

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

William R. Cagle
(1933-2017)

"Enthusiasm." The word, carved on a small wooden plaque on the bookshelf behind Bill Cagle's desk at the Lilly Library, serves as a fitting description of Bill's approach to books and to life. Whether in his book buying, his sharing of the library's treasures with interested visitors, his conversations, or his interest in good food and drink, Bill's enthusiasm was apparent and infectious.

After undergraduate studies in English at UCLA and service in the U.S. Army in Paris, Bill studied bibliography at Oxford with F.W. Bateson and Herbert Davis. In 1960, he began work at the Huntington Library as assistant to the librarian, and also returned to UCLA as a student in the newly-founded School of Library Service, which had recently been established under the leadership of Lawrence Clark Powell. After completing his studies in library science, he left the Huntington in 1962 to become librarian for English in the Indiana University Libraries. In 1967, Bill moved a few hundred yards southwest to the Lilly Library, where he would spend the rest of his professional career. In his new position as Assistant Lilly Librarian, Bill worked closely with Lilly Librarian David A. Randall, whose years in the antiquarian book trade and close relationships with collectors and booksellers made him a well-known and popular figure in the book world.

Randall was very knowledgeable in many aspects of books, particularly American and British literature, but he was not a trained librarian, and after the relative independence he enjoyed in the trade, he had little patience for some of the more formal organizational requirements and duties of a large university library system. It thus fell to Bill to share administrative responsibility for the operations of the library, but as always, Bill's enthusiasms were also strongly directed to the library's collections rather than only to its management.

One of the areas of the collection that Bill wanted to develop in depth was modern literature, and he soon introduced a system of standing orders by which newly-published books written by a selected list of British and American authors would be sent to the library as soon as they were issued. To accomplish this, Bill established arrangements with Robert A. Wilson of the Phoenix Bookshop in New York for American books, and Bertram Rota in London for British books. The British and American lists eventually totalled more than six hundred names, as new authors came on the scene and others came to Bill's attention. When asked about his standing order arrangement, Bill would always liken it to laying down a good wine cellar and to selecting the best of the current vintages. Not all of the choices might stand the test of time, but with books, even the "mistakes" would usually turn out to be interesting, since these were the authors who were thought to be worthy of collecting when the books were published. After a half-century of standing order activity, which continues today, the library now holds an enviable collection of modern literature, which could only be duplicated at a cost far higher than the publication prices paid over the years.

Bill was interested in a great many modern authors, but Joseph Conrad always received Bill's closest attention, and he focused his bibliographical studies on Conrad's works. Early in his career, Bill wrote "The Publication of Joseph Conrad's *Chance*" (*The Book Collector*, Autumn 1967, pp. 305-322), and he also did a great deal of research toward a Conrad bibliography, which, unfortunately, was never completed. But, Bill was always generous in his responses to queries, and he never hesitated to share his unfinished 1972 typescript *Bibliography of Joseph Conrad*, which remains, until the future publication of a full Conrad bibliography, the most useful source of information on many of Conrad's publications.

Bill compiled and sent to a few booksellers want lists of selected nineteenth- and twentieth-century British and American literary works which he hoped to add to the Lilly Library's already-strong collections. He also compiled another more extensive want list of French literature of the eighteenth- to mid-twentieth centuries, which represented a new collecting area for the library. Josiah K. Lilly, Jr. had gathered a number of high spots in this field, but Bill thought that the library should have a much more comprehensive collection, and he set out to build it systematically. When he introduced his idea to the Parisian booksellers he visited, they asked if he wanted these books in the form in which the French preferred them, i.e., in tasteful and appropriate morocco bindings, or in the original wrappers, which they described as "condition Américaine." Bill made the decision to collect as the French did, and over the next thirty years, through his want lists and frequent bookseller visits, he transformed the library's collection of French literature into one of the strongest in the United States.

In 1977, following David Randall's death, Bill became Lilly Librarian, and for the next two decades, he was able to focus even more of his attention on expanding the library's collections into new areas, including literary archives, film and popular culture, modern designer bookbindings, and gastronomy. He greatly enjoyed travel, and his frequent excursions with his wife, Terry, to visit booksellers and collectors were invaluable in bringing exciting and interesting books and manuscripts to Bloomington. Bill dealt with a large number of booksellers over the years, but he had many favorites, including Ralph Sipper and Ron Randall in Santa Barbara; Peter Howard in Berkeley; Bob Wilson and Justin Schiller in New York; Maggs, Quaritch, and Heywood Hill in London; Kulgin Duval and Colin Hamilton in Pitlochry; Pierre Berès in Paris; Walter Alicke in Vaduz; and Jacques and Ghislaine Quentin in Geneva.

Bill maintained many of his contacts after his retirement from the Library in 1997, and after a few years in Maine, Bill and Terry moved to Paris, where he happily spent the rest of his life. He never lost his interest in building the library's collections, and until shortly before his death, he continued to send detailed and perceptive suggestions for acquisitions, which arose from his daily habit of catalogue reading. His enthusiasm for books was apparent in all of his recommendations, and when we were able to add something special, as was the case in the July 2013 Sotheby's sale of the first part of the Joseph Conrad collection of Stanley J. Seeger, when the library acquired the copyright edition in parts of Conrad's *Nostromo*, he toasted our success along with us. Bill Cagle was a great bookman, and his legacy can be found at the Lilly Library, where his three

decades of devoted collecting will continue to shape and benefit research and teaching at Indiana University for centuries to come.

We request that this memorial tribute to William Cagle be presented to the members of the Bloomington Faculty Council and that it be preserved in its minutes and archive. After its presentation, copies of the memorial resolution should be sent to members of his family.

Joel Silver
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Indiana University Bloomington