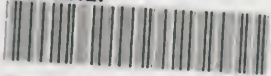


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The Book-plates  
of  
William Fowler Hopson

By  
Charles Dexter Allen



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The Book-plates of  
William Fowler Hopson

By Charles Dexter Allen



**W**ILLIAM Fowler Hopson of New Haven, Connecticut, who is not by the count of years, and still less by his own feelings and in the estimation of his friends, an old man, may yet fairly be called an old-time engraver, as he was among the first to take up the book-plate art in the early years of its recent renaissance, being ready then with some years of experience as a proficient engraver on wood, to appreciate what his art could do for the advancement of the book-plate. Some engravers and many designers of book-plates, whose hurried and numerous efforts,—as well as booklets about them and their works,—find their way quickly and with great frequency to the auction room, remind one of the novelists whose “best sellers” speedily run their course of popularity with a certain public, and then are found in rows on the stands of the second-hand book men as “remainders” to be picked up at fifteen cents apiece by those who discern any inherent value. Mr. Hopson has not worked with feverish rapidity, nor with an eye on the public recognition of his work, but with care and devotion has given his attention to producing designs which carry the message of personality, and to execution best adapted to the work in hand. Engraving on wood, line engraving on copper, etching and aquatint have been used readily and with good judgment, in securing the desired effect. In the seventeen years Mr. Hopson has been engraving book-plates, one of which was spent abroad in complete rest from this line of endeavor, he has made one hundred book-plates. It is safe to say that the owners and users of these book-plates by Mr. Hopson, are as satisfied a body of bookish people, as permanently pleased with the engraver’s interpreta-

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tion of their personal wishes and ideas, and as continuously delighted with their plates as constantly seen in their books, as any one hundred book-plate users anywhere: and this is the best test of work well done.

His work stands another test, secondary but not unimportant, that of the discerning collector who gathers many book-plates and finds it necessary both for convenience and in changing standards of what is desirable, to weed out the negligible and preserve only the truly good. In these moments the plates of Mr. Hopson remain. Many plates which seemed interesting when acquired, come in a few months to raise the query in the collectors' mind, "What did I see in that plate that made me want to keep it?" The book-plates by Mr. Hopson give more instead of less pleasure as the years pass. In looking over the collection of his plates, one realizes soon that a sense of monotony rather frequently felt in the work of many other engravers, does not lay its depressing hand upon his enthusiasm in going completely through the list of Mr. Hopson's work. On the surface this might seem to be due to the pictorial character of the larger number of his plates. Who does not like to look at pictures? Reflection shows that while the pictorial fact, giving its wealth of possibilities of change is an important factor in the sustained interest of his work, other features contribute largely to it, as the absence of the frivolous, the sense of enduring quality each one possesses, the evidence of thought and earnest work, whether in depicting his own designs, or in reproducing those of others, brought to him by clients. Mr. Hopson has worked as faithfully to give full value to the designs of others, as he has to give permanence to his own. Again, there is an inward sense of honor which the observer appreciates as the successful projection of the personality of the engraver into his work, so that each plate lives, tells its story, and loses nothing in repeated examination. Mr. Hopson is happy too, in creating an artistic feeling, in giving form and color to his work. Color, not perhaps considered by many as possible in the engraved book-plate, is in truth a very present and distinguishing mark of his work. Harmony of form and color to scheme and design is noticeable.



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The books in Mr. Hopson's plates are very real, due undoubtedly to his fondness for books, his understanding of them. His interiors are not photographically precise and hard, though often profuse in detail and omitting nothing that adds to the sense of "livableness," to the feeling that the owner delights in these actual surroundings, that his hand has held these very volumes, his eye looked forth from this window upon this stretch of lake or meadow. The genuine spirit of the historical is present in his plates that depict scenes, events or objects of historical importance, and in portraiture Mr. Hopson excels many of his contemporaries, preserving in his portrait plates not only forms and features well remembered but expression and lifelikeness.

Give him full rein to design a book-plate, and it is likely Mr. Hopson will do one of two things: either he will give you a bit of nature, like enough in the Bewick completeness and charm, or he will show the subtle drollery that makes him companionable and makes some of his plates a particular joy. A fondness for the out of doors, a sense of the humorous, a love of books and the fire-side, an absorption in his work, tempered with sufficient periods of play and rest, a loyalty to friends and an unfailing sense of the artistic, can be read in all his plates by those who look with understanding eye and mind.

With a century of book-plates completed, together with other innumerable engravings on wood and copper for books in limited editions or privately published, designs given to friends to commemorate personal events, and the intimate unlisted work that attaches to the live engraver's studio, we look forward with expectation of further delightful work from the graver and the etching needle of Mr. Hopson.

Charles Dexter Allen.





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OF THE  
C. M. B. B. B.

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## List of Mr. Hopson's Book-plates

1892

- 1 W. F. Hopson, New Haven, Conn.  
Pictorial. Etched. Never used.

1893

- 2 Free Public Library of New Haven.  
Architectural. Seal. Engraved on wood.  
3 George Dudley Seymour, His Book.  
Seal. Engraved on wood.  
4 Ex Libris, W. F. Hopson, New Haven.  
Pictorial. Etched.

1894

- 5 Ex libris, George Dudley Seymour.  
Pictorial. Etched.  
6 Ex libris Imaginaire et Suppose Adam de 4981 B.C.  
Pictorial. Soft ground etching.  
7 Ex Libris Society (Monogram of the Society).  
Intaglio half-tone plate. Never used.

1895

- 8 Ex libris, May Peabody, Oakend.  
Literary. Etched.  
9 Ex libris, E. G. Stoddard.  
Library Interior. Etched.  
10 Ex libris, Josephine E. S. Porter.  
Pictorial. Costume. Etched.  
11 Ex libris, Margaret Van Zandt.  
Library Interior. Engraved on copper.  
12 Ex libris, Frederic J. Libbie, Boston.  
Library Interior. Engraved on copper: aquatint.  
13 Ex libris, Gustave R. Sattig.  
Literary. Photo-engraved on zinc from pen drawing.  
14 John Howard Payne.  
An "exlibris imaginaire" published by an autograph dealer  
of New York. Etched: aquatint.

1896

- 15 The Blackstone Public Library. Branford, Conn.  
Pictorial. Engraved on wood.  
16 Ex libris, Frederick Graham & Annie E. Aylward.  
Book Pile. Based on design by W. E. Home. Engraved on  
wood.  
17 Ex libris, Stewart Means.  
Pictorial. Etched: aquatint.  
18 Ex libris, Maria M. Sterling.  
Book Pile. Engraved on wood

- 
- 19 W. F. Hopson.  
Pictorial. Etched: aquatint.
- 1897
- 20 Ex libris, Augustus J. Phillips.  
Library Interior. Etched: aquatint.
- 21 C. S. Mersick.  
Armorial. Engraved on copper.
- 22 Ex libris, Adrian Hoffman Joline.  
Allegorical. Engraved on copper.
- 23 Ex libris, John S. Wood.  
Book Pile. Engraved on wood.
- 1898
- 24 Ex libris, Frederick Wells Williams.  
Architectural. Chinese. Engraved on wood.
- 25 Ex libris, Alexander Wolfgang Mack.  
Pictorial. Etched: aquatint.
- 26 Rachel Norton, Her Book.  
Pictorial. Engraved on wood from drawing by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue.
- 27 Ex libris, J. J. H.  
Pictorial. Engraved on copper.
- 1899
- 28 Ex libris, Joseph R. Ensign.  
Interior. Musical. Etched: aquatint.
- 29 Ex libris, Joannis M. Berdan.  
Pictorial. Etched, from design by R. M. Crosby.
- 1900
- 30 Library of the New Haven Colony Historical Society.  
Pictorial. Engraved on wood.
- 31 Charles Dexter Allen, His Book.  
Portrait. Literary. Engraved on wood.
- 32 Ex libris, N. J. D.  
Pictorial. Classic. Engraved on copper.
- 33 Ex libris, William Lyon Phelps.  
Library Interior. Etched: aquatint.
- 1901
- 34 Charles H. Ferry.  
Pictorial. Etched: aquatint: some engraving.
- 35 George William Beatty, His Book.  
Book Pile. Engraved on copper.
- 36 Ex libris, Henry Whelan, Jr.  
Pictorial. Etched.
- 37 State Library, Hartford, Connecticut.  
Pictorial. Etched: some engraving.

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- 38 Yale University Library.  
Book Pile. Engraved on wood.
- 39 Ex libris, C. M. W.  
Armorial. Engraved on copper.
- 40 Ex libris, Robert M. Chamberlain, In Memoriam.  
Book Pile. Engraved on copper.
- 1902
- 41 Ex libris, Louis N. Wilson.  
Pictorial. Etched, from drawing by F. B. R.; aquatint and engraving.
- 42 Ex libris, Frederick Graham Aylward.  
Book Pile. Engraved on wood. (An alteration of No. 16).
- 43 Ada M. Hopson, Her Book.  
Pictorial. Literary. Etched: aquatint.
- 44 Middlesex County Historical Society, Connecticut.  
Seal. Engraved on wood.
- 45 Frank Addison Corbin, His Book.  
Pictorial. Literary. Engraved on copper: some etching.
- 46 Ex libris, Melissa A. Carter.  
Pictorial. Engraved on copper.
- 47 Ex libris, Joseph Gulrey Woodward.  
Pictorial. Historical. Etched.
- 48 Ex libris, Frederick W. Skiff of West Haven.  
Literary. Engraved on wood.
- 49 Caroline M. Smith.  
Pictorial. Musical. Engraved on copper, from design by Joline B. Smith.
- 50 Ex libris, Anna L. Curtis.  
Pictorial. Literary. Engraved on copper: some etching.
- 51 Alice Morgan Crocker, Her Book.  
Book Pile. Engraved on copper.
- 52 Gift of Charles J. Hoadley and George E. Hoadley.  
Pictorial. Historical. Etched and engraved on copper.
- 53 Colin M. Ingersoll, Jr.  
Architectural. Etched.

1903

- 51 Arthur W. and Emma L. T. Cole.  
Pictorial. Literary. Etched, with engraving.
- 55 Eli Whitney, His Book.  
Pictorial. Literary. Engraved on copper.
- 56 Ex libris, J. Herbert Johnston.  
Pictorial. Engraved on copper, reproducing a Bewick fishing picture.
- 57 George Burton Adams, His Book.  
Pictorial. Historical. Etched.
- 58 Nathan S. Bronson, His Book.  
Book Pile. Engraved on copper.

ADA M. HOPSON.  
HER BOOK.



BRONXIDE  
1898

"-TONGUES IN TREES,  
BOOKS IN THE RUNNING BROOKS,  
SERMONS IN STONES,  
AND GOOD IN EVERYTHING."

1910

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- 59 Manila Memorial, Ohio Alcove.  
Pictorial. Patriotic. Engraved on copper, from design by  
Mrs. Mary E. Rath-Merrill.
- 60 William A. Beardsley, His Book.  
Pictorial. Literary. Engraved on copper.
- 61 Byers Memorial Hall, Sheffield Scientific School.  
Literary. Etched: some engraving.
- 62 Norris G. Osborn, His Book.  
Pictorial. Etched: some engraving.

1904

- 63 Ex libris, William Brewster. Mount Carmel.  
Pictorial. Engraved on copper, from design by Joline B.  
Smith.
- 64 Ex libris, Stephen Whitney.  
Pictorial. Engraved on copper.
- 65 Kenneth Dodge Wood, His Book.  
Pictorial. Etched.
- 66 Emma Catherine Renold, Her Book.  
Pictorial. Engraved on copper.
- 67 Ex libris, Sara Everett Hayden.  
Portrait. Library Interior. Engraved on copper.
- 68 Margaret Mather Merriman.  
Pictorial. Literary. Engraved on copper.
- 69 Ex libris, William C. Atwater.  
Library Interior. Engraved on copper.
- 70 Ex libris, Caroline Rutz-Rees.  
Pictorial. Etched.
- 71 Edna Holbrook Barger.  
Pictorial, reproducing a bust by Palmer. Engraved on  
copper.
- 72 Ex libris, Herbert and Mary Y. S. Heathfield.  
Pictorial, reproducing a figure from Library of Congress  
mural decorations by J. W. Alexander. Engraved on  
copper.

1905

Mr. Hopson was abroad this year. He engraved  
no book-plates.

1906

- 73 Carnegie Johnson.  
Urn. Armorial. Engraved on copper
- 74 Helen Parsons, Her Book.  
Pictorial. Etched.
- 75 Ex libris, Morgan Bulkeley Brainard.  
Pictorial. Etched: some engraving.
- 76 Lydia Brewster Hubbard.  
Pictorial. Colonial Interior. Engraved on copper.





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1907

- 77 Brush Mineralogical Library, Sheffield Scientific School.  
Mineralogical. Engraved on copper.
- 78 Ex libris, Eben Jackson.  
Literary. Process plate from Mr. Hopson's design.
- 79 Christine Wilson, Her Book.  
Pictorial. Literary. Engraved on copper, from pen drawing by Mrs. Albertine Randall Wheelan.
- 80 New Haven Public Library, Philo Sherman Bennett Book Fund.  
Portrait. Pictorial. Engraved on copper.
- 81 Ex libris, Alice V. Payne.  
Library Interior. Engraved on copper.
- 82 Ex libris, Frederick Wallis Davis, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Patriotic. Pictorial. Engraved on copper.
- 83 Wilhelmina B. Cole.  
Literary. Old Chippendale frame. Engraved on copper.
- 84 Ex libris, John T. Manson.  
Pictorial. Etched.
- 85 Ex libris, Louis Henry Bristol.  
Pictorial. Engraved on copper.
- 86 One of the books of John C. and Lucy E. Ives.  
Portraits. Library Interior. Etched.

1908

- 87 Ex libris, Max Mailhouse, M. D.  
Pictorial. Engraved on copper: some etching.
- 88 Ex libris, Maribel Schumaker.  
Library Interior. Engraved on copper, from design by Mrs. Mary E. Rath-Merrill.
- 89 Ex libris, Alverd E. Winchell, M. D.  
Pictorial. Etched: some engraving.
- 90 Frank Anderson (and) Louise Finney Merrick, Their Book.  
Pictorial. Interior and landscape. Engraved on copper.
- 91 Connecticut State Library. Hartford. The collection of Charles T. Wells.  
Portrait. Engraved on copper.

1909

- 92 The Watkinson Library. Hartford. The Collection of Charles T. Wells.  
Portrait. Electrotpe of No. 91 with new lettering on upper ribbon.

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- 93 Curtis Memorial Library, Town of Meriden, Connecticut.  
Pictorial. Engraved on copper, reproducing view of city from photograph.
- 94 Edward S. Marsh, His Book.  
Pictorial. Literary. Engraved on copper.
- 95 Elizabeth Clarke Hull Chapter, D. A. R. Ansonia, Conn.  
Pictorial. Naval. Engraved on copper.
- 96 Kappa Alpha Theta. May Sexton Agnew Memorial Book Fund.  
Literary. Engraved on copper. (University of Kansas).
- 97 Ex libris, Jane Hollister Hale.  
Pictorial. Engraved on copper from water colour design by Mrs. Albertine Randall Wheelan.
- 98 Ex libris, John S. Wood.  
Pictorial. Etched.
- 99 White Collection. Established by bequest of Aaron White. (Law Library, Hartford, Conn.)  
Portrait. Half-tone with some graver work.
- 100 W. F. Hopson.  
Pictorial. Engraved on copper.
- 1910
- 101 Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Conn.  
Pictorial. Architectural.
- 102 Ex libris, Marburg.  
Pictorial. Library interior.









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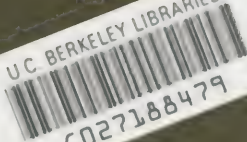
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