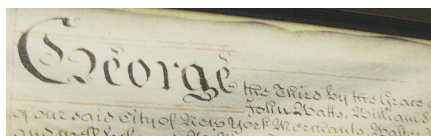




Books & People

IN THIS ISSUE



260 Years of the Library
PAGE 2



More artifacts from the
Western Front and beyond
PAGE 6



Travel and Exploration Books
PAGE 13

A Letter from the Board Chair

Dear fellow Library members,

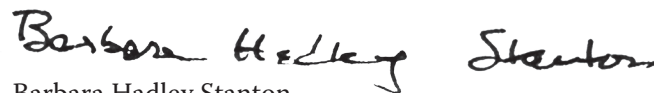
2013 was a good year at the Library. Our membership remained steady at almost 3,000 subscriptions, and we circulated 87,041 books, near an all-time high. Scholars made use of our electronic resources, writers filled the Fifth Floor rooms, and our events and exhibitions were of high quality.

The Library also completed a major renovation of the Third Floor. In October, we opened the new and enlarged Children's Library, which not only increased the amount of available shelving, but also provided a wonderful new space for young readers and an office for children's staff. In addition, bookcases were added to the Whitridge Room to house the poetry collection from longtime trustee Ethelyn Chase. These two major improvements were made possible by some very generous capital gifts.

With all that was accomplished last year, I am sometimes asked, "Does the Library really need more money beyond my membership dues? It's been going for 260 years and seems to be doing so well." The answer is definitely yes. If you divide the number of members by our annual expenses, the true cost is approximately \$870 per membership. Membership fees cover about 27 percent of this figure, and the endowment takes care of another 53 percent. The remaining 20 percent comes largely from gifts made to the Annual Fund. From this brief analysis, you can see the important role that you, our members, play through your annual contributions in helping us maintain our high standards of service. We thank all of you whose ongoing generosity makes the Library what it is today—a place for reading and fellowship.

I look forward to seeing you at the Library.

Gratefully,



Barbara Hadley Stanton
Board Chair



Meredith Rossi joined the staff as Head of Circulation on January 20. She comes to the Library from the New York University School of Law Library, where she was Circulation/Reference Librarian. Ms. Rossi is a graduate of Pratt University's Masters in Library Science program. She also holds a J.D. from John Marshall Law School in Chicago.

Outside the Library, Meredith likes to knit, travel, and, of course, read, particularly contemporary fiction. She enjoys working with patrons at the Circulation Desk and helping everyone find that next great read.

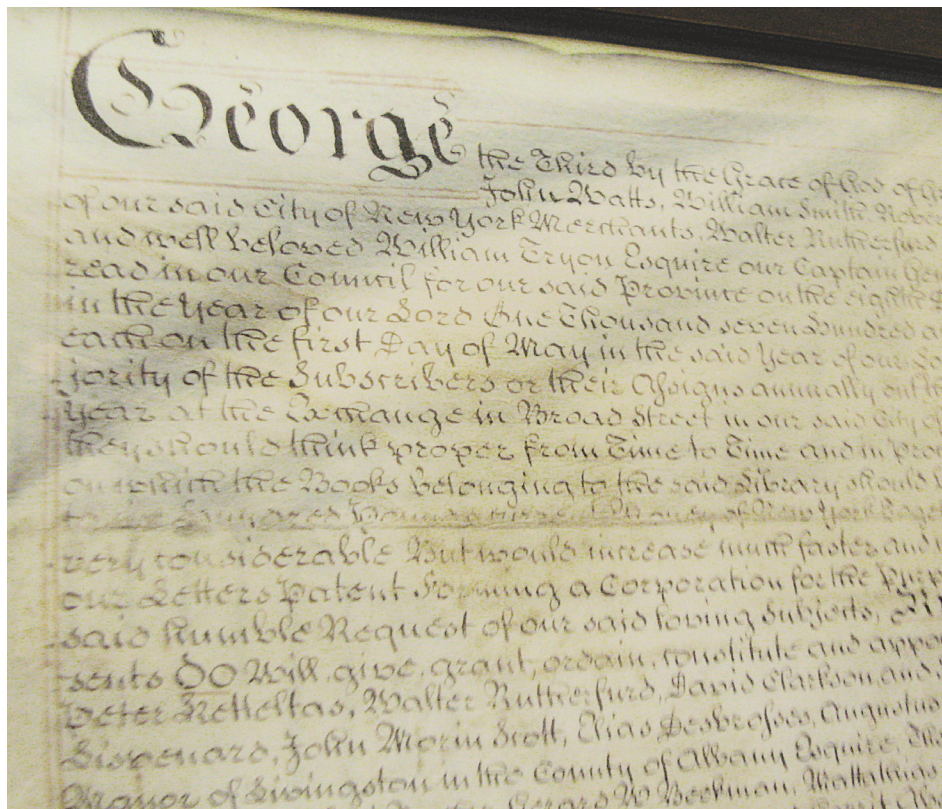
260 Years of The New York Society Library

This April, the Library will turn 260 years old. To the best of our knowledge, we are the oldest surviving cultural institution in New York City. In honor of the occasion, here are a few highlights of our history.

1754, April The Library is founded by Robert R. Livingston Sr., William Livingston, William Alexander (Lord Stirling), Philip Livingston, John Morin Scott, and William Smith Jr. The Library occupies space in a second-floor room in City Hall.

1754, October The Library publishes its first catalog, listing approximately 250 titles.

1772 The Library is granted a formal charter by King George III. The charter was lost during a later move and rediscovered in a private home in 1913 and returned to the Library. A facsimile of the charter is on permanent display on the main-stair mezzanine between the Second and Third Floors.



1772 The Library is granted a formal charter by King George III.

1774 The Library's operations are interrupted by the War for Independence. British troops occupy Manhattan Island. During the war, some of the collection is dispersed and destroyed.

1784 The Library's Board reclaims the collection, some of which had been stored at St. Paul's Church.

1788 The Library reopens at its original location at City Hall, the site of the new federal government. President George Washington and other American luminaries borrow books from the Library.

1789, July Borrowing activities are recorded in the "First Charging Ledger." This oldest surviving record of our collections' circulation has been fully scanned and can be found on our website.

1795 The Library moves to its second home at 16 Nassau Street. The collection now contains over 10,000 titles.

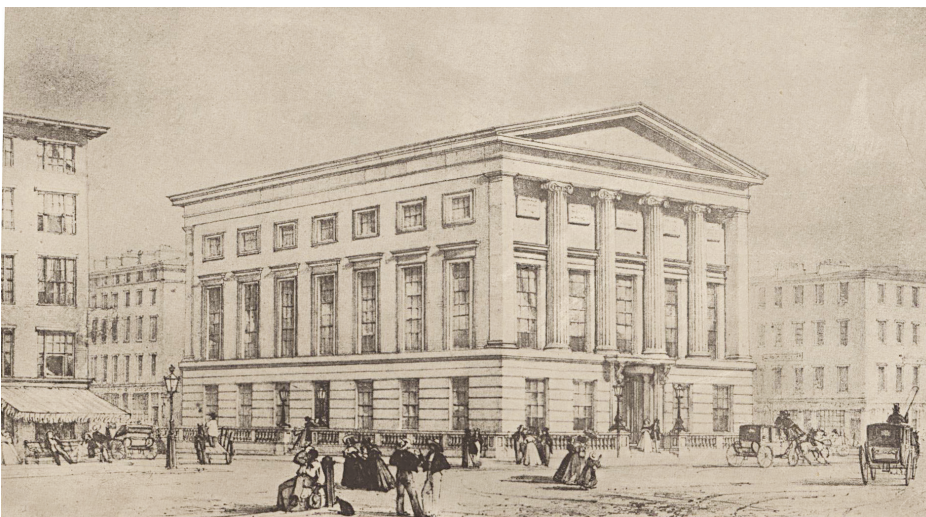
1813 The Library is given 292 volumes that had previously belonged to Connecticut colonial governor John Winthrop Jr. Some of his books had been owned, and annotated, by John Dee, advisor to Elizabeth I. Read more about the Winthrop Collection at www.nysoclib.org/collection/winthrop-collection.

1828 Philip Jones Forbes, who grew up in the Library building as the son of former Head Librarian John Forbes, becomes Head Librarian in his own right. He will serve in the post until 1855. His son, also John, will become a staff librarian in 1877.

1835 Washington Irving, author of "*Knickerbocker's*" *History of New York* and *Rip Van Winkle*, becomes a Trustee.

1837, April The Library's Visitors Book records a visit from Prince Napoléon Bonaparte III.

1840 The Library moves to a larger building on Broadway at Leonard Street. The building is initially shared with the New York Athenaeum. When the Athenaeum closes, its space is rented out to major lecturers and performers.



1840 The Library moves to Broadway and Leonard Street.

Have you seen our blog?

Library staff and friends offer short takes on items in the collection, events past and future, and other topics of interest to book lovers. Recent posts include Head of Acquisitions Steve McGuirl highlighting new books from the UK, Events Coordinator Sara Holliday sharing photos from the new exhibition, and Rare Books Librarian Erin Schreiner discussing the John Sharp Collection of eighteenth-century books.

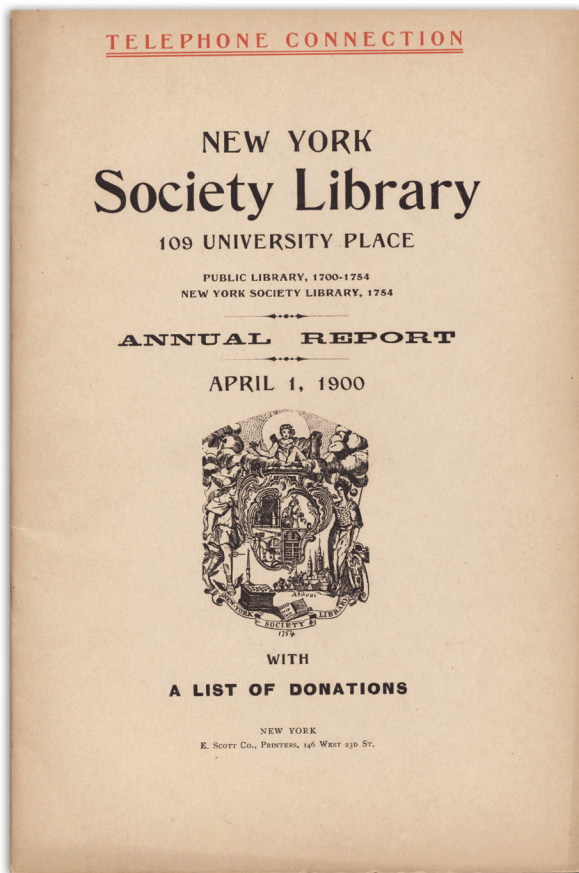
Look at the left-hand sidebar at www.nysoclib.org to see what's new.



One of the recent UK books.



An illustration from the John Sharp Collection.



1900 The Annual Report boasts of a telephone connection.



1917 Sarah Parker Goodhue gives the Library a magnificent gift.

1842 The Library guestbook records a visit from Charles Dickens. Ralph Waldo Emerson conducts six lectures on “The Times” in the Library’s ground-floor lecture room. Walt Whitman is a member of the audience.

1845 Edgar Allan Poe lectures in the building on “Poets and Poetry in America.”

1848, January Library member Herman Melville borrows Louis Antoine de Bougainville’s *Voyage Around the World* as a source for his book *Mardi* (1849). He will later borrow William Scoresby’s *Arctic Regions with a History and Description of the Northern Whale-Fishery* (1820) and keep it out for over a year. *Moby-Dick* is published in 1851.

1856 The Library relocates to University Place and 12th Street, where it remains through the first third of the 20th century. The Library’s first Annual Report is issued.

1868 Trustee Robert Lenox Kennedy adds the Hammond Collection to the Library’s holdings. The remains of a lending library from Newport, Rhode Island, the Hammond Collection contains many rare Gothic novels. Read more about the Hammond Collection at www.nysoclib.org/collection/hammond-collection.

1900 The Library installs its first telephone and advertises it on the cover of that year’s Annual Report.

1907 Marion King, born Marion Morrison, joins the staff. She will fill several positions over the next 43 years. After her retirement, King writes *Books and People* (1955), the definitive history of Library and reading habits in New York City in the first half of the 20th century.

1917 Sarah Parker Goodhue (Mrs. Charles Goodhue) dies, leaving the Library a generous bequest of funds, books, art, and china. The money will allow the Board to purchase the Library's current building at 53 East 79th Street. Mrs. Goodhue's china is permanently displayed in the Members' Room, and her portrait hangs in the Circulation Hall opposite the main elevator. The Library's bequest society is named in her honor.

1928 Willa Cather joins the Library, remarking to the desk staff, "I'm by way of being a writer."

1936 The Library purchases its current home on 79th Street. It was built in 1917 as the residence of John Shillito Rogers and his family. More about the move can be found at www.nysoclib.org/events/library-moves-uptown-70-years-79th-street-1937-2007.

1937 Edith Hall Crowell becomes the first female Head Librarian. Among her first acts is to recatalog the collection according to the Dewey Decimal Classification System.

1941, December Miss Crowell evacuates a number of rare books to Skidmore College in upstate New York. Fearing air raids as America enters World War II, the Library encloses the skylight over the main stairwell. During the war, the Library will lend its space for Red Cross classes and provide some free memberships to European refugees.

1954 The Library celebrates its 200th anniversary with a dinner for Board members and friends.

1966 Arnold Whitridge becomes Chair of the Board, a position he holds until 1979. The Third Floor reading room is named in his honor after his retirement.

1973 The theft of 435 Audubon prints is discovered. Head Librarian Sylvia Hilton tracks down almost all the missing prints, which have been sold to galleries in New York and London.

1978 Mark Piel becomes Head Librarian.

1995 The first New York City Book Awards jury is convened. It presents the first Book of the Year award to Kenneth T. Jackson's *The Encyclopedia of New York City* in the spring of 1996.

1999, June The Library's website, www.nysoclib.org, is launched.

2000 Graphic design firm Pentagram creates the Library's logo, based on the plaque by Paulanship on the front of the building.

2003 The Young Writers Awards are presented for the first time.

2004 The Library celebrates its 250th anniversary with a season of special events for children and adults. Mark Piel retires after 26 years as Head Librarian.

2006 Mark Bartlett becomes the 20th Head Librarian.

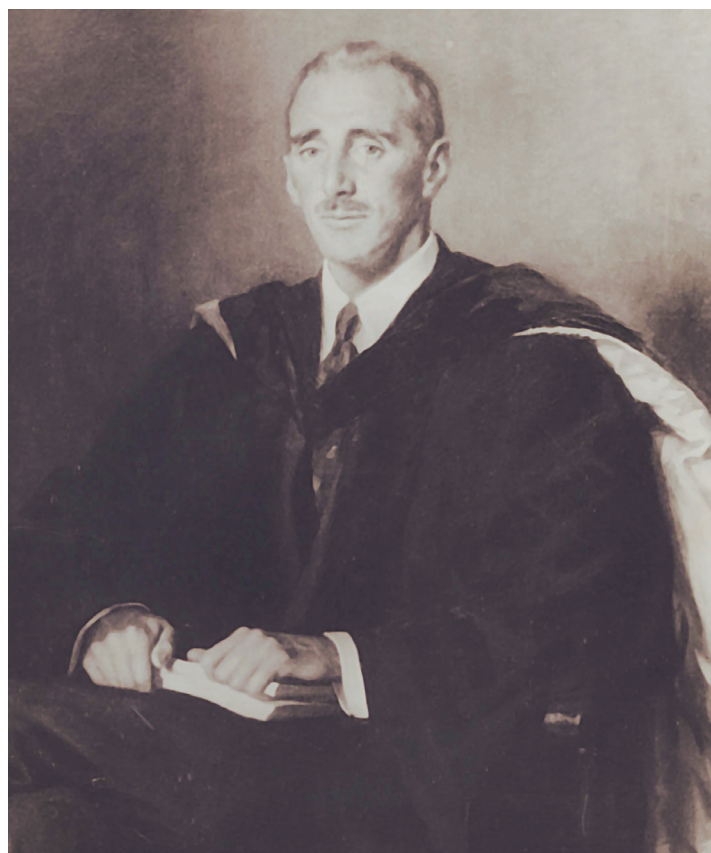
2007 The Assunta, Ignazio, Ada and Romano Peluso Exhibition Gallery opens.

2010 A major renovation expands the Third, Fourth, and Fifth floors and restores the beautiful Second Floor skylight. A gift from the Estate of Marian O. Naumburg makes the Library wheelchair-accessible.

2013 Barbara Hadley Stanton becomes the first female Chair of the New York Society Library.

If you enjoyed this article, we recommend the book *The New York Society Library: 250 Years*, edited by Henry S.F. Cooper Jr. and Jenny Lawrence, which contains many more historical anecdotes, facts, and images. Copies are available by request at the Circulation Desk.

STAFF MEMBERS KATHLEEN FOX AND SARA HOLLIDAY COMPILED THIS ARTICLE.



1966 Arnold Whitridge becomes Chair of the Board.

From the Western Front and Beyond: The Writings of World War One

Opening Night

For the launch of our 2014 exhibition, *From the Western Front and Beyond: The Writings of World War One*, on January 29, the Library offered a one-night-only display of books from the collection and special items loaned by Library members and friends. Here are some of the artifacts with notes by curator Harriet Shapiro. The exhibition continues through November 15 in the Peluso Family Exhibition Gallery.



Eliot Lee Ward (1893-1964). Library member Nancy Berry's father is pictured here in a 1917 portrait wearing his World War One ensign's uniform. Ward was assigned to the *U.S.S. Waters*, a destroyer that patrolled the northwest Atlantic. According to Mrs. Berry, the destroyer's captain suggested officers bring their golf clubs on board so they could play golf when they got to Cork, Ireland. Ward liked to say that he and his shipmates went to war to play golf in Cork. *Loan of Nancy Ward Berry*.



Frontispiece from Joseph Felix Bouchor, *Souvenirs of the Great War (1914-1915) From Pictures Made in the Field by an Eye-Witness*. Lyons: Librairie "La Renaissance," 1918. Collection of The New York Society Library.

Photo by Karen Smul

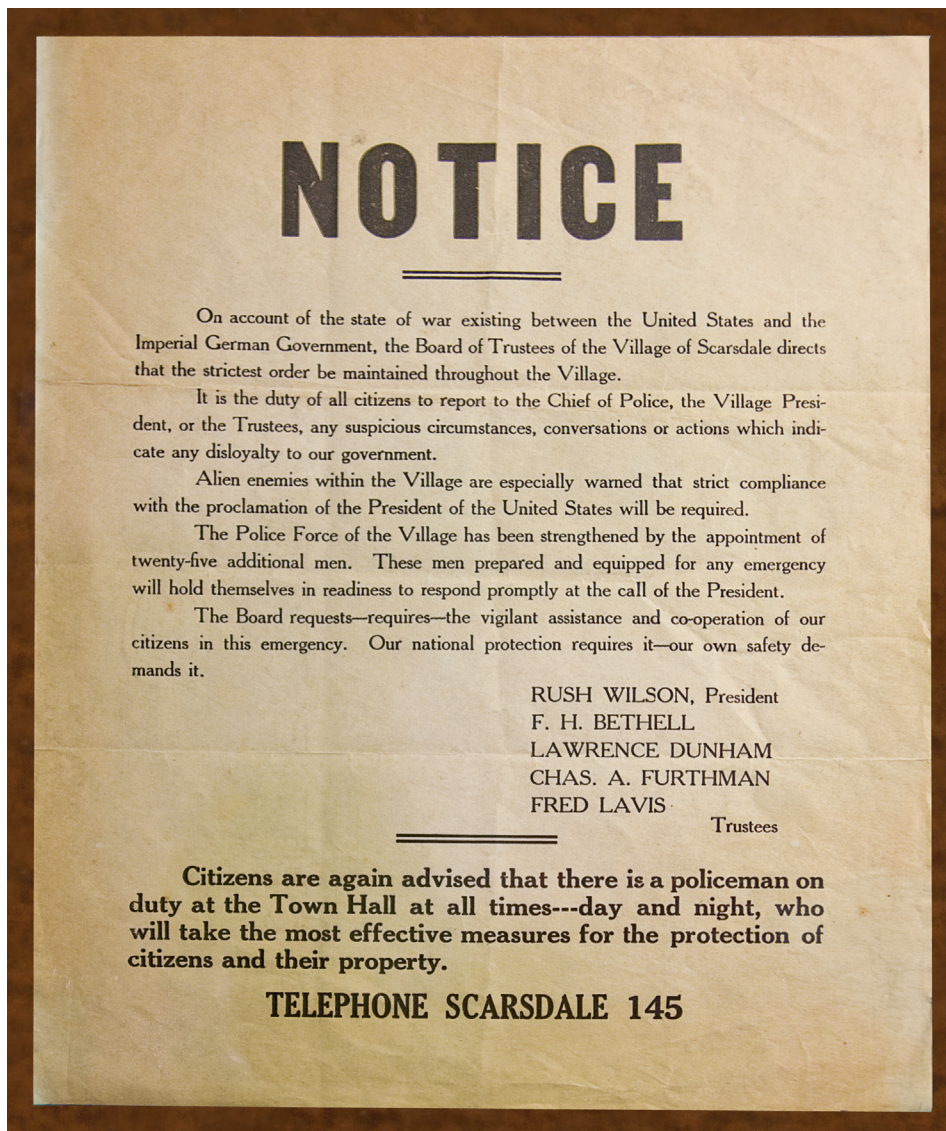


Top: William Walter Berger in Toulons, France, October 6, 1918.

Right: World War One dog tags, commemorative medal, lapel pin and battle ribbon belonging to William Walter Berger (December 16, 1890-March 12, 1962). Berger enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1917. During the war, he worked on the staff of General Pershing in Tours, France. *Loan of Josephine Berger-Nadler.*



Photos on this page by Karen Smul



World War One public notice to citizens of Scarsdale, New York, directing that the strictest order be maintained throughout the village. *Loan of Byron Dobell.*



One of a pair of cast-iron commemorative bookends depicting Rheims Cathedral, damaged September 1914 by German shellfire. Incised on the back of the bookends is a brief history of the cathedral, founded in 1211. Presented in the early 1920s to Gertrude Lowe by Herbert Hoover. Lowe, who worked for the American Relief Administration in Paris, was the aunt of Library member David Garrard Lowe. *Loan of David Garrard Lowe.*



World War One tin soldier. *Loan of Edmée B. Reit.*

Photos on this page by Karen Smul



This undated photograph of Wilton Loyd-Smith was taken during World War One. In the summer of 1916, Loyd-Smith attended the first officers' training camp at Plattsburg, New York. He saw active service as Captain of Field Artillery in the 4th Division, A.E.F. during the Second Battle of the Marne and took part in the Battle of St. Mihiel and the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. In August 1918 he was promoted to Captain of the General Staff. Loyd-Smith was the grandfather of Library member Jenny Lawrence. *Loan of Jenny Lawrence.*



A treated fabric gas mask, with dog tags and medals. The bottle (upper left) held mustard gas; inserted in a shell, it would burst on impact. *Collection of Andrew Spooner.*



Undated World War One photographs of Corporal Jacob Kaufman, a member of the First Infantry Division. The memorabilia belonging to Kaufman (1889-1973) includes the Purple Heart, two medals, two dog tags, and the "Big Red No. 1" shoulder patch. Jacob Kaufman was the father of Library member Gerald Kaufman. Jacob Kaufman never spoke of his war experiences, but his son believes they were extraordinary. *Loan of Gerald Kaufman.*

Photos on this page by Karen Smul

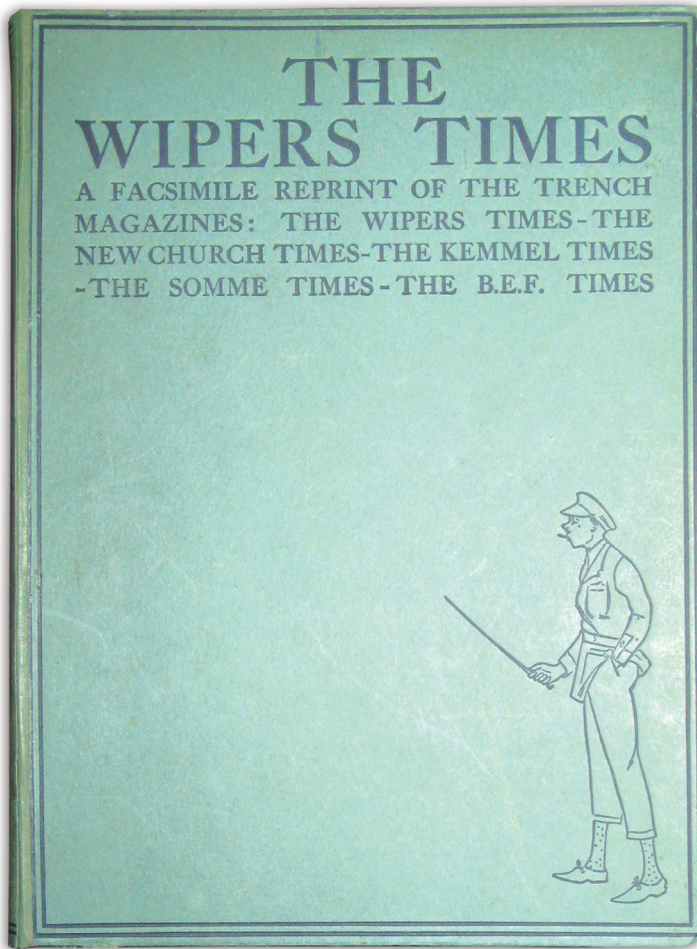


Photo by Karen Smul

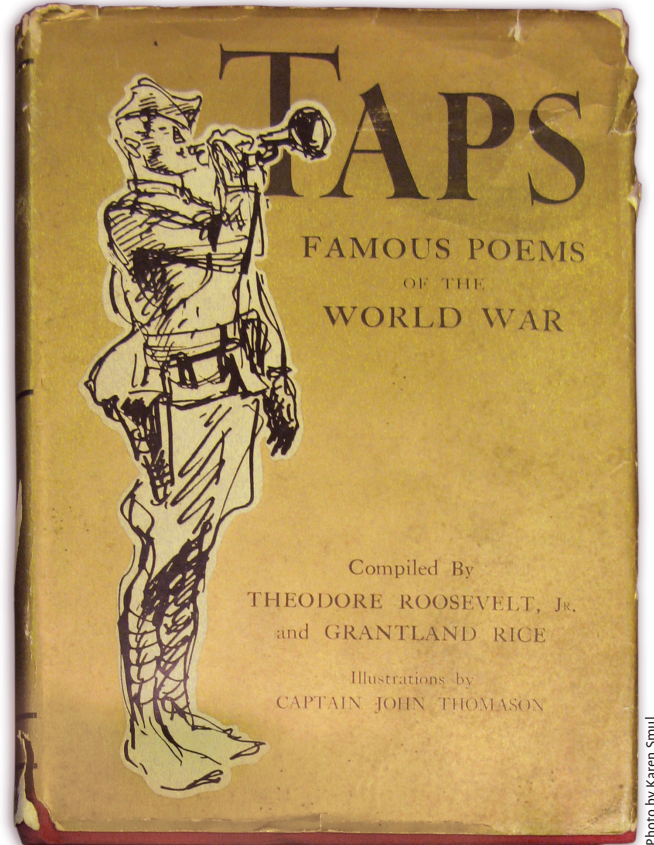


Photo by Karen Smul

Taps, Famous Poems of the World War. Compiled by Theodore Roosevelt Jr. and Grantland Rice. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1932 *Loan of Constance and Theodore Roosevelt.*

The Wipers Times, A Facsimile Reprint of the Trench Magazines: The Wipers Times, The New Church Times, The Kemmel Times, The Somme Times, The B.E.F. Times. London: Herbert Jenkins Limited, 1918. "Wipers" was the British soldiers' term for the battlefield near Ypres, Belgium. *Collection of The New York Society Library.*



Left: New Testament, Pocket Testament League 1917(?) Inside front cover: printed message, including signature of President Woodrow Wilson. *Loan of Patricia O'Toole.*

Right: *The Book of the Homeless (Le Livre des Sans-Foyer)*, edited by Edith Wharton. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916. *The Book of the Homeless* was sold for the benefit of the American Hostels for Refugees and the Children of Flanders Relief Committee. *Loan of Martin Hutner.*

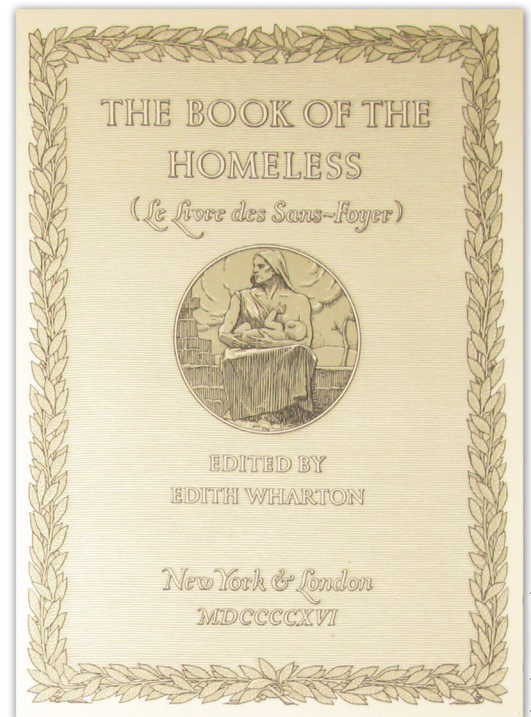


Photo by Karen Smul



Uniform of a British nurse; World War One postcards and correspondence. *Collection of Andrew Spooner.*



Photos on this page by Karen Smul

British infantry uniform tunic with soldier's whistle, watch, and compass. A bullet hole is visible above the hem on the bottom left. *Collection of Andrew Spooner.*

Photo by Karen Smul



Photo by Karen Smul



Top: World War One Victory Girl poster. *Loan of Edmée B. Reit.*

Left top: Versailles Peace Medal 1919. Awarded to the Right Hon. Huth Jackson (1896-1966) for his efforts on behalf of peace at the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. The Hon. Huth Jackson, who was the youngest director of the Bank of England, was the grandfather of Library member Hugh Fremantle. *Loan of Hugh Fremantle.*

Left: Iron Cross and two other World War One medals awarded to Dr. Theodor Schwedenberg (1876-1952). Dr. Schwedenberg, grandfather of Library trustee Timothy N. Wallach, served during World War One on the Eastern Front. Before the war, Dr. Schwedenberg, who was born in Germany, was the personal physician of Prince Bernhardt von Buelow, Chancellor of Germany from 1900 to 1909. After the war, Dr. Schwedenberg was a consulting physician to the American and British consulates in Berlin. Dr. Schwedenberg moved to the United States in 1939. He was the medical director of E.I. du Pont de Nemours Co. until his retirement in 1948. *Loan of Timothy N. Wallach.*

Book Recommendations

Travel and Exploration

Library staff are always happy to help you find your next great read. Recommendations on many topics can be found on our website, from the left-hand sidebar or at www.nysoclib.org/collection/recommended-books.

Over 260 years, the Library has built a rich and varied collection of travel and exploration books dating from antiquity through the 21st century, describing journeys from the tropics to the poles, from well-heeled, carefree grand tours to harrowing tales of endurance and deprivation. Below you will find some recommendations from Library staff for your next armchair journey. Destinations range from 80 miles away on the NJ Turnpike to the deepest Amazon jungle, but the only mode of transportation required is our trusty stacks elevator.

***The Pine Barrens* | John McPhee (1968) 917.49 M**

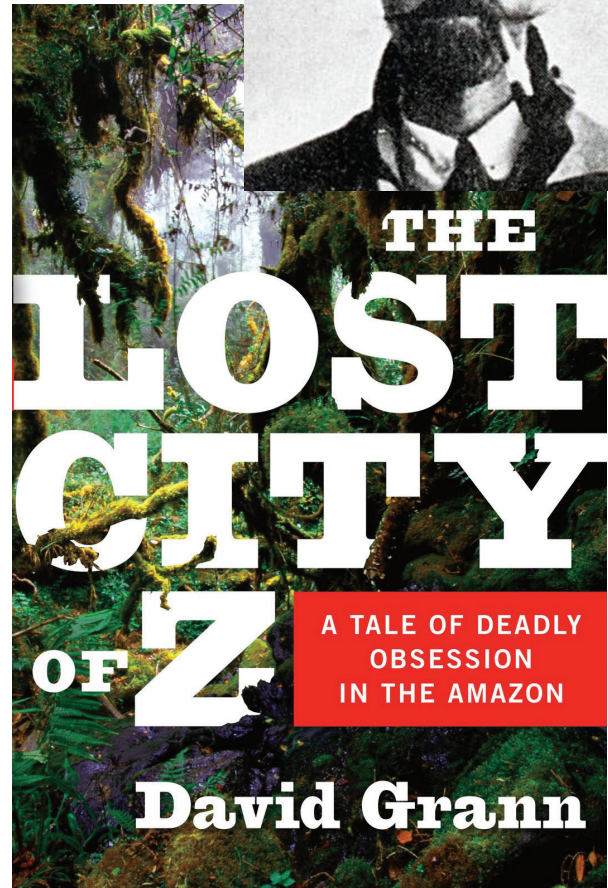
In the most populous state in the nation, New Jersey's vast Pine Barrens region is nonetheless still as open, uninhabited, and mysterious as it was when McPhee wrote this book. Rare pygmy pitch pines, carnivorous plants, Pine Barrens tree frogs (found only here, sounding like honking geese), as well as the misunderstood "Pineys" who live and work in the region are all found in McPhee's glorious narrative.

***A Week at the Airport: A Heathrow Diary* | Alain de Botton (2009) 387.7 D**

Most travelers rarely stop to explore or think about the "non-place" where many journeys begin and end. In this slim volume, de Botton makes London's sprawling Heathrow Airport his destination as the airport's first "writer-in-residence". He spies on travelers—poignantly observing two lovers departing—and converses with everyone from security personnel to the airport's chaplain, while reflecting on the nature of our global society. You may see Newark Liberty International Airport in a whole new light.

While I have probably recommended these books before, they still remain my favorite travel narratives ever so I feel compelled to include them (again): *An African in Greenland* by Tété-Michel Kpomassie (919.8 K) and *The Unconquered* by Scott Wallace (980.1 W).

—Carolyn Waters,
Assistant Head Librarian



***The Lost City of Z: A Tale of Deadly Obsession in the Amazon* | David Grann (2009) 918.1 G**

David Grann's book has everything you could possibly want in an adventure story: cannibals, wild animals, secret maps, flesh-eating insects, and a swashbuckling hero ready for the challenge. Colonel Percy Fawcett was the last of the great Victorian explorers. His exploits were so outlandish that Arthur Conan Doyle would model the hero of *The Lost World* on him. In 1925, he returned to the Amazon with only his son and a friend in an attempt to find a city that he called "Z," but that most called El Dorado. Many times before, Fawcett had entered the Amazon and fallen out of contact, only to reappear months later. Not this time. David Grann travels to the Amazon himself to recount Fawcett's adventures and solve the mystery of his disappearance and of the lost city of Z. Grann is a fish out of water, and his struggles through the Amazon further highlight the bravery and daring of his subject, a real-life Indiana Jones.

—Patrick Rayner,
Acquisitions Assistant/Circulation Assistant

In the Land of White Death | Valerian Albanov; translated from the Russian (2000) **919.8 A**

“One should not poke one’s nose into places where Nature does not want the presence of man.”

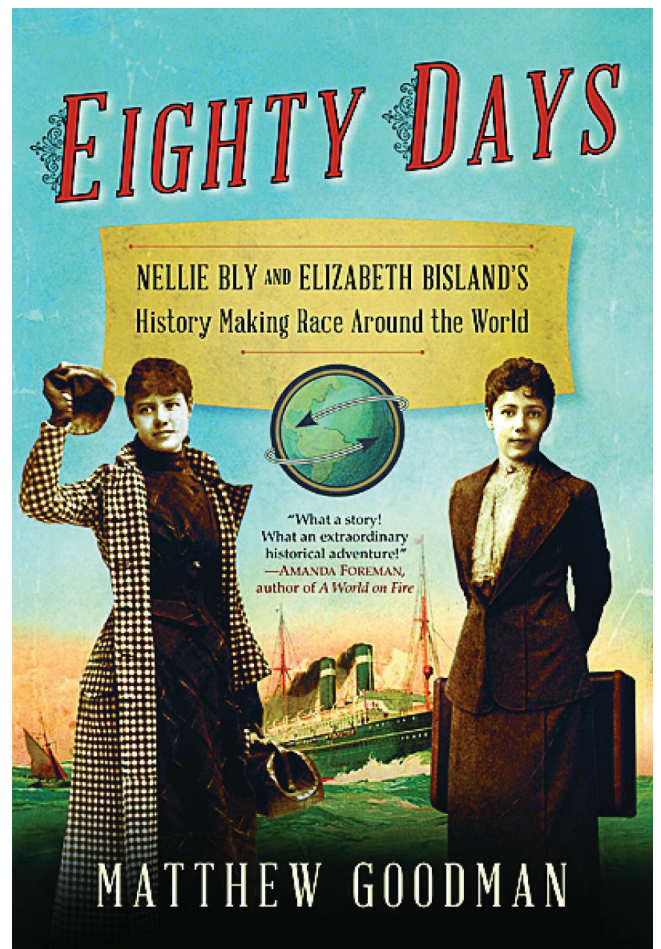
If you enjoy books of polar exploration such as Alfred Lansing’s *Endurance: Shackleton’s Incredible Voyage* (919.9 L) and Apsley Cherry-Garrard’s *The Worst Journey in the World* (919.9 C), check out the comparatively overlooked *In the Land of White Death* by Valerian Albanov (first published in 1917). Searching for new Arctic hunting grounds, the *Saint Anna* set sail from Russia in August 1912 and was soon trapped in ice in the Kara Sea. Nearly two years later, Albanov and thirteen others finally left the *Saint Anna* and set off across the ice for Franz Josef Land, a ninety-day, 235 mile march of remorseless hardship and terror, with only an outdated map to guide them. The crew endured starvation, walrus attacks, sickness, and more. Only two survived. Albanov kept a daily record of the journey, and it is on this diary that his lean, suspenseful, book is based. An incredible leader and skilled navigator, Albanov was also an excellent writer. One comes away from this unforgettable book filled with admiration for his resilience and resourcefulness. For more historical tales of extreme exploration, the vivid retellings in *Cassell’s Tales of Endurance* (U.S. title: *Off the Map*) by Fergus Fleming (910.9 F) will keep your eyes glued to the page and make you thankful to be safe at home.

—Steven McGuirl,
Head of Acquisitions

Armenian Sketchbook | Vasily Grossman; translated from the Russian (2013) **891.7 G**

In September I traveled to Armenia to see the early Christian architecture there. Before my trip, I picked up Vasily Grossman’s *Armenian Sketchbook*. A Jewish writer born in Ukraine, Grossman was a novelist who also worked as a journalist, covering some of the most devastating moments of the mid-twentieth century: the battle of Stalingrad, Nazi death camps, and the injustices of life in Stalinist Russia. After the KGB confiscated the manuscript of his masterpiece, *Life and Death*, Grossman retreated to Armenia, taking a job as a fiction translator. During this trip he wrote *Armenian Sketchbook*, a series of reflections on the landscape (solid rock, everywhere, everything, rock!), the people, the cognac, and the day-to-day of the trip. His Armenian story is vivid and loving, but his digressions on the nature of memory and impressions, his feelings as a linguistically bankrupt tourist, and his daily thoughts and moods are truly profound. The book is now one of my favorites in any genre because Grossman writes so well about a fundamental experience of travel. Far removed from the familiar, in the company of strangers or even all alone, one sees oneself.

—Erin Schreiner,
Special Collections Librarian

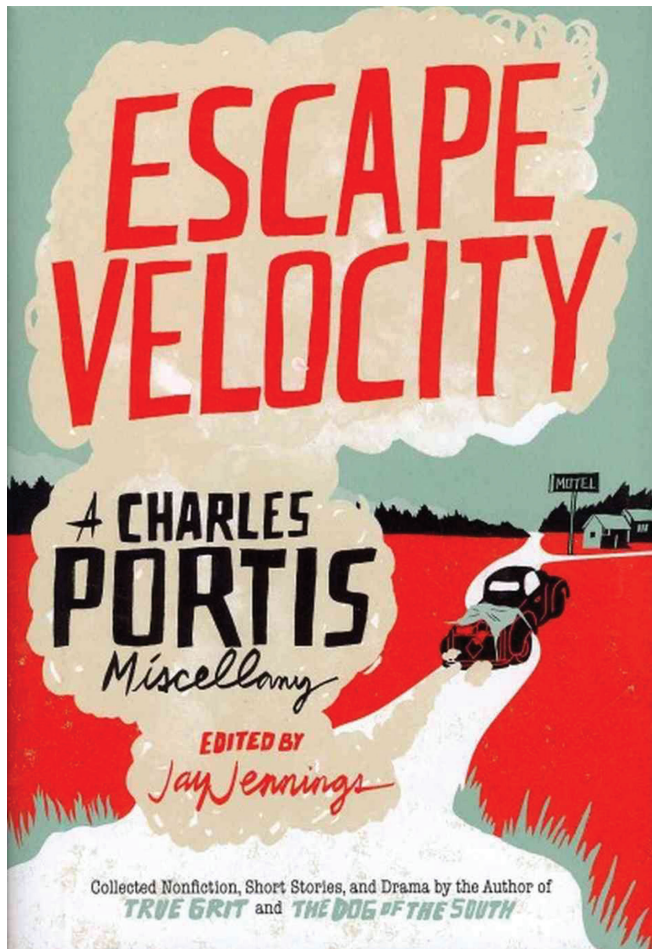


Eighty Days: Nellie Bly and Elizabeth Bisland’s History-Making Race Around the World | Matthew Goodman (2013) **910.4 G**

On the same day in 1889, two pioneering women journalists set off from New York in opposite directions. Nellie Bly was born in Pennsylvania and established a new kind of investigative journalism. Elizabeth Bisland was born in Louisiana and wrote primarily about literature. Bly’s goal: beat Jules Verne’s fictional record of travelling around the world in 80 days. Bisland’s goal: beat Nellie Bly. Bly’s and Bisland’s differing backgrounds and personalities shaped the way they travelled and what they appreciated. Through the press coverage of the journeys and the women’s journals, Matthew Goodman provides two very different views of the world from two very different women.

The Lunatic Express: Discovering the World...via its Most Dangerous Buses, Boats, Trains, and Planes | Carl Hoffman (2010) **910.4 H**

Carl Hoffman decided to experience travel the way that so many people do: out of necessity, rather than for pleasure. The author sought out the most dangerous transportation options—the airlines with the worst safety records, long-distance buses in South America that routinely plummet from the cliff-side roads they travel on, the ferries in Asia that all too often sink simply because they are so overloaded—and



lived to tell the tale. Along the way, we meet the fascinating and incredibly friendly people he encounters. This book is a call to adventure and a demonstration of how extraordinarily far one can still get from our modern civilization despite its global reach.

—Matthew Bright,
Catalog Librarian/Systems Assistant

Escape Velocity: A Charles Portis Miscellany | Charles Portis (2012)
820.81 P

The title *Escape Velocity* admits to the gumption Southerners can never quite summon to stray too far from home for too long. However, in the short piece “Motel Life, Lower Reaches,” Portis (an Arkansas writer widely famous for *True Grit* and cult-famous for his flights of comic genius) finds a noble dignity and poignant tactility among the threadbare towels, defective cooling units, mysterious smells, sickly lighting, and diner-fried country steak that comprise the bargain traveler’s humble existence. Much of his oeuvre—especially the novels *Norwood* and *The Dog of the South*—features an idiosyncratic troupe of ramblers and dreamers leaving their comfort zones. They tour the highways and byways of the heartland and those of that other America (Central); cross paths with nomadic con men and loquacious freeloaders;

and prove—to equally humorous effect—the heights and hypocrisies of their self-proclaimed perceptiveness.

—Brynn White,
Bibliographic and Systems/Digital Projects Assistant

Children’s Books

Planning a trip to Europe with the kids, just back from one, or merely in need of some sofa sojourns? Then check out any of Miroslav Sasek’s vintage *This is...* series exploring cities near (NYC) or far (London, Paris, Rome). If your children are eager early readers, also try Tim Egan’s *Dodsworth* series (Juv-YR E) featuring the title character encountering the sights of New York, Paris, and Rome, all the time chasing down his wayward quacking sidekick. Finally, for older girls, there are the diaries of Melanie Martin, by Carol Weston (Juv-F W), chronicling family trips to Italy, Holland, Spain, and back home in Manhattan. Wherever you’re bound, whatever the age, these adventures are sure to entertain young readers on the go.

—Susan Vincent Molinaro,
Children’s and Interlibrary Loan Librarian



53 East 79th Street
New York, NY 10075
www.nysoclib.org

T. 212.288.6900
F. 212.744-5832

This newsletter is available
in electronic form at
www.nysoclib.org/sites/default/files/pdf/news2013-07.pdf



The Peluso Family Exhibition Gallery