



The Iowan

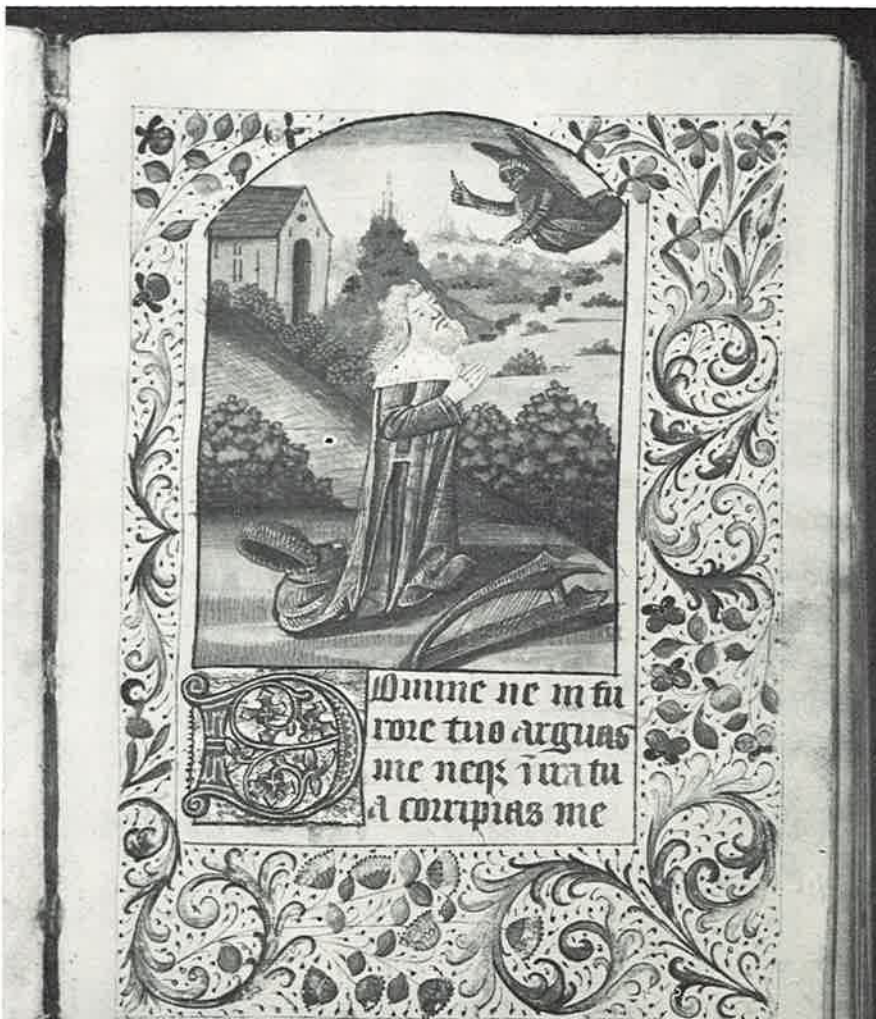
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Treasures of The University Libraries

By Ronald L. Fingerson

King David Praying, a page from the Book of Hours produced between 1460-80.



THE Special Collections Department of the University of Iowa Library contains incomparably the finest assemblage of notable books and manuscripts in the state. Largely these treasures have come as gifts from the private libraries and holdings of generous Iowans. A number of them have been purchased with monies raised by such groups as the Friends of the University of Iowa Libraries.

Johann Gutenberg is generally accepted as the inventor of printing with movable type. By joining individual pieces of metal type — letters — together to form words and the words to form sentences, he was able to set up a full page of type and print as many copies of that one page as he desired. This speedy process revolutionized book printing — proved fatal to the artful but slow process of producing handwritten manuscript books — and made it possible for everyday private citizens to own books. Books printed by movable type between 1455 — the year Johann Gutenberg produced his 42-line Bible — and 1500 are called *incunabula*. The University of Iowa Library owns twenty-two *incunabula*.

The manuscript book — handwritten and hand-illustrated — caught in the quicksand wake of progress is beautifully represented by the Library's fifteenth century *Book of Hours*. In his master's thesis, *Horae Mariae*, written at the University of Iowa in 1958, Mr. Arden Behrendsen dated this *Book of Hours* as having been written between 1460 and 1480. The text in Latin includes excerpts from the four Gospels, psalms, prayers, offices, a litany, and a calendar in French. The handwritten script is written in red and brown inks and on parchment — animal skins — rather than on paper. Bright red, gold, pink, blue, green, and brown inks were used in drawing the book's six illustrations. These illustrations — miniatures — are: St. John on the Island of Patmos, The Crucifixion, Pentecost, The Annunciation, King David Praying, and The Dance of Death — and additional borders depicting fruits, flowers and acanthus leaves. Medieval dragons, fleurs-de-lis, and roses are blind stamped into the calf binding on both front and back covers. The presence of gold leaf embossed on the initial letters throughout the text evinces that this *Book of Hours* was originally the private devotional book of a medieval nobleman or noblewoman.

Numbering among the finest of the Library's *incunabula* is Hartmann Schedel's *Liber Cronicarum*, more widely known as *The Nuremberg Chronicle*.

In length of page the largest of all *incunabula*, *Liber Cronicarum* — a chronological account of popes, emperors, and ominous events from the Creation to the Last Judgment — is largely remembered for its 1,809 woodcut illustrations printed from 645 woodcut blocks. These blocks were skillfully designed by two noted woodcut artists — Michael Wolgemuth and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff. Particularly interesting are the woodcut maps of countries and the illustrations of houses, castles, and cities. The book was printed in Nuremberg, Germany in 1493 by Anton Koberger. There being more than one hundred first editions in North American libraries, *Liber Cronicarum* is not particularly rare or difficult to locate. The Library's copy, bound in brown pigskin, bears the stamp in black letters on the spine — From the German Imperial Library — indicating that it was once owned by the Prussian State Library in Berlin. Bookplates on the inside front cover designate ownership at another time by Herman Frash Whiton. The Library purchased its copy from still a third owner, the New York bookseller — H. P. Kraus.

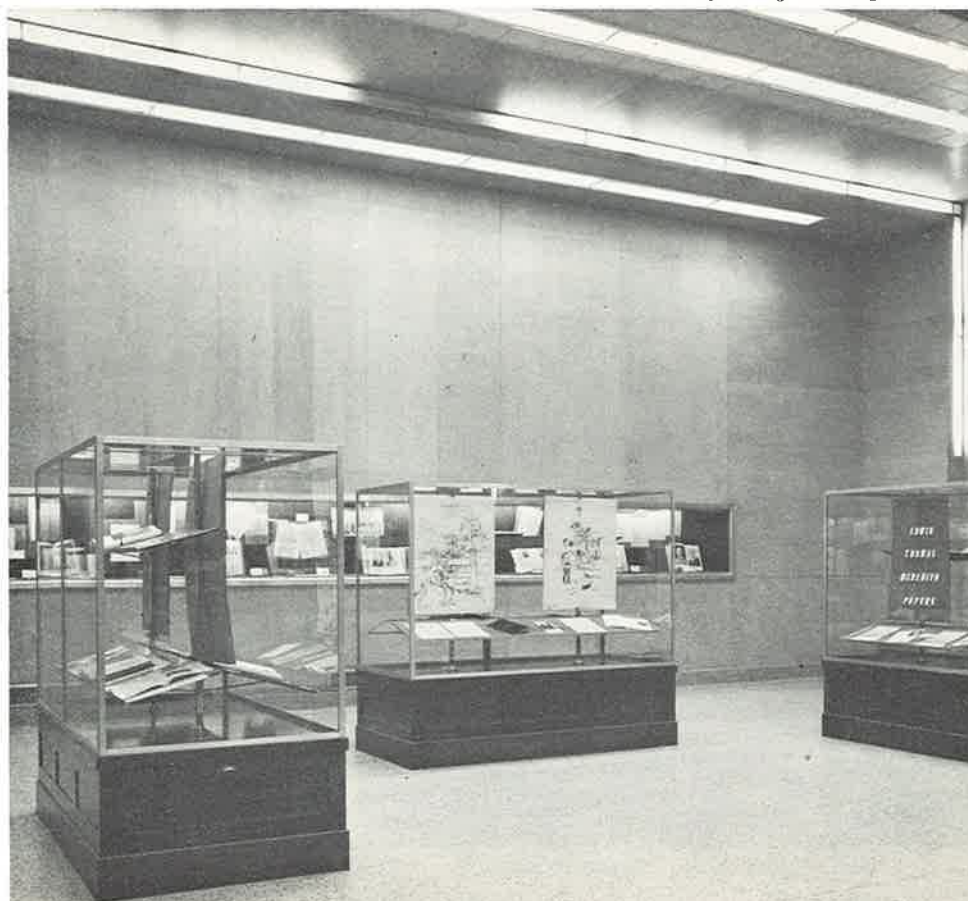
Liber Cronicarum and the manuscript *Book of Hours* are both part of the University Library's "X" Collection, a collection of 8,620 early, rare, and special books on diverse subjects. First editions buffs would delight in this collection's first edition holdings. Representative, in addition to *Liber Cronicarum* (1493), are Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), Galileo Galilei's *Dialogue on the Two Chief Systems of the World* (1632), Sir Thomas Browne's *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* (1646), Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702), Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), Samuel Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), Lawrence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* (1768), Samuel Pepys' *Memoirs of Samuel Pepys* (1825), *The Book of Mormon* (1830), Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1855), Samuel Clemens' *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), and Joseph Conrad's *Tales of Hearsay* (1925). Galileo's *Dialogue* (1632), proposing "that the earth moves around the sun", was adjudged heretical by the Holy Office of the Inquisition and placed on the Church's *Index of Prohibited Books* in 1633 on which list it remained for the next two hundred years.

The Brewer-Leigh Hunt Collection comprising 2,355 volumes and 1,885 manuscripts or letters, written by Leigh Hunt and many of his literary friends,



Wallcase contains representative works from the Mark Ranney Memorial Collection of fine bindings. On the table is William M. Sloane's *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte* which won the Gold Medal for bookbinding at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1904, and for which Mrs. Ranney paid \$1,000 a volume. The work was artistically bound in crushed levant morocco, a highly polished goat skin leather which readily absorbs colored dyes, by Hertzberg Monastery Hill Bindery, Chicago.

An exhibit of selected letters from the Edwin Thomas Meredith Papers: (right case) includes letters pertaining to Meredith's candidacy for President in 1928, (center case) includes letters which Meredith received from Franklin D. Roosevelt, Herbert Hoover, and Calvin Coolidge, (left case) letters pertaining to Meredith as Secretary of Agriculture, (wall case) letters relating to Meredith's support of William Gibbs McAdoo for the Presidency in 1924. The collection totals approximately 28,000 letters and related materials. The cartoons were drawn by Ding Darling.



was purchased for the Library in 1934 with the help of an anonymous donor. The collection, originally brought together by Luther A. Brewer, founder of the Torch Press of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is particularly strong in "association books." Association books contain handwritten comments and inscriptions by their authors or famous owners, often on fly-leaves and in margins surrounding the text. A particularly excellent association copy is *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus* (1692) which includes a bookplate from the library of Thomas Carlyle on its inside front cover, and the presentation inscription in Leigh Hunt's own hand on the fly-leaf opposite the title page: "No un-Christian present at Christmas, either in poverty outside or riches within, to dear Thomas Carlyle from his affectionate friend Leigh Hunt. December 27, 1836." Noteworthy in the collection is a first edition, first printing, of John Keat's *Poems* (1817), his first published book of poetry. *Poems* was presented to the Library as a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Hearst, Jr. and added to the Brewer-Leigh Hunt Collection in 1963.

Extra-illustrated books are those from which the original binding has been removed — letters, portraits, documents, prints, and drawings inserted between the pages of the original text — and

then rebound in the enlarged size. Two gift collections — the Foreman M. Lebold Collection and the Mark Ranney Memorial Collection — contain outstanding "extra-illustrated" books. The Foreman M. Lebold Collection, comprising forty-six manuscripts and manuscript letters, one photograph, one broadside, and seven rare books given to the Library in 1955 by Mrs. Lebold, includes Adrian H. Joline's *Meditations of an Autograph Collector* (1902) to which has been added forty-seven letters from Fitz-Greene Halleck, Augustin Daly, Ben Perley Poore, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mary Howitt, E. L. Bulwer, William Cullen Bryant, Wilkie Collins, Thomas Wentworth Higginson and others. The letters were inserted opposite the page of the original text which mentioned the name of the author of the letter. Originally published in one volume, the addition of the letters necessitated rebinding the work in two volumes. The Mark Ranney Memorial Collection comprising 3,700 volumes of which 3,000 volumes were bequeathed to the Library in 1907 by Mrs. Ranney, includes William M. Sloane's *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte* (1896). Originally published in four volumes, Sloane's *Napoleon* was enlarged with portraits of Napoleon, portraits of Napoleon's family and other famous people, pictures depicting bat-

tles, maps of battlefields and cities, original handwritten documents, and letters signed by Napoleon's officers and ministers. Each page of the original text as well as each page of inserted material was then inlaid in large-sized handmade Whatman paper swelling the original size to twelve volumes. Additionally, the work was artistically bound in *crushed levant morocco* — a highly polished goat skin leather which readily absorbs colored dyes — by the Hertzberg Monastery Hill Bindery of Chicago, Illinois. It won the Gold Medal for Bookbinding at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis in 1904. The magnificence of the set is evinced by the price Mrs. Ranney paid for it — \$1,000 per volume.

Dr. Mark Ranney was a lecturer on insanity at the University of Iowa College of Medicine at the time of his death and had a great fondness for books. Although the library which his wife, Martha, built and preserved in his memory is noted primarily for its exquisite leather bindings, the books on literature, history, pottery, porcelain, tapestry, lace, sculpture, coins, gardens, music, Egyptian art, Dutch interiors, French cathedrals, and Gothic and Renaissance architecture are significant as well. A book which added to the collection out of monies provided by Mrs. Ranney to further fill out the collection

The reading room of the Special Collections Department of The University of Iowa Library. The tall cases on the left contain books in the Iowa Authors Collection. In the center cases and right wall cases are books in the Bollinger-Lincoln Collection.



(1961) and the English, Danish, Norwegian, German and Italian editions of Honore Morrow's *On To Oregon* (1926). Many Iowa authors have presented the library with gifts of their book manuscripts, galley proofs, corrected page proofs, and correspondence files leading to the first editions of their works. Handwritten and typewritten drafts in several stages of completion, galley proofs, page proofs, letters exchanged between the author and his editor, and publicity surrounding the publication of MacKinlay Kantor's *Andersonville* fill fourteen manuscript boxes. A similar importance is to be found in the eleven boxes of materials leading to the final publication of Thomas Duncan's *Big River, Big Man*. Both of these fine books later served as bases for movies. Manuscript drafts and corrected page proofs often reveal to the student writer significant insights into the changes, growth, development of ideas, and creative process at work in the mind of the author. Biographies of sixty of Iowa's leading authors and listings of their published works are presented in Frank Paluka's excellent new book, *Iowa Authors*, which recently has been published by the Friends of the University of Iowa Libraries.

Among the more than one hundred fifty manuscript collections in the Library, twelve each contain more than 10,000 letters. Notable among these twelve are personal papers of Woodrow Wilson's last Secretary of Agriculture — Edwin Thomas Meredith. Born in Avoca, Iowa in 1878, Edwin Meredith began a highly successful publishing career in 1896 when he became part-owner of the *Farmer's Tribune*. In 1902 he created *Successful Farming* and with increased prosperity *The Dairy Farmer* (1921) and *Better Homes and Gardens* (1924). As a candidate for the U. S. Senate in 1914, as a candidate for Governor of Iowa in 1916, as Secretary of Agriculture in 1920, as a political supporter of William G. McAdoo for President in 1924, and as himself a candidate for President in 1928, Meredith formed many lasting national friendships. His correspondents included among others: Newton D. Baker, Bernard Baruch, Fred Biermann, Arthur Capper, Calvin Coolidge, Jay N. Darling, John W. Davis, Samuel Gompers, James W. Good, Clyde L. Herring, Herbert Hoover, Cordell Hull, William M. Jardine, Breckenridge Long, Frank O. Lowden, William G. McAdoo, Andrew A. Mellon, George Fort Milton, Hollins Randolph, Daniel C. Roper, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Henry Cantwell Wallace. The total collection com-

prises approximately 28,000 letters and related materials.

Of the remaining collections open to reading and research a number must be mentioned: the Edmund Blunden Collection, containing 247 books and 480 manuscripts or letters relating to the contemporary English poet of the same name; the French Revolution Collection, comprising 8,000 political pamphlets printed during the years 1788-1799, supplemented by French newspapers and government publications; the Ding Darling Collection, providing nearly 6,000 of Ding's cartoons in their original large-size format; the John Springer Collection, including 1,850 books on the history of typography; the Harvey Ingham Collection of approximately 500 books on the American In-

dian, and the History of Hydraulics Collection of approximately 500 books dating from 1513 to 1960. Among the non-book, letter, and manuscript collections are the Levi O. Leonard Collection of several thousand items dealing with the Union Pacific Railroad in the latter part of the nineteenth century; the Vawter-Redpath Chautauqua Collection of letters and contracts relating to the Chautauqua movement of the 1890's; the Edwin Ford Piper Collection of Ballads and Folk-songs; Progressive Party Papers, 1942-1963; the Charles Bernard Hoeven Papers, 1925-1965; the Karl M. LeCompte Papers, 1939-1959; the William Francis Riley Papers, 1933-1956; the

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The "closed stacks area" of the Special Collections Department. This area is not open to casual browsing but all the books may be used individually in the reading room by filling out a written request. On the left of the center aisle are books in the "X" collection and on the right are books in the Brewer-Leigh Hunt Collection.



Jeweled Eggs

(Continued from page 48)

layers as needed to provide appropriate strength. Other hobbyists in the same field use leather for hinges, according to the doctor.

Now the eggs are ready for whatever design the doctor fancies and no two of the 15 eggs done to date bare any resemblance to each other, attesting to the doctor's decorating ingenuity.

A vast storehouse of imitation pearls of all hues and sizes which have been stripped from necklaces; plastic beads; imitation jewels; decorations taken off old earrings, costume jewelry and women's pocketbooks; gold ribbon and brocade; brilliants and glitter of varying sizes and colors and almost anything that would make an egg unique and colorful are contained among the doctor's raw materials for decorating.

A numerical breakdown of the 250 decorating items would be: about 25 types of gold braid, 10 different felt backgrounds, 20 different styles and sizes of gold brocade, 100 different bottles of pearls, 50 different bottles of beads, plus miscellaneous bric-a-brac from miniature angels to glass baubles from earrings.

One great source of materials has been friends who have given the doctor items — especially earrings and decorations off of old dresses — that they think might enhance an egg. Those items not garnered from friends are purchased locally — at Roshek's and Stampher's department stores in Dubuque, local drapery shops and especially at the Taylor House in Galena and the House of Fabrics in Dubuque — or from hobby stores when the doctor travels.

Although no preconceived pattern is set upon once the actual decorating is undertaken, a certain combination of compatible colors is usually chosen. Greens, reds and yellows are among the most popular.

All the beads and pearls are applied with either small pliers, tweezers or a round toothpick. Either a little Elmer's glue is spread on the egg's surface or the bead or pearl is dipped into the glue and then fitted on the egg. When gold braid or brocade is used airplane glue is substituted for the Elmer's glue.

The first part of the egg decorated is around the edges of the two parts to set up sort of a shelf so the top and bottom will fit snugly together and not slip off. The inside of the egg next gets attention and it is usually fancied with

felt, glitter, sequins or fine size beads — about the size of a pin head.

Sometimes if the inside is going to be decorated with all one color of materials it is just washed with glue and the beads, glitter or sequins are poured in and shaken around until the inside is completely covered.

Most of the intricate designing is left for the top outside of the eggs. Work now slows down somewhat as it is more exacting. Every bead or pearl has a special place and each is applied separately so that the holes in the pearls do not show and to make sure that the brilliant side is facing outward to make a finer looking egg.

"Once you start, the only limits to the designs are your materials at hand and your imagination," says the doctor.

A recent innovation in the decorating has been the adding of dates — just the year — in beads to the top of the eggs. So far only one egg has been done in this fashion, but more are planned.

Time for completing eggs varies. Working only a couple of hours a day it may take three weeks to complete a particularly complexed designed egg, like the gold egg, which the doctor rates as his favorite. For others it may take only two or three sittings to complete an egg box.

Most times two or three and maybe up to as many six eggs are being worked on at the same time. As the doctor put it, "I either make them or I don't."

To date none of the eggs have been sold or are any going to be says the doctor. "I plan to give them away, mostly to my children as heirlooms."

If the supply becomes too massive the doctor would give them away to friends rather than sell them. "When you sell items from your hobby, then you destroy the hobby and it ceases to be a hobby," says the doctor. The same holds true in all his other hobbies — no sales, just gifts to friends.

The jovial, grey-haired and moustached doctor, who has the knack of whistling while he works on the eggs, says "This is a hobby you don't find time for, you make time for it."

The doctor's wife, Marie, serves as his number one — and only — assistant by suggesting designs. "She is my best critic," the doctor also noted.

The eggs are put on display during the Easter season and the rest of the time are stored in a cabinet in his basement. The roomy basement also serves as his workshop for his other hobbies. The decorating work on the eggs is done on a six-by-six folding, cardboard table. The cutting and applying of the bases to the eggs is done in his down-

town Dubuque dental offices, where he has practiced since 1923.

In all the hobby is one of the most inexpensive that the doctor has for the cash outlay, for each egg never exceeds more than two dollars.

Although he has received a number of letters of inquiry about the eggs very few people except close friends have seen them displayed and then only at his home. Sometimes the doctor will send along slides of the eggs to interested parties who write seeking information.

Though egg decorating is his most unique hobby it is not his favorite. That nod goes to hand-dipped candles, which he has researched extensively and is today so knowledgeable in that fast-disappearing art that he has been asked to write a chapter on it for a forthcoming book on hobbies.

The egg decorating phase of the doctor's hobby year runs for only about a month or a little longer, as he starts three weeks before Easter and puts the hobby aside for outdoor activities — mostly golf — once the weather turns warmer.

His hobby is an old and honored one, dating back into the 1800's. In fact, in the 1890's, a Frenchman, Faberge, enjeweled an egg of porcelain for the Czar of Russia. It was subsequently valued at more than a thousand dollars.

Treasures of Libraries

(Continued from page 6)

Ben F. Jensen Papers, 1939-1965; the William A. Logan Papers, 1890-1930; the Frederick E. Biermann Papers, 1933-1960; the Charles Almon Dewey Papers, 1890-1958; the John C. Lewis Papers, 1896-1956; the Ray Burdett Griffin Papers, 1855-1901; and the papers of many other equally notable Iowans. Many interesting aspects of these collections have been discussed in *Books At Iowa*, a magazine published twice a year for the Friends of the University of Iowa Libraries.

The continued growth of the University Library's rapidly expanding special collections of books and manuscripts depends, in considerable part, on the good will and generosity of its patrons and users. The Library's present manuscript interests lie in collecting the correspondence, speeches, diaries, manuscripts, and personal papers of notable Iowans — local, state, and national leaders in all fields of endeavor — literature, the arts, politics, the sciences, government, journalism, and business.