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Papa Lyman Remembers

Women in Book Publishing and Selling

by Lyman Newlin (Book Trade Counsellor)<broadwater@ag.net>

The Follett family was to have been the subject of this column but as I started to write about it, I discovered that I need more time to research the developments accomplished by the third, fourth, and possibly fifth generations. I had about decided to return to chronology when I read an article in a recent *New York Times* about the appointment of **Anthea Disney** (no relation to you know who) as head of **HarperCollins**. Add this to the fact that I had just finished putting together a list of reference books I intend to promote in March which has been declared "National Women's History Month." Of course, I began thinking about the history of women I have known in book publishing and selling. A brief study of directories substantiated my belief that women in our industry have made a tremendous stride forward in the past generation. The following is not intended as a history as such, rather it is a collection of reminiscences of women I have known and learned from in the course of my experience. I must herewith throw out a challenge to **Nancy Essig** or **Marlie Wasserman** to get cracking on a proper *history of women in publishing*.

Here are some women I remember and to many of whom I am indebted as teachers. I'll try to mention every woman I have known who fills this description but I am sure I will miss some only because my mental data bank does not always come forth with all the information I call for.

I'll begin with **Anna Bond Patterson**, a Sunday school teacher in my boyhood. She was office manager of Chicago's **Economy Book Store**, owned by her brother-in-law, **Laurence Palne**. As I have previously written, **Bonnie Patterson** helped me get my first real job in 1933 when the N.R.A. came into being ... **Sara Smith**. Among other jobs at **Wilcox & Follett Co.**, credit manager was her main one. She always signed her name to collection letters "S. Smith." When asked why she said, "A tough letter signed by a woman wouldn't get as much attention as it should." Sara was barely five feet tall but her collection copy read like it was coming from a Chicago Bear fullback. ... **Margaret Harding** was director of the **University of Minnesota Press** during the forties. I have to guess that Margaret was one of the first, if not the first, female university press director. I will always be grateful to her for being an early u.p. director to publish books on natural history and the outdoors. Some of her best were *Birds of Minnesota* by **Thomas S. Roberts**, MD, and the books of **Francis Lee** and **Florence F. Jacques**. Margaret was succeeded by **Helen Clapesattle**, author of an early u.p. bestseller *The Doctors Mayo*. I have previously mentioned other great Minnesota book women: **Helen L. MacDonald** and **Jane McCarthy** of the Press and **Lucille Clark** and **Elizabeth Dunn** of the **Minnesota Book Store** ...

Emily Schlossberger was an early director of the university presses of Nebraska and Notre Dame. I recall a tepid argument with her concerning a pet peeve of mine: the comparatively high cost ratio of cloth bound to paper bound u.p. books. I still remember her Teutonic-accented reply to the effect that the higher income from hard bound to libraries was used to subsidize lower priced paperbacks for students ... **Leone Stein** at Massachusetts I remember for introducing me to Indian pudding as we discussed her fledgling press over lunch ... I believe **Ann (Reinke) Strong** got her start with Leone ... From **Harding**, **Schlossberger** and **Stein** I progress to **Patricia Fitch** who steered **Ohio University Press** to the acquisition of **Swallow Press**; to my knowledge the first (and only?) merger of a university press and a commercial publishing enterprise.

Directories of twenty years ago listed very few women as directors of university presses. By my count the *1994-95 Association of American University Presses DIRECTORY* names about twenty female directors. This includes **Wendy J. Strothman** of **Beacon Press** (yes, Beacon is a member of AAUP) who has recently joined **Houghton Mifflin** as trade vice president. The list does not include **Marlie Wasserman** as director of **Rutgers**. **Marlie**, a product of the **University of Chicago Press**, who had for several years been the number two person at Rutgers. After a brief hiatus as an editor at **Routledge**, she returned recently to R.U. P. as director ... I have followed **Nancy Essig** from **Columbia**, **Johns Hopkins** and **Virginia** as a marketing expert. I was delighted when Virginia made her its director ... **Audrey Livernois**, was a great choice to succeed **Hillary Marshall** as marketing director of **U. Toronto Press**. About the only argument we ever had was whether Canada and the United States should merge under one government. I'll let the reader decide who took which side ... **Penelope Kaiserlian** came from her native Scotland via **Pergamon** to the **University of Chicago Press** where she is now associate director. I have always been amazed at the powerful marketing program engineered by this soft-spoken, laid-back lady. It goes to prove the contention that you don't have to yell to get things done. (Will you ever learn, Lyman?) ... Unfortunately I have not been as active in dealing with university presses as I once was so I have not had the privilege of working with **Barbara Colson** since she became the marketing manager of **Cambridge University Press**, New York. I had enough experience, however, to applaud her appointment to director of **Cambridge, USA** — the first woman to head a UK-university press in the USA.

Commercial publishing firms have lagged far behind universities in utilizing the brains, temperament and judgment so prevalent in

womankind and so needed in the handling

of knowledge. I don't pretend to be an expert in behaviorism but I had not been in the book industry very long before I began to wonder why the "people" columns of *Publishers Weekly* and other media covering books devoted so little space to women. I soon came to the conclusion that the sex with the best qualifications was being overlooked. Well, the university presses must have agreed — going from two or three to twenty or more directors in twenty years and if you look at the number two positions in the AAUP listings you will soon agree that the next twenty years will see more than one female addition per annum to the highest jobs in u.p. publishing.

I don't have much space left for mentioning women in commercial publishing, but the history of head of firm women in this field is not crowded with names. I can think of few who could be grouped with Ms. Disney as heads of really large commercial publishers. There's **Phyllis Gann**, CEO of **The Putnam Berkley Group**, some of whose companies were of great importance to me in my early years as a bookseller. I wrote previously of how I was **Follett's** choice to become manager of the **Putnam Book Store** at 2 West 45th Street, New York, when Putnam was headed by the great **Melville Minton** who would have sold the store to **Wilcox & Follett** had not the **Womrath** chain made a last minute higher bid. **Grosset & Dunlap** was one of the top suppliers of books acceptable to school library buyers of **Follett Book Company**. Ditto **Platt & Monk** ... Mrs. **Helen Meyer** was, to my recollection, the first president of a top-line trade publisher. When **George T. Delacorte** was the principal of **Dell Publishing**, **Dial Publishing** and several other publishers **Helen** was his chief operating officer. I have just now learned, from research in *Who's Who in America, 1972-73*, that she also served on the board for **Dunellen Press** which had been founded by **Eugene H. Nellen**. I don't believe she was on board when I did some consulting work for Dunellen in the mid seventies. I say this because the great lady and I had a bit of a misunderstanding when I approached her on behalf of a client who was in need of additional capital for his company. I had been led to understand that Mr. Delacorte had scads of money to invest in promising book industry enterprises. The **Dell/Dial** offices were in the brand spanking new **Dag Hammarskjold Plaza**. After overcoming the awe inspired by my first visit to this building, I was ushered into Mrs. Meyer's quite large and imposing private office. Within seconds of our exchange of introductions she pressed a bell button at the side of her desk and

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You Gotta Go to School for That?

Library Uniforms & Nifty Accessories

by Jerry Seay (College of Charleston) <seayt@cofc.edu>

The groundswell of ideas and excitement is staggering. I am, of course, talking about the library uniform concept for members of our august profession. Nearly all of the four people who read this column have sent in ideas for a uniform. As I indicated in my last diatribe, there is a vital necessity for such an identifying garment. I for one am getting tired of having to answer the question, "do you work here" with, "what? do you think they let just anybody sleep at the reference desk?" So, in response to my call, you, my public, have responded.

Jey Wann, Acquisitions Coordinator at **Oregon State Library**, who, by the way, is wearing a nice sweater, a nice wool skirt, and a beat-up pair of Birkenstocks considers the multi-tiered approach. She writes, "I can't come up with an official uniform suggestion, but it reminds me of a former employee here who was concerned that patrons have trouble telling who's on the staff and who's not. Her suggestion was a 3-tiered uniform system: librarians would wear blazers, paraprofessionals would wear (I think) vests, and pages would wear beanies. Whether or not the beanies should include propellers, I don't know. The person who suggested this was a former Army band member, and perhaps that accounts for her coming up with the idea in the first place."

Now this has possibilities, I mean, besides the great propeller idea. Why not distinguish different staff positions by particular dress code or color? Hey, just think of **Star Trek**. (Why do all ideas eventually go back to **Star Trek**?) Remember? Scotty and all the engineering crew wore red uniforms. Most officers wore gold, and medical personnel wore blue. Of course, Spock wore blue as well and that was because ... er ... well, no one really knows. But, with just a glance you always knew how these folks fit in to the grand scheme of things. Imagine such a system in a library ... "No Sir, I'm sorry, but we here at circulation wear green uniforms and that question is obviously one for a blue uniformed reference librarian. Please direct your question appropriately or I shall be forced to beam you out."

Though I grant that the idea of sleek librarians strutting around the library in tight fitting nylon coveralls of various colors is enough to drive one wild, I submit that sensible shoes and a well-placed hair bun would give this

ensemble just the right balance of sexy professionalism. Of course, this assumes that one is trying for sexy professionalism. Alas, not everyone is comfortable with such bold assertions of raw librarian power. Note that this suggestion came from a former employee. Great minds are rarely appreciated.

So, for those seeking a more down to earth look, if somewhat less flashy, **Joan Bartram** of **Salve Regina University Library** in Newport, Rhode Island gives us this idea. She writes, "In the summer of 1968 I received my first appointment as a Collection Development Librarian, I was at the time working at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. My boss was an Englishman, superb bookman, and exemplary eccentric named **John Robert Turner Ettlinger**. Based on his experience as a rare book librarian at Brown he set up an exhaustive training program for me. The first three parts of this training program included work on fermentation (his hobby -- we fermented anything and everything), abandoned schoolhouses in Nova Scotia (he collected them), and the designing of a library uniform."

Joan goes on to say that Mr. Ettlinger put her in charge of designing a library uniform. "The brief he gave me to design the uniforms must be put in further cultural context," she writes. "The man was an old Etonian and graduate of Magdalen College, Oxford who had one dozen Eton ties which he wore in rotation with his three identical navy blue suits. Further, he had been in the RAF during World War II. Predictably, the Public Services Uniform echoed the British school girl look -- white shirt, gray flannel skirt, and "old school tie." The Technical Services uniform was reminiscent of the RAF -- coveralls with the institutional crest emblazoned on the front and the wearers name and position on the back." In the end, disagreement on the right colors to use "torpedoed the entire project," writes Joan. "I continued to wear my Mary Quant minidresses to work and the Reference Department never looked like Victoria Station with its alligators of schoolgirls. Over two decades later I'm still not sure if I'd rather look like a gray poupon bottle, as you suggest, or an English school girl as my mentor envisioned!" Well, though I would tend to think twice before donning English school girl attire, I must admit that the "RAF coveralls"

look does hold a certain appeal to those of us who consider speed-in-dressing when choosing our wardrobe. You can get into and out of those things in seconds, even while wearing sensible shoes. It would combine practical fashion and identifiability for the librarian on the go.

While the above uniform ideas address the problems of librarian and position identification, there is still the problem of our uniform getting across what we do and who we are. Construction workers wear hard-hats and firemen have big boots. These garments are readily identifiable trademarks of their profession. What about librarians?

Erik N. Anderson, Director of **Hanford Technical Library** at the **Pacific Northwest National Laboratory** has come up with a uniform that goes far toward addressing this dilemma. Erik writes, "We know that the age of specialization is gone; we are all generalists. Therefore, to hold our profession together, I propose the Good Librarian's Uniform, Eclectic (**GLUE**). It starts off with smartly tailored khaki pants to express our down-to-business attitude. Add a European cut linen shirt in startling red, reminding one of overseas journal prices. Round off with a corduroy blazer (with elbow patches, of course), demonstrating our strong academic foundation. To tie our rich history to the electronic age, it's topped off with a green eye shade that disguises a 3-D virtual reality headset, which allows us to look into cyberspace and find those non-catalogued electronic-only serials. All unisex, of course."

Eric brings up a great point: **accessories!** What a great way to round out our uniform: a **librarian utility belt**. On this utility belt we would attach all the stuff that we need in our day-to-day librarian work -- things like keys (for digging paper out of printers), and paper clips (for digging keys out of printers), and a flashlight (to see to dig keys and paper out of printers). Just add a handheld computer, a coin changer and, presto, each librarian is self sufficient, fully mobile, and action-packed. Of course, we librarians are already self sufficient, fully mobile, and action packed; but who among us has a nifty utility belt? Now, that, I think you will agree, is reason enough to have a library uniform.

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immediately two men entered the room from a side door. One was bearing a large ledger, the other a sheaf of correspondence. One of these gentlemen was presented as head bookkeeper, the other as credit and collection manager. These boys soon destroyed all hopes of

help. The trouble was that I had not explained the purpose of my call when I made the appointment. Business woman that she was Mrs. Meyer had assumed that I was coming to arrange to pay a rather sizable delinquent account. I believe that Mrs. Meyer learned something from me: don't be too optimistic when making appointments. I learned that **George Delacorte** had other places for his money

besides struggling publishers. Didn't he contribute substantially to the creation of statuary, fountains and amphitheaters in Central Park for the enjoyment of children?

... **Shirley Lambert** was secretary to **Edward Maguire**, sales manager of **G.K. Hall** and I was assistant to **Richard Abel** when we met during a Chicago Midwinter ALA ses-

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sion. From G.K. Hall Shirley did marketing and editorial work for **Pergamon, Libraries Unlimited, and Fulcrum**. Last July she took over the position of editorial director at **Scarecrow Press** from the retiring **Norman Horrocks**. I have frequently had occasion to marvel at Shirley's command of several foreign languages and her savvy in marketing. I predict continued success as head editor of this prestigious publisher ...

In the days when **Wilcox & Follett Co.** owned only a handful of college bookstores, four at Big Ten universities maintained excellent trade book departments. I was business manager of **Follett Book Company** and as such one of the few staff members active in trade book merchandising. Thus I had some input in the direction of branch store trade policies. In 1938 Follett's Illinois book store in Champaign needed a trade department manager/buyer and I was put on the trail of likely candidates. I had come to respect and admire a young trade department clerk in **Kroch's Book Store** on Michigan Avenue, Chicago. (Kroch's had not yet made public its ownership of Brentano's Chicago and the stores were operated separately.) Her name was (and still is) **Elsa Lichtenstein**. Elsa went through the usual hiring gamut and then created and managed the trade department at Follett's University of

Illinois College Book Store. After three years in Champaign, Elsa decided to go to New York and got a job with Follett's number one competitor, of all people! She started at **Barnes & Noble's** retail store at 18th Street and Fifth Avenue. Elsa served under the presidencies of **John Barnes** and **Warren Sullivan** before **Len Riggio**, of **NYU Book Store**, took over ownership. Elsa eventually became head of the art book department of the **Barnes & Noble** store in Rockefeller Center. She retired in 1993 after a career of over fifty years as one of the best known art book people in the business. Her name was and is revered by all publishers of art books past and present.

Any history of women in publishing should probably begin and end with **Sara Miller McCune**. I first knew her as Sara Miller, a very pretty and charming member of Macmillan's sales department. It was she who helped the department out of the jam created by sending a huge shipment of books to a Wisconsin country schoolhouse instead of the intended **University Book Store** in Madison. This created a furor among college store managers but Sara helped settle it at an ABA meeting in Washington. After Macmillan Sara spent time as sales manager of **Pergamon Press** in Oxford, England. Upon her return to America, she married **George McCune** who had been a Macmillan sales manager and together they founded **Sage Publishers** in 1964. After a few years in New York, the business

was moved to California where it has grown to be one of the leading English-language publishers of books and journals in the social and behavioral sciences, with nearly 2000 titles now in print. Since the sudden death of George in 1990, Sara has spent time as a foundation executive, but as chairman of **Sage** she travels to visit its offices in London and Delhi, India while George's son, **David** has taken over as president of the company. Sara has taken part in several **Charleston Conferences**, contributed the first publisher profile to *Against the Grain* (v.1, no.2, June, 1989, p. 28) and also was interviewed in *ATG* (v.5, no.5, November 1993, pp. 32-35).

It is quite possible that I have neglected to mention some of my acquaintances among the top American female publishers. As others come to mind, I'll include a thumbnail sketch in a future column. 🐼

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Who's Who in America. Marquis/Bowker, 1972-73; 1992-93; 1996.

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My thanks to **Janet Domzella**, Director, **Lewiston Public Library** for help with facts about **George T. Delacorte**, garnered from *American Biography*, 1965.

Back Talk
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sitions, URL address maintenance, and preservation functions. Our shelves may be digital, but the work of filling them and keeping them filled continues to be complicated and important. Job security for the information professional is assured.

Lest any of this be interpreted as negative toward the brave new digital world or that I am pining for the good old days when books were books and journals were a fiscal disaster, that is not my intent. I am enthused about the superior access that will be afforded by digital monographs and periodicals, by the whole

new educational opportunities that multimedia will provide, and by the expanded use our special collections will receive. My purpose is to simply point out that from the vantage point of someone who is already involved to a fairly significant degree in the acquisition of digital materials, this new paradigm does not do away with the need for librarians — it demands them.

On the other hand, while our future is assured, we can't just expect to do everything the same. We have to focus on the enduring nature of the functions librarians have always performed: selection from the universe of publication that which is useful and affordable,

working with information providers to secure access to the needed material, providing bibliographic access so that you can find what you want when you want it, providing the setting where materials can be used effectively, training people how to find what they need and how to use it when they find it, preserving today's acquisitions for tomorrow's researchers, planning and budgeting, and dealing with the politics of the supporting institutions so that capital, material, and personnel resources are available to make all of this work. We have work before us. Break up your funeral flower arrangements into nice bouquets for your desks and get back to work. 🐼

Rumors
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doctor was awed that I knew an author in his magazine!

I just had an idea for a new *ATG* column — Arguments I Have Known. The editor would be — ta da — **Lyman Newlin**! The man is amazing! Now he even has an email account <broadwater@ag.net>! Read his reminiscences of women he has known (and arguments he has had) in **Papa Lyman**, this issue, page 67.

Corrections from the Last *ATG* (v.8#1, p. 31 —

Lucretia McClure <LMCL@db1.cc.rochester.edu> says there are

a few typos in her **Op Ed** (v.8#1, p.31). I am sorry, y'all. Now when I look at them I can't explain *what idiot* would have made these mistakes! Here goes. A sentence is left out in the second paragraph: "Medical literature is full of literary treasures as well as elegantly-described science. Librarians had the pleasure of introducing these works to readers and helping students on their way to becoming physicians." And — in the fifth paragraph, five lines from the bottom the sentence should read, "scientists who will chart" (rather than check) And — top paragraph of second column, gleaned and gathered (rather than gleaned and fathered), And, last line of that same paragraph should say, "read and study" instead of "ready and study." There you have it. To paraphrase **Edna St. Vincent Millay**: The person who edits a journal appears before the public with her typos exposed ... 🐼