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Ambrose Bierce.

"His Pupils, Friends, and Enemies"

In his new introduction to the 1967 edition of *Ambrose Bierce: A Biography*, Carey McWilliams wrote at length about his efforts to see a trunk of letters, photographs, papers, books, etc. left by Bierce to his daughter, Helen, before he departed for Mexico in 1913. McWilliams' efforts were in vain, however, for she always found excuses to put him off. In time he realized she was jealously guarding the trunk and its contents as her one solid financial resource, and he later helped her negotiate its sale, sight unseen, to Mrs. Milton E. Getz of Beverly Hills.

The agreement of sale provided that McWilliams, then at work on the biography, was to have access to the collection, but Mrs. Getz insisted this was to be at her convenience. Her convenience was very inconvenient for McWilliams, who recalled:

I discovered that I was to be given only a limited time to inspect the contents. Going over the material proved to be a nerve-racking, frustrating, utterly exasperating experience, the more so as by then I had a deadline to meet for delivery of the manuscript . . . The hurried hours I spent looking through the material were for me a nightmare; when I think back upon the experience, even after all these years, I still feel cheated.

And so the treasures contained in the trunk remained virtually unknown, even to McWilliams.

In November, 1936, Mrs. Getz' library was sold at public auction at the Anderson Galleries in New York. The catalogue published on that occasion revealed publicly, for the first time, the riches contained in the collection, essentially Bierce's archive. This section of the catalogue is entitled "Ambrose Bierce, the Soul of Honor/His Pupils, Friends, and Enemies" and contains an extensive number of letters addressed to him, file copies of his own letters, some of his manuscripts, and a group of his scrapbooks. Unfortunately, as usually happens at an auction, the material was dispersed, much of it falling into the hands of private collectors where most Bierce scholars could not discover it. Happily, however, a notable portion of this Bierce archive is now in The Bancroft Library, purchased intact from a dealer who got it from one of the private collections which had acquired it from the Getz sale:

the famed Carl H. Pforzheimer Library of New York. Bancroft's purchase was made possible by The Friends of The Bancroft Library and the Theodore R. Meyer Memorial Fund.

The descriptions in the auction catalogue were by no means exaggerated, for even this one segment of the archive presents much needed documentation on many facets of Bierce's life and personality. Professor M. E. Grenander of the State University of New York at Albany, a leading Bierce scholar who is preparing a collected edition of his letters, believes Bierce was a master of the epistolary form:

... the engaging warmth and intimacy of many of [the letters] reveal an aspect of his character—that of the kindly friend—which has been almost totally obscured by such sobriquets as "Bitter Bierce," "The Devil's Lexicographer," and "The Wickedest Man in San Francisco." In addition, his own side of some of the quarrels about which the public has heard much from his antagonists sets them in a very different light from the customary version.

Her assessment is well born out by the Bierce we see in the letters in this collection.

The kindly friend—and sentimental friend—is best exemplified in the letters written to him by Lily Walsh. A young woman deaf from childhood, she wrote to Bierce in 1895 asking him to publish her sonnet in the *Examiner*. Bierce took an interest in her, and, feeling she was handicapped by lack of education, secured her admission to the California Institute for the Deaf in Berkeley. Lily became his staunchest admirer, and her many letters testify that Bierce was "a generous man of heart and when he wishes, a gentle critic, too." Her untimely death, soon after she started attending the Institute, caused Bierce great grief, and he mourned her loss as if she were a daughter.

Gertrude Atherton's letters to Bierce illuminate still another facet of his relationship with women. Unfortunately only her side of the correspondence is represented in the collection, but it was obviously a lively exchange, and Mrs. Atherton could match him in kind with wit, sarcasm, and satire,

and many caustic comments on the literary scene. The 171 letters begin just prior to their first meeting in 1890 and continue to 1909, when Mrs. Atherton was gaining increasing national recognition. While she cannot be classified as one of Bierce's pupils, she obviously appreciated his criticism of her work, and she greatly admired his writing.

Bierce's long association with William Randolph Hearst has always intrigued their biographers, since Bierce often resigned in rage from his post and just as often was coaxed back to write for the Hearst papers and magazines. Hearst personally intervened in arguments and misunderstandings between Bierce and the editorial staff, as evidenced in the correspondence. After a particularly bitter charge from Bierce, in which he stated that it was only "certain pleasant memories of the lovable Will Hearst of the old Merchant Street days" that kept him working all those years, Hearst's reply was again conciliatory:

The Honorable William Randolph Hearst is quite as anxious to do what is right and what is agreeable to all as Will Hearst ever was, and I wish I could get you to believe that.

The interchange of letters between the two forceful figures will undoubtedly fascinate and aid the scholars of Hearst as well as those of Bierce.

There are also letters from Tom Hood and Harry Sampson, editors of *Fun*, alluding to Bierce's journalistic work in the 1870's for that English magazine; from John Camden Hotten who issued Bierce's first two books; from Walter Neale, publisher of Bierce's *Collected Works*; and from friends and pupils such as Percival Pollard, Dr. C. W. Doyle, and Silas Howes. To quote again from the 1936 auction catalogue:

These letters, documents, and scrapbooks are Ambrose Bierce's autobiography. Yet they are more than that—they are the autobiographies of many of his pupils, friends, and enemies, giving a clear insight into the personal and public character of many famous persons of the period.

This new acquisition magnificently complements and enhances the Library's Bierce collection, begun with the writer's bequest of forty-four volumes from his own library.

28th Annual Meeting

N. Scott Momaday, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *House Made of Dawn*, and of *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, based on his Kiowa heritage, spoke before a large audience in Wheeler Auditorium on Sunday afternoon, June 1st. His talk, entitled "The Native Californian: Centennial Views of the American Indian," set the tone for the special exhibition of Indian materials which formally opened in the Library's Gallery later in the afternoon. Included in the exhibition, which attracted visitors throughout the summer, were the recently-presented manuscript of *House Made of Dawn*, as well as his ceremonial regalia, loaned for the occasion by Momaday, and several examples of Southwest Indian pottery from the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Keith Kellum of Oakland.

Prior to the major address, the annual business meeting was conducted under the chairmanship of William P. Barlow, Jr., who read these welcoming remarks from University President Charles J. Hitch, who was in Washington, D.C.:

In many ways The Bancroft Library is a University-in-microcosm, a unitary symbol of the diversity of the whole, for it puts into practice the academic ideals to which all of us subscribe: scholarship, achievement, intellectual curiosity, respect for the past and hope for the future, excellence. To all these the Bancroft adds a very special ingredient which makes it something more than a first-rate research library; that special ingredient is you—the Friends—and the support and love and enthusiasm you give the Library make it a splendid institution indeed.

Berkeley campus Chancellor Albert H. Bowker greeted the Friends, noting the Library's collections "add to Berkeley's luster" and at the same time they "place on it no small burden of responsibility," for he declared:

More than ever we need the Bancroft's mission; more than ever that mission needs our support. Few endeavors give their partisans such satisfaction, the sense of achievement in all three spheres of life—past, present and future. That is a feeling

shared by The Friends of The Bancroft Library.

In place of the three retiring members of the Council—Mrs. John E. Cahill, Mrs. Gerald H. Hagar, and Warren R. Howell—the Friends elected Miss Mary Woods Bennett of Berkeley, Mrs. Jackson Chance of San Francisco, and Henry K. Evers, also of San Francisco, all alumni of the campus.

Professor James D. Hart delivered the Director's message, enumerating many of the major gifts during the past year and thanking members of the Library's staff for their devoted labors. And following Dr. Momaday's moving, personal recollections, the Friends and their friends walked across to The Bancroft Library, to view the exhibition and partake of refreshments served by the staff.

Roger Kent Papers

Undisputed titular head of the California Democratic scene for more than a decade is an unprecedented tenure to which few politicians can lay claim. Unique among them is the San Francisco attorney Roger Kent who was consecutively chairman or vice-chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee from 1954 through 1965, and whose papers have now been presented to The Bancroft Library by Mr. Kent, with additions from the Central Committee.

Born in Chicago in 1906, Roger Kent is the youngest of seven children born to William and Elizabeth Thacher Kent. His father, a prominent Progressive Republican, was elected to Congress from California's first district, serving from 1911 to 1917, and shortly thereafter was appointed by President Woodrow Wilson to a four-year term on the U.S. Tariff Commission. His mother was an outspoken leader in the women's suffrage movement. He was educated in Marin County and the Thacher School at Ojai, and briefly in Washington, D.C. while his father was a member of Congress. In 1928 he was graduated from Yale University, and in 1931 from the Yale Law School.

Kent's involvement in Democratic politics began in 1928 when he registered in the party. In 1948 and again in 1950 he ran unsuccessfully for the House of Representatives,



Roger Kent, flanked by William H. Orrick, Jr. and Harry S. Truman at the San Francisco Press Club, October 25th, 1956.

from the same congressional district once held by his father. From December, 1953 until August, 1954 he was northern California chairman of the Richard Graves for Governor Committee and, as a consequence, was elected chairman of the Northern California Division of the Democratic State Central Committee later in 1954. It was because of his astute, liberal leadership that Kent served more than ten years, during which period he was also active in the 1956 Presidential campaign of his long-time friend, Adlai Stevenson, served as state chairman of the 1960 Kennedy-Johnson campaign and as northern California chairman of the 1962 Edmund G. "Pat" Brown gubernatorial campaign. He was also chairman of the Western States Democratic Conference from 1962 to 1965.

As an attorney Kent became a partner in the newly-formed San Francisco law firm of Crimmins, Kent, Bradley & Burns in 1946, and has been associated with that firm to the present, with the exception of a leave of absence from March, 1952 until May, 1953 when he was General Counsel for the U.S. Department of Defense and, briefly, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense.

The collection of his correspondence and papers documents Kent's long career of political leadership, and includes candid assessments of and discussions with leading local, state and national figures, as well as political aspirants, from 1947 through early 1974. The Kent Papers nicely complement other recently acquired collections, including those of Edmund G. "Pat" Brown, William F. Knowland, and Thomas Kuchel, and promise to

be a rich source of primary material for scholars of twentieth century California politics.

Gastronomy: Colloquium and Exhibition

On Sunday afternoon, September 28th, in Wheeler Auditorium, The Friends of The Bancroft Library will present a panel discussion on gastronomy, prior to the reception in the Library's Gallery which will open an exhibition of 115 works from the distinguished collection, created by Dr. Marcus Crahan of Los Angeles, of uncommon early books related to food and drink. Joining Dr. Crahan on the panel will be Mr. Harry A. Levinson, antiquarian bookdealer of Beverly Hills, and Mr. R. Gordon Wasson, mycologist from New York.

Writing of his collection, which encompasses a broad range of topics related to the central theme of gastronomy, Dr. Crahan has said:

In the computer world of information retrieval there is a command term — "explode" — calling for all aspects of a subject. So, with our collection: food includes plants, herbs, cooking, poisons, pomology, viticulture, mycology, hallucinogens, perfumes, genus, the origin of agriculture and pastoral societies. Drink includes milk and wine, physiology, manner, custom, ritual, thirst vs. sense of drink, temperance, the arts of fermentation, distillation, brewing; the migration of tea through religion, romance in coffee, cocoa (coca), governmental control and revenue, the laws of the land and sea, excise, smuggling, piracy and trespass.

Among the many volumes which will delight and intrigue the Friends are *Cerevisiarum Comes: or, the New and True Art of Brewing . . . To which is added . . . a Cure for those that are Sick and Ropy* by W. Y-Worth (London, 1692) and *Ten Nights in a Bar-Room, and What I Saw There* by Timothy Shay Arthur (Boston, 1854). Many distinguished printers are represented in the exhibition, among them Aldus Manutius and Charles Estienne. Those of the Friends who are unable to attend the opening reception may view this extraordinary collection through Thanksgiving.

The Twelve Bibliophiles

Even a Library as comprehensive in its chosen fields of collection as the Bancroft will find, now and again, that an item has escaped its awareness. One such lacuna came to light recently when a dealer's catalogue brought to our attention *The Story of the Limited Editions Group of San Francisco* by Charles W. Collier, published in 1955. Due to the dilatory nature of cross-continental post, however, the copy had been sold by the time our order was received. But Fortune came to our rescue, and one of our Friends, Lawton R. Kennedy, a member of the Group, has graciously presented his copy to the Library.

Established in November, 1929, the Group was composed of printers, artists, and collectors who gathered once a month at a dinner meeting to discuss the latest product of George Macy's new Limited Editions Club. Charles W. Collier, along with Charles McIntyre, Haywood Hunt, and nine other men comprised the first membership, limited to twelve at any one time. The meetings were held in the rooftop dining room of the Hotel Cecil on Post Street, later in the Hotel Californian. Each member contributed his share to the cost of one annual subscription to the Club's publications; at the end of the year a drawing was held and each member selected one volume to keep in his personal library.

The Collier history was written to commemorate the Group's Silver Anniversary in 1954, and later Haywood Hunt printed the volume. Although an afterword forecasts another such history in twenty-five years, the Group disbanded in the mid-1960's.

Elizabethan Sixpence

On June 27th, Mr. Charles Slaymaker of Novato presented to The Bancroft Library an Elizabethan sixpence, minted in 1567, which he had discovered last year while excavating the Indian settlement of Olompali in Marin County. Although there is a temptation to suppose this to be the coin which had been affixed in 1579 to the Drake Plate of Brass, such a claim cannot be justified by any evidence.

In a tape-recorded interview for Bancroft, Mr. Slaymaker, who received his archaeo-

logical training at San Francisco State University, recounted the digging-out of a ceremonial dance floor:

. . . it was always my habit . . . to hand-trowel down to the floor myself to point out the texture and hardness of the floor so [my assistants] wouldn't go through it. It's extremely critical to find the whole floor. While exploring the floor myself with the hand-trowel and trying to discover exactly where it was, I flipped this coin out.



He noted that he "was extremely skeptical to say the least" when this "sensational" artifact turned up, but during the fifteen months following the discovery, Mr. Slaymaker performed chemical tests of the soil, whose lack of acid helped to preserve the silver, and he forwarded the coin itself to England where its date of minting was authenticated by a staff member of the British Museum.

The coin is now on display in the Library's Gallery where visitors may speculate upon the possible relation of the Plate of Brass to this Elizabethan artifact also discovered in California during the twentieth century.

Shaw, Wells & Galsworthy

Lucile Heming Koshland and Daniel Edward Koshland—Mr. and Mrs. Daniel E. Koshland, Sr. of Hillsborough—recently presented to the Library a considerable collection of the works of George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, and John Galsworthy. Their gift, 194 items in all, is comprised of

first editions of the writings of these three authors, though also included are biographical, bibliographical, and critical works pertaining to them. There are eight manuscript letters, seven by Shaw and one by Wells, and many of the volumes bear inscriptions by the authors and retain their original dust jackets.

This group of volumes is particularly desirable because they strengthen and enhance the large body of modern British literature transferred from the University Library in 1970 when the Rare Books Collection became a part of the Bancroft. To this end there have been a number of acquisitions by the Library of the works of such modern English and Irish writers as Stephen Spender, Sean O'Faolain, and William Butler Yeats, reported most recently in *Bancroftiana* for February, 1975. Now with the Koshland gift substantial collections of three other important literary figures have been added.

The Shaw-Wells-Galsworthy combination has the added benefit of providing an in-depth view of an important period in recent British literary history, roughly spanning the years between 1890 and 1930. Shaw and Wells were fellow Fabians, and both of them brought a sense of realism and political consciousness to their work. Galsworthy, too, though in a more moderate way and without affiliation to any specific political organization, was part of the movement to bring social comment to literature. His work as a dramatist and reformer brought him into contact with Shaw, both at the Royal Court Theatre and before the Parliamentary Committee on Censorship. The work of all three writers reflects a concern with class structure and economic inequality, the rights of women, and the engagement of the ordinary citizen in the responsibilities of government.

Besides the first editions of a number of his plays, such as *Back to Methuselah*, *Man and Superman*, and *Saint Joan*, all of the genres in which Shaw worked are represented in this new acquisition. This includes music and drama criticism from the early days of his London career and his influential political writing, notably *A Plan of Campaign for Labor* and *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism*. *Casbel Byron's Profession*, referred to in the postcard here reproduced, represents the period in the

29 Fitzroy Square W.
12th May 1894.
Dear Lane
"Casbel Byron" is now
practically in my hands again,
Scott having closed accounts with me
over it. There are probably some seven
or eight hundred of the shilling
edition still in Smith's hands on
sale.
Yrs faithfully
G. Bernard Shaw.

Shaw's note to John Lane, May 12th, 1894.

1880's when Shaw devoted himself exclusively to the novel.

The other examples of Shaw's correspondence which accompany the collection are also illuminating. In a letter written in April, 1894 to the critic A. B. Walkley, he is concerned with popular misconceptions about the characterizations in his new play, *Arms and the Man*. With great detail Shaw outlines how he views each of the play's characters. Another later letter contains an interesting postscript in which, with typical Shavian brusqueness, he states: "Yes: I coined Superman. They were all blubbering with Overman and Beyondman when I settled it."

The Galsworthy material is particularly strong in the area of drama, though the Forsyte family, too, is well represented by such titles as *The Forsyte Saga*, *Two Forsyte Interludes*, *Soames and the Flag*, and others. First editions of all of Wells' important works include his early and very popular titles *The Time Machine*, *The War of the Worlds*, and *The Invisible Man*. A major portion of the original thirty-four parts of *The Science of Life*, which Wells wrote in collaboration with his eldest son, G. P. Wells, and Julian Huxley,

is here, as well as the twenty-four parts of the *Outline of History*, which are bound together in four volumes.

Taken together, the three collections which comprise the Koshland gift provide for the student of late nineteenth and early twentieth century literary and social history a remarkable primary resource.

Genthe Photo Identification

In the last issue of *Bancroftiana* we included a marvelous photograph of a San Francisco street scene at the turn of the century, the photographer Arnold Genthe. Thinking that our readers might like to test their powers of detection, we withheld the location, promising revelation in this issue of our newsletter. One of our Friends, Richard H. Dillon of the Sutro Library, correctly guessed the street: Grant Avenue, running from Pine Street (at left and out of the picture) to Bush Street, visible at the far right. This is, of course, the first street of Chinatown, as one approaches from the south.

For those who may wonder how identification was made by the Library, we call attention to these clues: house numbers 434 (first house at left) and 432 (just below) indicate that the numbers ascend with the hill, thus eliminating, in this number area, all but Grant Avenue and Stockton Street; the partially-revealed sign on the shop beyond 432, beginning "Lond . . ." is fully identified by the San Francisco city directory for 1901 as Jacob Londella, Tattooer, the lettering of the latter word almost completely in view to the left of the shop's entrance. Londella's business was located at 430 Dupont Street, later renamed Grant Avenue.

The Bancroft Fellows

Once again the University-wide competition for the Bancroft Fellowships has resulted in three awards for the coming academic year to doctoral candidates engaged in research on subjects whose source materials are in the Library. Chosen this time are Linda Ann F. Morris and Brent M. Cohen, both of the Berkeley campus, and Stanleigh D. Bry, of the Santa Barbara campus.

Ms. Morris is a graduate of Grinnell College and holds a Master's degree from the

University of Washington. A student in the Department of English, she plans a dissertation dealing with democratic values in nineteenth century American humor and will make intensive use of the Bancroft's Kounakjian Collection.

The Rare Books Collection, and particularly its Elizabethan editions of Chaucer and its sixteenth century dictionaries, will be utilized by Mr. Cohen in the writing of his dissertation on Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. Also a student in the Department of English, he holds his undergraduate degree from the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Mr. Bry is in the Department of History at Santa Barbara, from which campus he received his Bachelor's degree. The topic for his dissertation is "New England Merchants in Mexican California" and he cites the important collections gathered by Hubert Howe Bancroft, among them the Bandini, Fitch, Larkin, and Vallejo Papers, as primary resource for his research.

We welcome them to the Library where we expect to see them often in the Heller Reading Room.

Baja Documents on Film

Among the most exciting discoveries of Californiana in recent years has been that of the Archivo Histórico de Baja California Sur Pablo L. Martínez in La Paz. Heretofore untouched, the archive contains approximately one million pages of manuscript and printed material covering the years from 1744 through 1928, all of it now being micro-filmed for The Bancroft Library under the direction of Professor W. Michael Mathes of the University of San Francisco.

Recovered from the annex to the La Paz public jail in 1969 through the efforts of Dr. Miguel León-Portilla and Professors Armando Trasviña Taylor and Jesús Castro Agúndez of Mexico, the archive has been established in the Casa de la Cultura of that city. Extensive documentation in religious, military, and civil matters prior to 1848 relates to both Baja and Alta Californias, and more recent materials, while dealing principally with peninsula California, also contains references to the history of the state of California.



Filming in La Paz.

The Library began filming the archive in May, 1973, as a result of cooperation between the Government of Baja California Sur, through the then-Director General of Acción Social, Professor Eligio Moisés Coronado, and the Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, under the direction of Dr. León-Portilla. Work has been completed through 1873 and 145 rolls of film are now available for scholarly research in the Library.

Philip Bancroft, Sr.

1881-1975

Philip Bancroft, the sole surviving son of Hubert Howe Bancroft, the Library's founder, died at his Walnut Creek farm on August 11th. One of the earliest members of the Friends, Mr. Bancroft had supported its activities for a good many years and in 1962 he anonymously presented stock certificates which were sold by the Library and the money realized was "transformed into papers of a very different kind that could not otherwise have been bought for the Bancroft Collections." (*Bancroftiana*, April, 1962.)

Born in San Francisco on June 30th, 1881, Philip was the younger brother of Paul and Griffing, and was followed by a sister, Lucy. As a young man he spent his vacations on the family farm at Walnut Creek, where his

own three children were to grow up several decades later. He attended Harvard University, from which he was graduated in its Class of 1903, and received his law degree from Hastings College of the Law. In 1905 he began his law career in San Francisco, also becoming involved in local politics, and in 1908 he was elected as one of two delegates from his Assembly district to the Republican National Convention. Four years later he was again a delegate to this Convention, and shortly thereafter was elected a delegate to the Bull Moose Convention which nominated Theodore Roosevelt and Hiram Johnson.

Following service in the first World War, Philip Bancroft settled permanently on the family farm, which he and his brother Paul had inherited from their father, and became a practicing farmer. In 1938 he campaigned successfully for the Republican nomination for the U.S. Senate, but was defeated in the general election by Sheridan Downey. During that campaign his daughter Anne took charge of the headquarters at the farm, exhibiting organizational abilities which she later applied to her membership on the Friends' Council.

Philip Bancroft's loyalty and generosity will be missed and we extend to the Bancroft family the sympathy of an old friend.

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