

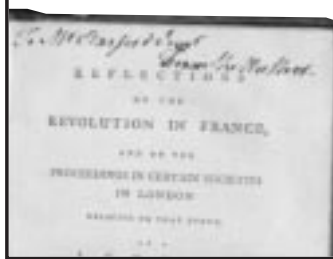
**P**inceton's collection of rare books traces centuries of scholarly pursuit and tracks much of human history, and its cultural heft attracts researchers from around the world. But these holdings also reflect the eclectic interests of

Princeton alumni. That is why the University recently acquired a slim, unassuming volume titled *Halieutica sive de Piscatu*. It is the oldest printed book on fishing — and it builds on an extensive collection of rare angling books donated by Kenneth H. Rockey '16 and Otto von Kienbusch '06.

Over the years, hundreds of collections have been given to the University by alumni with passions ranging from ancient Egypt to the Civil War to, yes, fishing. Firestone Library's Rare Books and Special Collections conserves and often expands the collections, and makes them available to scholars.

**"He was confined to bed and weak, but we talked of his Princeton collection."**

A list that only scratches the surface of offerings includes 7,000 English literary works spanning the 14th through early 20th centuries, from Robert H. Taylor '30; extensive works of the Roman poet Virgil from Junius Spencer Morgan '1888 (nephew of J.P.); and 6,000 volumes by or related to



Victorian novelists, the gift of Morris L. Parrish '1888.

One of the earliest contributors was John Shaw Pierson '1840, a maritime agent for the New York Bible Society. He developed an interest in the Civil War at a time when many Americans preferred to forget it, and although not wealthy spent almost 35 years patiently gathering war-related works — from regimental histories to abolition pamphlets. Pierson's



assemblage, close to 9,000 items, has been tapped by, among others, Upton Sinclair, for his novel *Manassas*, and Princeton's own James M. McPherson, the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian. The gift apparently meant much to Pierson. "I was with him a few days before his death," a rare-book dealer once wrote to University Librarian Julian Boyd. "He was confined to his bed and very weak, but we talked of Princeton and his collection there. Such devotion cannot be forgotten."

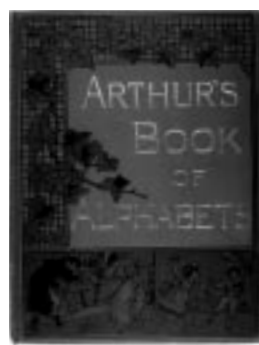
Robert Garrett '1897, long-time University trustee and four-time medalist in the first modern Olympic Games in Athens, also found

texts an appropriate gift for his alma mater. Garrett was particularly interested in the history of writing and script, says Don C. Skemer, Special Collections' curator of manuscripts. One result is that Princeton houses the largest collection of Islamic manuscripts in the Western Hemisphere and such rarities as ancient Egyptian papyri.

Collecting is an avocation many associate with the 19th century, but it has thrived well beyond. A collection of children's literature large enough to fill its own library is the gift of Trustee Emeritus Lloyd E. Cotsen '50, who continues to seek out

illustrated books from every century and country. One of the modern era's great bibliophiles, William H. Scheide '36, houses his preeminent collection of rare books and manuscripts in Firestone. That collection now includes the four oldest printed Bibles.

And there's more. Works of Jewish-American authors as well as poets, Irish and American, come from Leonard L. Milberg '53. An extensive women's history collection was built by Miriam Y. Holden, wife of Arthur C. Holden



'12. And among the library's newest contributors is Bruce C. Willsie '86, who tracks down treasures such as a copy of *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, signed by its author,

Edmund Burke, using E-Bay and other venues.

Then there are the two avid fishermen, Otto von Kienbusch, who enjoyed catching trout in the Catskills, and Kenneth Rockey. Because of them, Princeton has about 150 editions of per-

**Von Kienbusch snagged *The Arte of Angling in a bookstore in London.***

haps the best-loved fishing book in the English language, Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*, and the only copy of the second book in English on the subject, *The Arte of Angling*, discovered by von Kienbusch in a London bookshop in 1954.

Now, too, there's the *Halieutica*, a translation into Latin of a poem by a second century AD Greek poet. The 1478 work, dedicated to Lorenzo "the Magnificent" de Medici, contains descriptions of fishing methods, and sea flora and fauna of the ancient Mediterranean world. There are fish recipes, too. ☺



Counter-clockwise, from left: *Arthur's Book of Alphabets* from the children's collection of Lloyd E. Cotsen '50; Edmund Burke's inscription on a copy of his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, from Bruce C. Willsie '86; illustration from *A Treatysse on Fysshynge Wyth an Angle*, 1496, the oldest printed work in English on fishing, from collection of Otto von Kienbusch '06; Books in the Civil War collection of John Shaw Pierson '1840; [[TKTK]]; Ancient Egyptian papyrus fragment, from collection of Robert Garrett '1897; Bookplate from Sinclair Hamilton '06 collection of American illustrated books; Department of Rare Books and Special Collections reading room at Firestone.

# Calendar of Events

Now to May 18: "Book From the Sky: A Work by Xu Bing," The Art Museum

May 29 to June 1: Reunions

Now to June 1: "Celebrating the Classes of 1943, 1953, 1963, 1978 and 1983," Mudd Library

June 9 to June 19: Alumni College, "Florence to Rome: Frescos and Foreigners." Contact [aagossen@princeton.edu](mailto:aagossen@princeton.edu)

Now to June 29: "Shuffling the Deck: The Collection Reconsidered," The Art Museum

Now to June 30: "The Arts of Asia: Works in the Permanent Collection," The Art Museum

Now to July 13: "The New Vulgarians: New York Pop," The Art Museum

Now to June 15: "The Art of Structural Engineering: The Swiss Tradition," The Art Museum

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