



The Patrons' Post

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California State University Fullerton**

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Literary Pilgrimages

by Albert R. Vogeler

For hundreds of years people have felt the urge to do honor to great writers by visiting their homes, their haunts, and their graves, by walking the paths they trod, by looking at the world they saw. Of course the same urge has been associated with artists, composers, statesmen, saints, and others of great achievement. But authors, as a group, predominate in inspiring memorialization. Such literary pilgrimages may be deeply personal, serious and scholarly, or merely a part of casual, commercialized cultural tourism.

Literary historians and biographers are of necessity literary pilgrims, and their desire to connect with their subject's milieu may seem obsessive. My wife Martha and I have engaged in many literary pilgrimages both serious and casual for five decades. In pursuit of her biography of Frederic Harrison, she and I sought out the London church where he was baptized and checked the baptismal record; dined at a hotel, once his childhood home, on the 100th anniversary of his wedding reception there; visited each of the five houses he occupied during his adult years, from Tudor manor to country cottage; went to his law office in Lincoln's Inn and the Church of Humanity he helped found; and

gazed reflectively at the urn containing his ashes in the chapel of Wadham College, Oxford. It seemed obvious to us that familiarity with each of these sites was essential to understanding his life and work.

In 1985 I spent two weeks traveling in the desolate mountains of western Iceland with a small party of scholars, all members of the William Morris Society, who were there because *he* had traveled there a century before. In 1991 Martha and I searched the steep medieval streets of Taormina and finally identified the house D.H. Lawrence briefly occupied and where he wrote “Snake.” And in 1997 we stood on a country road near Arras at 9 am on the 9th of April because on that spot a German artillery shell had mortally wounded the poet Edward Thomas precisely eighty years before.

How many pilgrims and tourists have trod the floorboards of Jane Austen’s house in Chawton, Surrey; or in London sought out number 48 Doughty Street, now a museum, where Dickens wrote *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby*; or paid homage to George Eliot in Highgate Cemetery (a close neighbor there to Karl Marx); or tramped through the Lake District to visit Wordsworth’s Hawkshead, Grasmere, and Rydal; or nodded respectfully at Henry James’s neat brick house in Rye; or navigated Rome’s busy Spanish Steps to glimpse the dying Keats’s last abode; or ambled down Prague’s Golden Lane to find the house where Kafka visited his sister; or searched in vain for 221b Baker Street, where the fictional detective, not his creator, lived?

Even in the absence of corporeal remains, tombs and graves may inspire visitors: we may be deceived about their contents. As a young college graduate I visited Drumcliff churchyard near Sligo on the West coast of Ireland to locate Yeats’s gravestone with his famous lines, “Cast a cold eye/on Life, on Death./ Horseman, pass by!” Little did I know—nor did anyone else at the time—that Yeats was not there or that his remains were lost forever somewhere in a French cemetery. And in Florence the same year, in the Santa Croce, I stood reverentially before the monument to Dante, ignorant of the fact that he is entombed where he died, in Ravenna.



Westminster Abbey presents pilgrims with the prospect of just such ignorant error—unless they have done their homework. Are visitors to this national shrine in the actual presence of the mighty dead, or merely of names cut in stone? The Abbey has held the entombed remains of monarchs and prelates for a thousand years and, after Chaucer in 1400, of authors as well. Jonson and Johnson are here, as are Tennyson and Browning, Dickens and Kipling—but not very many other notables.

Dozens of authors are there in name only. Memorial plaques set in the walls and in the floor, mostly in “Poets’ Corner,” remind us that Shakespeare and Marlowe, Milton and Pope, Blake and the

Brontes, Coleridge and Scott, Wordsworth and Keats, and even our near-contemporaries Eliot, Auden, and Dylan Thomas are the nation's literary heritage. Almost all have been accommodated under the encompassing canopy of Christianity. But the greatness of Shelley (atheist) and George Eliot (Humanist) won them entry despite their heterodoxy. I have a vivid memory of the emplacement of the George Eliot memorial in 1980, when the invited guests, expecting a lecture, were electrified by an exalted chanting from on high of her Positivist poem "O may I join the Choir Invisible."

Oscar Wilde's tomb in Pere Lachaise Cemetery, Paris, is the most visited destination in that Valhalla of cultural icons, and this may not be only because of the familiar story of his flamboyant notoriety and tragic downfall. Jacob Epstein's tomb sculpture of a hovering androgynous Assyrian angel, which somehow echoes Wilde's unsettling glamour, may help account for the fact that lipstick and graffiti constantly deface the stonework, requiring installation of glass shielding. He is surrounded by good literary companions: Moliere, Balzac, Proust, Colette, and Gertrude Stein (with, inevitably, Alice B. Toklas). A once famous philosopher's grave brought us first to Pere Lachaise, but now only scholars know his name: Auguste Comte, founder of Positivism and the Religion of Humanity. Few pilgrims visit his grave or his statue at the Sorbonne, but his house near the Odeon is a museum which welcomes the occasional academic researcher. For years in London Martha and I paid an annual visit to the site of the Church of Humanity established in Bloomsbury by his English disciples—alas, now an office.

Much loved works of Shakespeare and Dickens have made their fictional worlds part of the imaginative landscape. Perhaps we have visited or dream of visiting the Forest of Arden, or the field of Agincourt, or Verona, or Elsinore. We will never find what Shakespeare created in these real yet mythic places, but the magic of their names is sufficient to render them sites of pilgrimage. So too is that of "Shakespeare's Globe Theatre," which has not existed since the seventeenth century but whose recreation in 1997 attracts a constant flow of tourist-pilgrims. "Dickens World" in Chatham, Kent, a commercialized theme park, demonstrates that quaint fabrications of fictional places can satisfy the public's interest in cultural tourism—the least serious kind of literary pilgrimage.

My two most exotic visitation sites are associated with men of action who also qualify as significant writers. Here the pilgrimage was part of a larger travel agenda, a voyage to the remote islands of the South Atlantic in 1997. On St. Helena I saw the lonely and empty tomb of Napoleon, who was interred there for nineteen years before Paris reclaimed him for the ages. Later, on the sub-antarctic island of South Georgia, I stood with my small party of fellow travelers in the windswept Grytviken whalers' cemetery at the granite gravestone of the legendary Antarctic explorer Ernest Shackleton, and toasted "the boss" with a tot of rum.

Such far-ranging expeditions may not be needed in order to establish a connection with admired writers. All over London the round Blue Plaques on their residences—discreet, standardized, minimal—tell us they once lived there. And in a single library, such as the Huntington, we can commune with them in an intimate way by scrutinizing their manuscripts. In a sense, too, writers live in our minds when we belong to the Shaw or Conrad or Wells or D.H. Lawrence or Edward Thomas Societies, attend their conferences, go on their field trips, and read their newsletters. If, for example, we subscribe to the quarterly *Gissing Journal*, we honor the novelist by sharing his experiences and interests, hopes and travails.

Beyond the diverse meanings of literary pilgrimage I've mentioned here is another I have not touched on at all. The best way to pay our dues to the authors we admire is to make the short and simple pilgrimage to their printed pages.



Activities Report

By

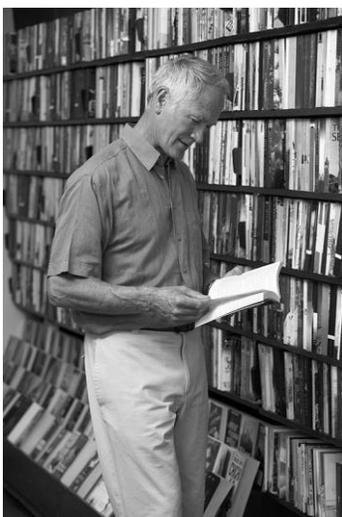
Howard Seller and Lis Leyson

The Patrons of the Library have presented two speakers so far this year. On Saturday, January 28, John Rabb, who hosts the KPCC radio show *Off Ramp*, talked about how live radio works and provided a demonstration of the challenges of reporting from the scene of a story. Our second lecture, on Saturday, March 24, was given by Narda Zacchino, who has had a long and distinguished career in journalism. Ms. Zacchino discussed the role of media in a democracy. Both lectures were followed by a lively question/answer period.

On Friday, April 27, the Patrons visited the CSUF Tucker Wildlife Sanctuary in Modjeska Canyon. We will meet at the Visitors' Center for a guided tour of the 9 acre nature preserve. The tour lasted for approximately 90 minutes.

This year's annual meeting of the Patrons will be on Saturday, June 2 at 2:00 P.M. in room 130 of the Pollak Library. The Patrons will honor Dr. Al Vogeler for his many years of outstanding service to the group. The meeting will also include a panel discussion entitled *The Book: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*. Members of the panel include David Rips, whose extraordinary book collection includes many rare and much desired volumes; Richard Pollard, CSUF librarian; and Chuck Kissel, the manager of the CSUF bookstore.

Please join us for the annual meeting. Admission and parking on campus are free.



Book Sale Center

By June Pollak

The Patrons and Emeriti Book Sale Center is open throughout the academic year, except during the semester finals period and the intersession between the fall and spring semesters. We sell used books, both from donations and excess volumes from the CSUF Library. Our very low prices of \$1, \$2, or \$3 per book are set to help the CSUF students and others purchase books which are usually extremely expensive. All proceeds from sales are designated to purchase books for the Library, vitally important in this era of drastically reduced state funding.

Our hours are 11 to 3 on Tuesdays, 11 to 7 on Wednesdays, and 12 to 4 on Thursdays. Please visit us regularly – new stock is added each week.

As always, we need your donations to keep the shelves stocked in L 199. Please call 657-278- 8625 and ask for Ann Roll in order to make arrangements. If you are interested in joining the Patrons and Emeriti volunteers working in the Book Sale Center, please call June Pollak at 949-661-0463.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By

Nancy Holmes

Membership in the Patrons of the Library offers individuals privileges at the Pollak Library as well as discounts at Titan shops, Marriott CSU Ha' Penny Pub and CSUF performing arts and athletic events. In these times of continuing state budgetary problems, your membership in the Patrons of the Library is of great import as the Patrons provide significant support services to the Library. Said services are book purchases, periodical subscriptions, activities, lectures, operation of the Book Sale Center in cooperation with the Cal State Fullerton Emeriti, plus significant projects such as the cataloging of the Roy V. Bowell Collection of the History of Cartography.

Please maintain your membership in our beneficial organization and urge colleagues, friends, and family to join us. Our website, www.library.fullerton.edu/patrons, identifies events, activities and other relevant information. Also, please feel free to contact me at 714.738.5590 or via e-mail at nancylynnholmes103@gmail.com should you need any additional information

Banned Books in the Zamarano Select

By Gordon Van De Water

The perceptive reader, while going through the recently published *Zamorano Select*, may realize that two volumes on the listing have been banned in the past and that one of them continues to create anger and antipathy even to this day. That novel is *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck. The other title is *Oil!* by Upton Sinclair.

A set of four books in my library fully considers banned books. Edited by Ken Wachsberger, they discuss works which have been banned in the distant past and up to the late 20th century. More than 400 titles that have been censored for their social, erotic, religious or political content are probed. It is easy to understand why some of the titles appear on banned book lists, such as Paine's *Age of Reason*, Ovid's *The Art of Love*, and

Orwell's *Animal Farm*. Other titles made me wonder when I first saw them on the lists until I read why they were objectionable to many private groups and governments. Such titles include *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens, *Doctor Dolittle* by Hugh Lofting, and a book loved by many young readers, Wilder's *Little House on the Prairie*.

Upton Sinclair's *Oil!* was quickly censored when it was published in 1927. It was banned in Boston ostensibly because of negative remarks made about the Harding Administration and its involvement with the Teapot Dome scandal, and also for some sexual explicitness and discussion of contraception. According to Leon Harris, Sinclair's biographer, the real reason for the banning of *Oil!* was "its description of how the oil interests bought the Republican Convention that nominated Harding." Sinclair was actually pleased at the banning since this made for better publicity to sell the book. A photograph of him on the streets of Boston wearing a fig-leaf shaped sandwich board advertising the book appeared in many newspapers and helped make it an international best seller. In addition to being banned in Boston, the book was also banned from public libraries in Yugoslavia in 1929, and because of Sinclair's socialist views, it was consumed in the book-burning flames that were omnipresent in Nazi Germany in 1933. The book was banned as late as 1956 in East Germany since Sinclair was viewed as an "irate foe of communism."

The *Grapes of Wrath* was first published in April 1939. It was an immediate best seller in 1939, and continues to hold a high place in American literature seventy-three years later. Yet within four months of publication it was condemned in many parts of the country. As early as August 18, 1939, it was ordered removed from the library shelves of Kansas City, Kansas, and a few days later the board of supervisors of Kern County, California, passed a resolution banning it. Why? The reasoning now seems arbitrary, even perverse. Most of all, the book was considered a bad influence on the youth of America, specifically because of indecency, obscenity, repugnance in the portrayal of a woman giving birth, and the depiction of life in a "bestial" way. The Kern board justified their banning of the book by saying, "[It] has offended our citizenry by falsely implying that many of our fine people are a low, ignorant, profane and blasphemous type living in a vicious, filthy manner." A prominent rancher even burned a copy of the book, an act which was photographed for *Look* magazine. In addition, the Kern County resolution requested that Twentieth Century-Fox not complete the film production then in progress.

There was a bright light burning in Kern County when Librarian Gretchen Knief courageously wrote these insightful words to the Supervisors:

If that book is banned today, what book will be banned tomorrow? And what group will want a book banned the day after that? It's such a vicious and dangerous thing to begin and may in the end lead to exactly the same thing we see in Europe today.

Besides, banning books is so utterly hopeless and futile. Ideas don't die because a book is forbidden reading. If Steinbeck has written truth, that truth will survive. If he is merely being sensational and lascivious, if all the "little words" are really no more than fly specks on a large painting, then the book will soon go the way of all other modern novels and be forgotten.

The letter had no effect, though the advice was sound then and now. Attempts to ban the book continue across the United States to this day mainly by school boards reacting to complaints from parents and fundamentalist ministers. As can be expected, the reasons continue to be that the narrative is "ungodly" and "obscene". In 1993, in Union City, Tennessee, a parent wanted the title removed from the reading list for his daughter's advanced placement class. He claimed that "Reading this book is against my daughter's religious beliefs." He also itemized the number of offensive passages: God's name taken in vain - 129 times; vulgar language - 264 times; and reference to sex - 31 times. The school board had a two-hour debate on this and other books and then voted unanimously that *The Grapes of Wrath* would remain as a part of the reading list. One of the board members explained:

There were books that could be deemed offensive by spokesmen for any number of religious, political, sexual, and racial agenda. But does that capacity to offend mean these books should be ignored for their ultimate value and thus removed from the list of required reading?

Perhaps we are learning

A Room with a View

By

Farron D.Brougher

Southern California is a good place to live for fans of presidential libraries. There are two less than 70 miles apart, though in the LA basin that can be a three hour drive in traffic. The Nixon Library is in Yorba Linda, near Anaheim, and the Reagan Library is in Simi Valley, about 50 miles northwest of downtown LA. This article is the first of two about California's presidential libraries.



The superlative libraries most often boast about is the size of a particular collection, or the number of unique, rare objects, such as letters or manuscripts. Among presidential libraries the Reagan has bragging rights for the largest object housed within the building: a Boeing 707 that was used by the president as Air Force One. With a wingspan of 152 feet, nine inches, the plane is so massive that the green and white Marine One helicopter in the corner of the observation area ahead of the right wingtip looks like a toy. This aircraft flew former presidents Nixon, Ford and Carter to Cairo in October, 1981 for the funeral of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. In addition to those three, the aircraft served presidents George H. W. Bush, Clinton, and George W. Bush.

With over 50 million documents in the archives, how does the Reagan collection compare to those of other two term presidents of the late 20th century? The Nixon library has about the same number, while the first Bush's collection holds 40 million.

The Clinton archives holdings of 78 million pages is more than fifty percent larger than the next largest collection. And for the first time emails are included, 20 million of them. The numbers aren't in for the second Bush, but according to the library's overview brochure, millions of electronic records will supplement those on paper.

Digitizing documents by the millions is a daunting expense, but fortunately some important ones from the Reagan are online. Although newspapers have been called the first draft of history, the archives may have a stronger claim to that title. Archivist Kelly D. Barton pointed to some literal first drafts among the archive's holdings, including extensively edited versions of Reagan's most famous speeches. The first page of the "evil empire" speech given to the National Association of Evangelicals in March 1983 shows the work of a meticulous writer, Ronald Reagan. On page 7, the president strikes out all but one sentence of a discussion of prayer and religion in the schools, showing he knew the first principle of good writing: less is often more. On June 12, 1981, in the shadow Brandenburg Gate, Reagan spoke the words for which is most likely to be remembered: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." In the earliest of five drafts dating from late May to early June, the first version was flat, wordy and repetitious: "Twenty-six years after the Wall was built, it's time for that wall to come down." The immortal words appear two days later, preceded by a German translation, which somewhat dilutes the impact. After two more drafts, the line takes its final form, followed by a cryptic comment, struck through, "This line in English for the American audience." German text appears elsewhere in the speech, so this may hint at the editor's wise choice to let the words stand alone for dramatic effect.

Not everything in the archives is politically or historically significant, like the list of every film the Reagans watched during the famous presidential downtime at Camp David. While no pattern can be discerned among the hundreds of films, westerns are well-represented. Not surprisingly, the first couple watched "Knut Rockne," on October 24, 1982. And again on October 2, 1987. No surprise either is the relatively small sample of R-rated fare.

For those not inclined to dig through the archives, there is much more to see inside and outside the museum. The view alone is almost worth the trip. A six-ton section of the Berlin Wall, covered in graffiti on the western side, stands behind the library. The president's grave and memorial are on the grounds. The Oval Office is recreated as it appeared during the Reagan years, as are portions of the Rancho Del Cielo, where Reagan was very much a horseman, if not a cowboy. Permanent displays also include an account in Reagan's hand of his attempted assassination, noting that "getting shot hurts."

The website's six-minute virtual tour is a tease because a thorough walkaround takes hours, not minutes. For mid-tour refreshments, visit Reagan's Country Café. There is even a touch of humor in the museum store, quite appropriate for this president, a "Trust but verify" coffee mug bearing the presidential signature.