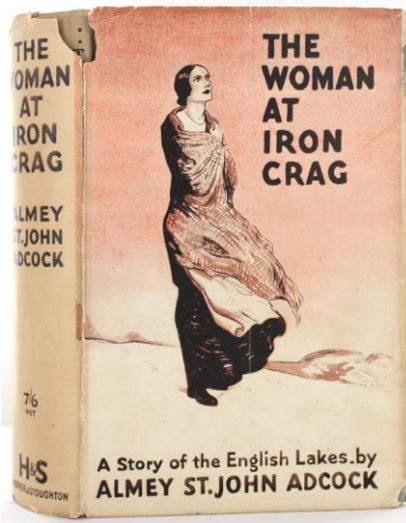




BLACKWELL'S RARE BOOKS.

MODERN FIRST EDITIONS: 25 RECENT ACQUISITIONS.

May, 2025.



INSCRIBED TO HER BROTHER-IN-LAW

1. Adcock (Almey St. John) *The Woman at Iron Crag*. A Story of the English Lakes. Hodder & Stoughton, 1934, FIRST EDITION, pp. 320, crown 8vo, original light blue cloth, lettered in black to upper board and backstrip, the latter sunned with slight lean to spine, a few light marks to cloth, bottom corners bumped, faint browning to inner margin of free endpapers, attractive pictorial dustjacket, a little chipped, some splitting to upper joint-fold, good **£200**

Inscribed by the author at time of publication, 'To Sidney, With love from Almey. July 1934'.

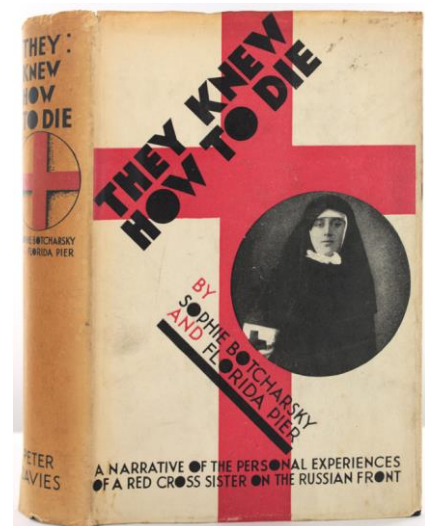
The recipient is likely Sidney Webb, her brother-in-law - married to the author's sister, the children's author Marion St John Webb (they were the daughters of Arthur St John Adcock).

Scarce in the dustjacket.

2. Botcharsky (Sophie) and Florida Pier. *They Knew How to Die*. Being a Narrative of the Personal Experiences of a Red Cross Sister on the Russian Front. Peter Davies, 1931, FIRST EDITION, occasional faint spots, pp. viii, 311, crown 8vo, original black cloth, backstrip lettered in gilt, edges slightly spotted, dustjacket price-clipped, a little browned to backstrip panel and borders with some very light soiling, gentle creasing at extremities, very good **£575**

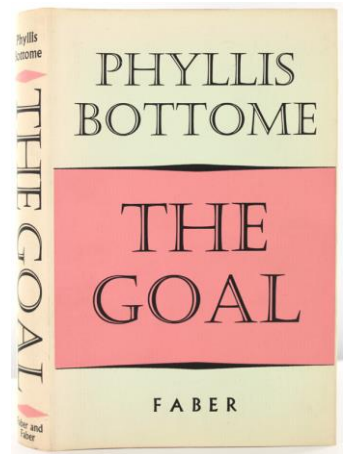
An unflinching account of nursing on the Russian Front, the narrative running from the advance into Prussia in October 1914 to the February Revolution of 1917. The author was the daughter of Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, an anti-Bolshevik activist and writer, who took her family to Britain in the wake of the Revolution - Botcharsky dedicates the work to her stepfather, the linguist Harold Williams.

Her co-author, the improbably-named Florida Pier, had married a Scot and moved to Britain from the US - establishing herself as a playwright. By the time of this work, she had divorced James Scott-Maxwell, and was about to embark on the next phase of her career - as a Jungian psychoanalyst.



3. Bottome (Phyllis) *The Goal*. Faber and Faber, 1962, FIRST EDITION, 6 monochrome plates, pp. 206, crown 8vo, original red cloth, backstrip lettered in gilt, partially against a black ground, a few small spots to fore-edge, dustjacket slightly faded around the backstrip panel, very good **£100**

Scarce. A memoir by the novelist, published the year before her death, covering the years from the Great War - during which she married Ernan Forbes-Dennis, up to their discipleship of Alfred Adler. It is a storied life, including encounters with Ezra Pound, whom she knew well in her early years, Ian Fleming, who attended their school at Kitzbühel, Nigel Dennis, their nephew, and numerous other 'poets, philosophers, scientists, Presidents and Prime Ministers'.



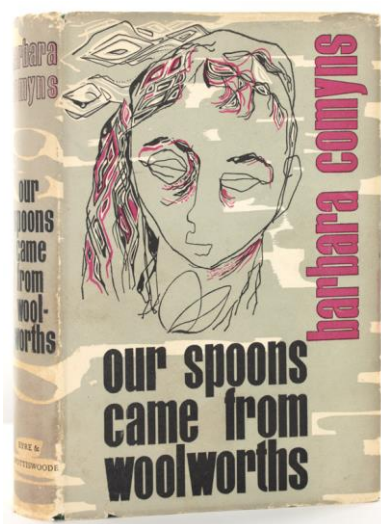
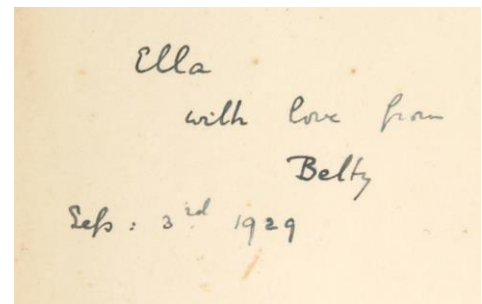
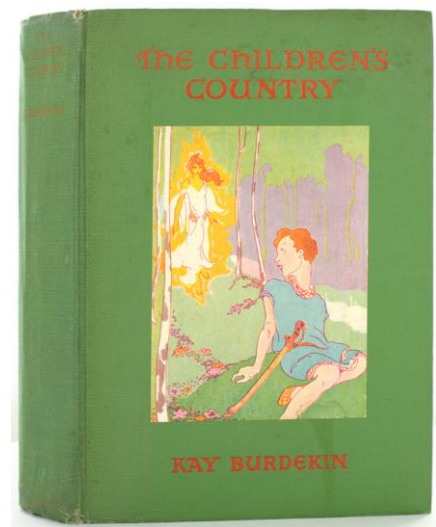
4. Burdekin (Kay [Katharine, also known as 'Murray Constantine']) *The Children's Country*. New York: William Morrow, 1929, FIRST EDITION, frontispiece and 7 colour-printed plates, these (uncredited, but by Beth Krebs Morris) with a sliver of waterstaining at head, occasional very light spotting, pp. viii, [1], 262, 8vo, original green cloth, backstrip and upper board lettered in orange, the latter with repeat of one of the plates laid down, backstrip lettering rubbed, light wear at tips and a couple of faint marks, edges slightly toned with small waterstain to top edge, a few faint spots to endpapers, good **£400**

Inscribed by the author on the flyleaf, using her nickname: 'Ella, with love from Betty, Sep: 3rd 1929'.

The recipient was the author's Cornwall-friend, artist Ella Naper - close also to the author's sister, Rowena Cade, who built and founded the Minack Theatre in the cliffs of Porthcurno.

Scarce. The author's only children's book, not published in the UK; it is an unusual fairy tale, with a characteristically progressive approach to questions of gender: two Scottish children, Donald and Carol, adventure in Fairyland, finding there the distinction between boys and girls dissolved.

Burdekin would later write under the pseudonym Murray Constantine, notably 'Swastika Night' - her work continuing to challenge conventions around gender roles.



5. Comyns (Barbara) *Our spoons came from Woolworths*. Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1950, FIRST EDITION, pp. 223, crown 8vo, original green cloth, backstrip lettered in gilt, top edge a trifle dusty, dustjacket with a striking (though unsigned) pictorial design, backstrip and rear panels a little toned, the latter slightly dustsoiled at head, lightly chipped to extremities, later price-sticker to front flap, very good **£1,500**

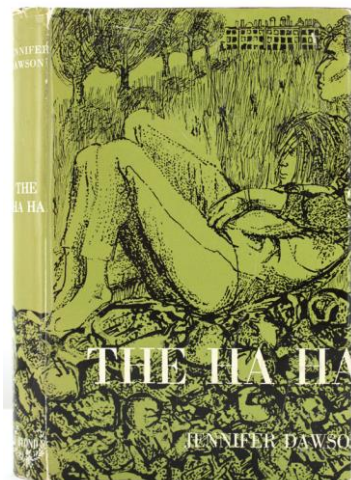
Scarce. The author's second novel, subsequently brought back into print by Virago, and more recently NYRB; Graham Greene, a friend of her husband Richard Comyns Carr, was her early champion, and it was through his offices that her work - the present volume and its predecessor, 'Sisters by a River' - was placed with Eyre & Spottiswoode.

The novel is a thinly-veiled portrait of her first, unhappy marriage to the artist John Pemberton, played out against the backdrop of 1930s bohemian

London. The printed note preceding the text, 'The only things that are true in this story are the wedding and Chapters 10, 11 and 12 and the poverty', largely functions to protect the identity of Rupert Lee, eminent in the London Group of artists that included Comyns and Pemberton (Lee also being the latter's uncle), and portrayed in the work as Peregrine, with whom the protagonist Sophia Fairclough has an affair (as Comyns had with Lee, resulting in a daughter).

6. Dawson (Jennifer) *The Ha-Ha*. Anthony Blond, 1961, FIRST EDITION, pp. 176, crown 8vo, original brown patterned-paper boards, the backstrip lettering in gilt, dustjacket slightly rubbed and nicked at extremities, very good **£450**

A scarce Oxford novel - the winner of the James Tait Black Memorial Prize in the year of publication and of note as the earliest of three important novels on mental illness at the beginning of this decade, followed by Kesey's 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest' and 'The Bell Jar' by Sylvia Plath (as Victoria Lucas); indeed, Plath is known to have read the present work at the beginning of 1963 (the year 'The Bell Jar' was published), asking her friend Jillian Becker to collect it for her from her flat in Primrose Hill.



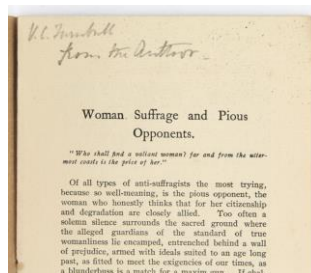
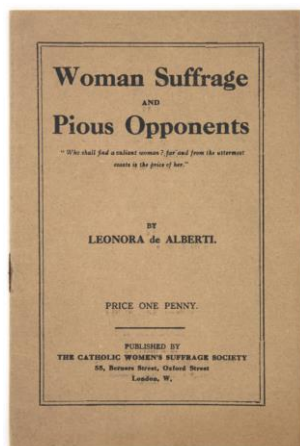
AGAINST 'A BABBLE OF PIOUS NONSENSE'

7. de Alberti (Leonora) [*Drop-head title:*] *Woman Suffrage and Pious Opponents*. The Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, [1913,] FIRST EDITION, pencilled ownership at head of text (recording it as gift 'from the author'), one leaf a little browned at bottom corner, pp. 6, foolscap 8vo, original stapled buff wrappers, the staple rusted, very good **£1,000**

Scarce. The author rails against 'of all types of anti-suffragist the most trying' - i.e., the Catholic woman who believes in her piety that companions of her sex should be content with their lot. Alberti's criticism is clearly born of personal experience: she cites 'a woman otherwise intelligent and a bread-winner', who regards it as impertinent to seek a privilege that was not possessed by 'Our Lady'.

The inside front-cover offers an interesting overview of The Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, established in 1911, of which Alberti was Honorary Literature Secretary: their colours were blue, white and gold, their Patron 'Blessed Joan of Arc', their object to 'band together Catholics of both sexes in order to secure for women the Parliamentary Vote on the same terms as it is, or may be, granted to men'.

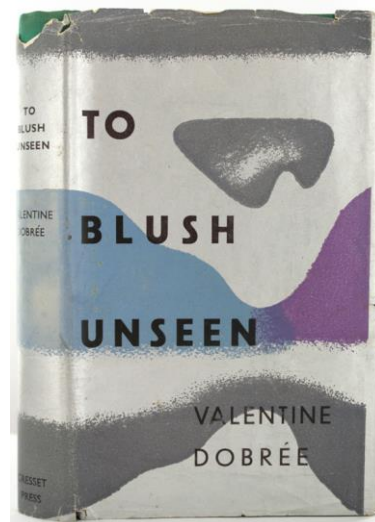
Alberti worked as an archivist and palaeographer at the British Museum and Public Records Office; she wrote on Spanish history and the Spanish language, in addition to her literary work in the cause of Suffrage. From 1915 onwards, she was the editor of the Society's journal, *The Catholic Suffragist*.



8. Dobrée (Valentine) *To Blush Unseen*. [The Cresset Library.] Cresset Press, 1935, FIRST EDITION, pp. ix, 143, foolscap 8vo, original turquoise cloth, backstrip lettered in gilt with lean to spine, edges and free endpapers faintly spotted, dustjacket a little nicked and creased at extremities, chipped also, more so at head of backstrip panel, good **£100**

Scarce. A collection of stories, preceded in this series by Sylvia Townsend Warner's 'More Joy in Heaven' and Graham Greene's 'The Basement Room' - the title is drawn from Gray's 'Elegy'.

The author, née Gladys Brooke-Pechell, was the wife of Bonamy Dobrée - with him part of Eliot's circle, and on the fringes (and occasionally in the beds) of the Bloomsbury Group, she was also highly regarded as an artist and poet.



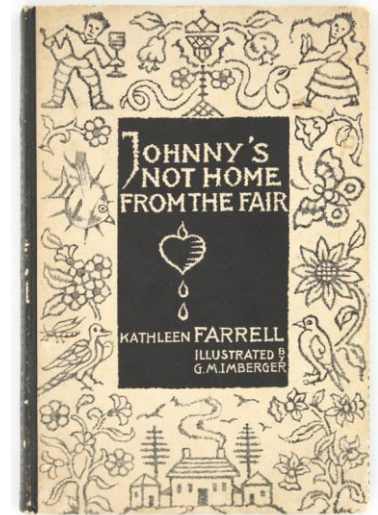
HER FIRST BOOK, SIGNED BY THE ARTIST

9. Farrell (Kathleen) *Johnny's Not Home from the Fair*. Illustrated by George Imberger. P. S. King and Staples, 1942, FIRST EDITION, pp. 62, foolscap 8vo, original cream boards illustrated with a design by Imberger printed in black, a tiny amount of wear at tips of backstrip, gentle lean to spine and some rubbing at extremities, a couple of faint stains to margins of boards, very good **£750**

Signed by the artist on the half-title (no flyleaf, as issued), in the month of publication: 'Christmas 1942, G.M. Imberger'.

This is his first, perhaps only, book illustration work; born in Germany, he and his wife, Hedwig, had been interned at Eastbourne during the War, and remained in Britain upon release in 1940 - first in Hampstead, where presumably his acquaintance with Farrell and her partner, Kay Dick, was made, and latterly in Battle.

The author's first book, its printed dedication - 'for my mother (without permission)' - betokening some basis in her own childhood; it 'hovers somewhere between a memory and a ghost story' (The Guardian), with the narrator offering elliptical recollections of her grandmother.

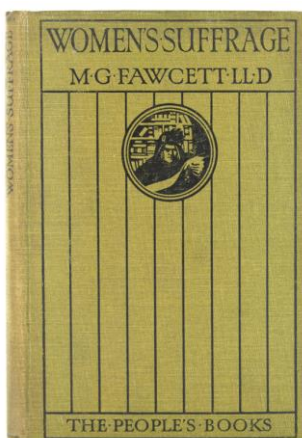
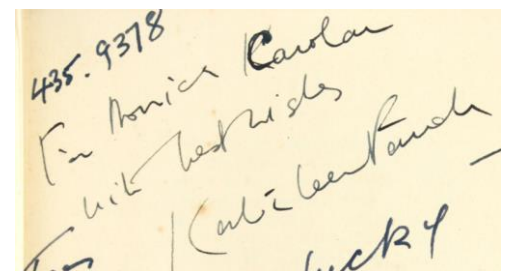
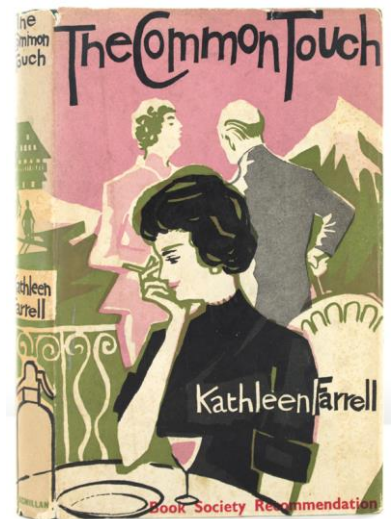


INSCRIBED

10. Farrell (Kathleen) *The Common Touch*. Macmillan, 1959, FIRST EDITION, initials scratched at head of half-title (carrying through to title-page), pp. [iv], 217, crown 8vo, original green cloth, backstrip lettered in gilt, faint discolouration to boards, a little rubbing to extremities and a couple of faint spots at head of free endpapers, slightly later gift inscription to flyleaf (beneath the author's inscription, see below), dustjacket a little spotted and faintly soiled overall, backstrip panel a shade faded, chipped at extremities, very good **£650**

Inscribed by the author on the flyleaf: 'For Monica Carolan, with best wishes, Kathleen Farrell'. Presentation copies of the author's work are rare - the recipient here presumably the same bearer of that name who edited Mozart's letters for Macmillan in the 1960s.

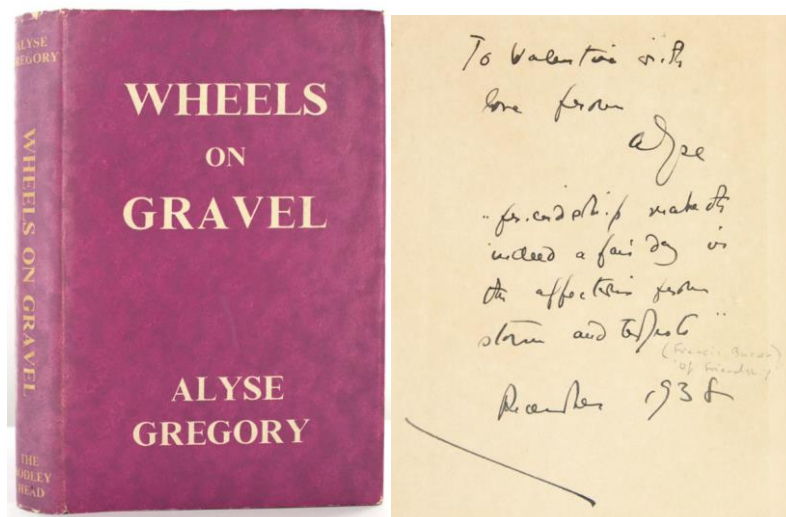
Her fourth novel - uncommon. Farrell's work was often compared with that of Barbara Pym, though the wit and cynicism that partly provides that comparison has a distinct character.



11. Fawcett (Millicent Garrett) *Women's Suffrage*. A Short History of a Great Movement. T.C. & E.C. Jack, 1912, FIRST EDITION, faint spot to prelims, occasionally recurrent, pp. 94, [2, ads dated February 1912], foolscap 8vo, original green cloth, lettered in black to backstrip and upper board, the latter with border stamped in same, top edge black now faded, free endpapers very faintly browned, front pastedown with bookseller ticket at foot, very good **£500**

'Even if victory should be delayed it cannot be delayed long' (p. 83).

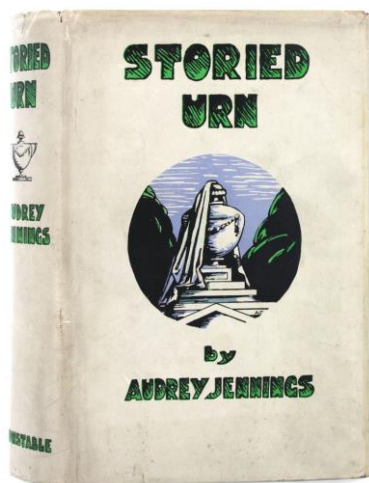
An excellent copy of a powerful book by one of the movement's protagonists.



INSCRIBED TO VALENTINE ACKLAND

12. Gregory (Alyse) *Wheels on Gravel*. John Lane The Bodley Head, 1938, FIRST EDITION, light spotting to prelims receding into opening leaves and recurrent at rear, the half-title with bookplate to verso (Cynthia Peacock of the Sylvia Townsend Warner Society), pp. 208, crown 8vo, original dark pink cloth, backstrip lettered in gilt and darkened with lean to spine, a couple of small marks at head of lower board, top edge pink, others toned, dustjacket with backstrip panel a shade faded, slightly rubbed and nicked at extremities, very good **£375**

Inscribed by the author on the flyleaf, incorporating a quote from Francis Bacon's 'Of Friendship': 'To Valentine, with love from Alyse, "friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections, from storm and tempests". December 1938'. The recipient was the poet Valentine Ackland, partner of Sylvia Townsend Warner - fellow Dorset residents. Eleven essays on different aspects of life.



13. Jennings (Audrey) *Storied Urn*. Constable, 1933, FIRST EDITION, the half-title and final page of text browned, pp. viii, 342, crown 8vo, original red boards, backstrip lettered in blue, gentle knock at head of upper joint, a few small spots to fore-edge, a couple of very faint spots to flyleaf, dustjacket with a design by the author, slightly chipped and nicked at extremities, very good **£250**

Scarce.

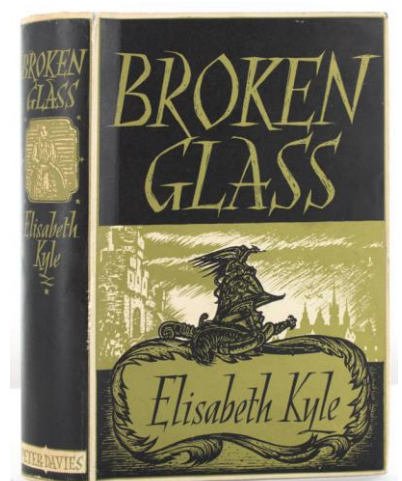
A first, and only novel, by an obscure author who also had a brief artistic career - a talent evinced by her own artwork on the dustjacket. Painting is also used as a reference point for the composition of the novel, which concerns a love-triangle in the eighteenth-century, in the author's Note preceding the text.

INSCRIBED

14. Kyle (Elisabeth, pseud. for Agnes Mary Robertson Dunlop) *Broken Glass*. Peter Davies, 1940, FIRST EDITION, pp. 288, crown 8vo, original green cloth, backstrip lettered in cream, edges slightly toned with a small spot to fore-edge, dustjacket slightly nicked at extremities with soe very light soiling to the rear panel, very good **£425**

Inscribed by the author on the flyleaf: 'With Elisabeth Kyle's kindest regards, Sundrum Castle, September 16, 1940'.

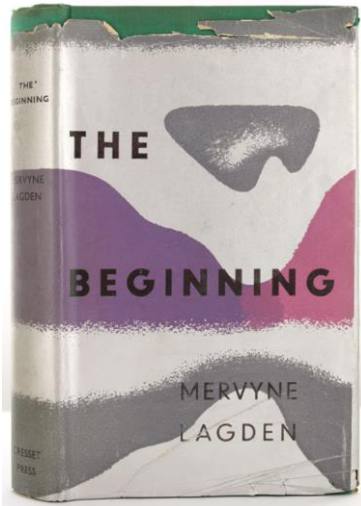
The novel has at the centre of its landscape a castle in the rather different setting of Transylvania: it begins in 1625, but accelerates through the centuries in its first half,



ending in the turmoil that the Great War inflicts upon the region; thereafter, 'the scene is set for a romantic story' (blurb), wherein Octave Dragulescu, a rich young Romanian, falls in love with Sarolta Lukats, who now occupies the castle along with her brother - thereby 'unknowingly giving his assistance to a plot to restore Transylvania to Hungary'.

Her third novel, scarce; romance and history were the staples of her work - both germane to her friendship with Josephine Tey.

with Elizabeth Kyle's
kindest regards.

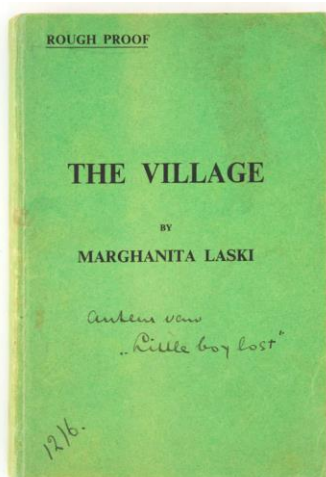
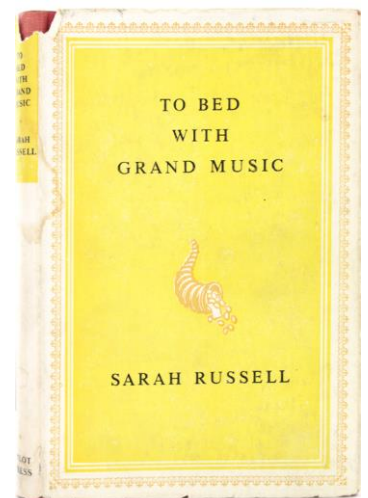


INSCRIBED

15. Lagden (Mervyne [Hilda Mervyn]) *The Beginning, and Other Stories*. Cresset Press, n.d. [circa 1935,] FIRST EDITION, pp. ix, 191, crown 8vo, original green cloth, backstrip lettered in gilt and worn at foot, slight lean to spine and cloth darkened to extremities, dustjacket chipped, nicked and creased, very good **£225**. *Inscribed by the author on the flyleaf: 'Kate, Mervyn Lagden, Xmas 1935'. A scarce book, from a series that included Graham Greene's 'The Basement Room' and Sylvia Townsend Warner's 'More Joy in Heaven' Hilda Mervyn Lagden attended St Hugh's College, Oxford in the early 1920s; her published output consists of the present work and a slim collection of poems concerning the Cotswolds, circa 1950 - this volume begins with a poem, 'Cotswold Rain', and the stories concern rural life there.*

16. (Laski.) RUSSELL (Sarah, pseud. for Marghanita Laski) *To Bed with Grand Music*. The Pilot Press, 1946, FIRST EDITION, pp. 158, crown 8vo, original orange cloth, backstrip lettered in black, the cloth a little mottled overall, edges spotted, dustjacket chipped at extremities and lightly dustsoiled overall, larger chip at head of backstrip panel, which also carries a faint waterstain, very good **£95**

Scarce. Early work by Marghanita Laski, written under a pseudonym - a 'pungent first novel', the blurb advises, though in fact preceded by Laski's debut 'Love on the Supertax' (1944). The dissimulation derives in likelihood from its controversial subject-matter: it is a 'cautionary tale on the pitfalls of wartime infidelity' (blurb), with its anti-heroine, Deborah Robertson, keeping the home-fires burning only in respect of satisfying her lustful tendencies with a succession of lovers whilst her husband serves his country in the Middle East. The work remains in print, shedding the pseudonym, with Persephone Books. Born in Manchester into an eminent Jewish family that included political theorist Harold J. Laski (her uncle), the author went up to Somerville College, Oxford, graduating in 1936.

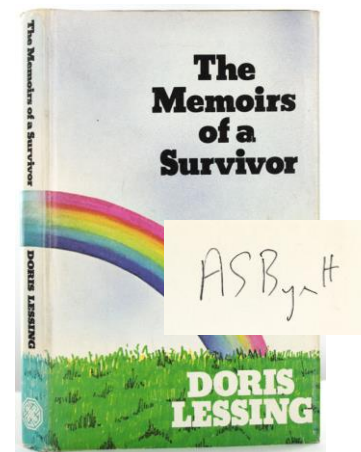


17. Laski (Marghanita) *The Village*. Cresset Press, 1951, UNCORRECTED PROOF COPY FOR FIRST EDITION, final leaf with light crease at bottom corner, pp. 275, crown 8vo, original green proof wrappers, printed to front ('Rough Proof' at head), manuscript note in German to same ('Auteur von "Little Boy Lost"') with published price noted at foot, a couple of faint spots along upper joint, backstrip gently faded, slight lean to spine, edges lightly spotted, good **£250**. *Scarce in proof form; a novel that begins at the end of the Second World War, set in the fictional village of Priory Dean - where the close of conflict begins the reassertion of social order. Recently reprinted by Persephone Books.*

A.S. BYATT'S COPY

18. Lessing (Doris) *The Memoirs of a Survivor*. The Octagon Press, [1974,] FIRST EDITION, pp. 182, [4], crown 8vo, original green boards, backstrip lettered in gilt and faded, very faint partial browning at head of endpapers, the front pastedown with shadow from previous ticket at foot, the flyleaf with the ownership inscription of novelist A.S. Byatt at head, a little very faint surface abrasion to paper beneath this, dustjacket with backstrip panel gently faded and slightly rubbed at extremities, very good **£125**

Lessing's dystopian novel of a near-future Britain, the copy of novelist A.S. Byatt - who included Lessing, in an article on Muriel Spark for The Independent, as one of the 'powerful female writers' in the 'generation, just before my own'.



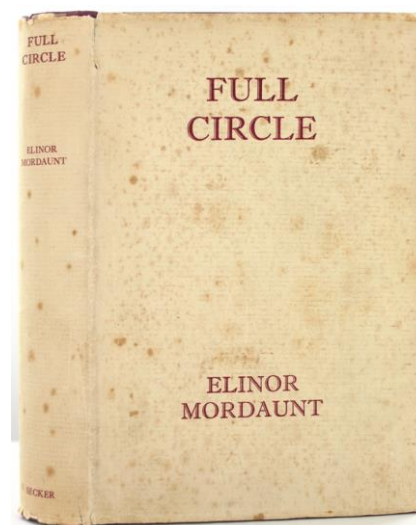
19. Mackenzie (Agnes Mure) *Lost Kinnellan*. William Heinemann, 1927, FIRST EDITION, a few faint spots to prelims, recurrent at rear, pp. [viii], 288, crown 8vo, original green cloth, backstrip lettered in gilt, publisher device in blind to lower board, slight discolouration to cloth and a small dink to upper joint, corners of upper board lightly bumped, light spotting to edges, pictorial dustjacket (the design to the front panel by Pinder Davis), slightly browned, a couple of small chips and nicks, short closed tear at foot of rear panel, very good **£325**

A scarce Scottish novel, published in Heinemann's '3s. 6d. Library' series. The author was a great friend of Nan Shepherd, whom she knew at the University of Aberdeen; the two continued to correspond and support one another throughout their careers. Her work here evinces the same skill that Shepherd shows, of including the landscape as a character within the human drama.

20. (Maugham.) MORDAUNT (Elinor, pseud. for Evelyn May Clowes) *Full Circle*. Martin Secker, 1931, FIRST ENGLISH EDITION, small spots at head of opening leaves, recurrent at rear, pp. 320, crown 8vo, original pink cloth, lettered in gilt to upper board and backstrip, lean to spine, top edge pink, fore-edge roughtrimmed and faintly spotted, bookplate to flyleaf, dustjacket price-clipped and lightly foxed overall with very short closed tear at head of rear panel, internal tape repair at head of backstrip panel, very good **£875**

Scarce, due to having been withdrawn following a libel action by W. Somerset Maugham. Published in the US as 'Gin and Bitters', the author concealed behind the pointed pseudonym 'A. Riposte'.

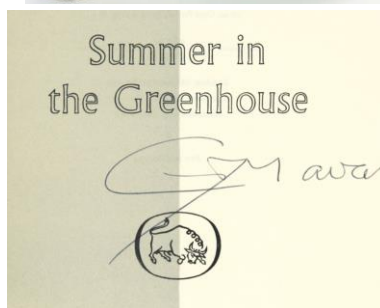
Raymond Toole Stott, in his bibliography of the latter, suggests that this vicious and thinly veiled attack on Maugham is revenge for darkening the character of Florence Hardy, the second Mrs. Hardy - a friend of Elinor Mordaunt, and portrayed as Mrs. Driffield in 'Cakes and Ale'.





HER FIRST BOOK, SIGNED

21. Mavor (Elizabeth) *Summer in the Greenhouse*. New Authors Limited (Hutchinson), 1959, FIRST EDITION, pp. 223, [1], crown 8vo, original black boards, backstrip lettered in white with decorations in blue & yellow, top edge a trifle dusty, a few faint spots to inner margin of free endpapers, contemporary ownership inscription to flyleaf, dustjacket with a design by Haro Hodson to front panel, gently rubbed at extremities with a couple of tiny nicks and a short closed tear at head of rear panel, very good **£215**



Signed by the author on the title-page. Her first book; she had earlier read History at St. Anne's College, Oxford.

It is, the blurb advises, 'the story of innocence unintentionally corrupted', set in 'the blazing summer of 1939', with the War entering the narrative in a decisive manner towards its end.

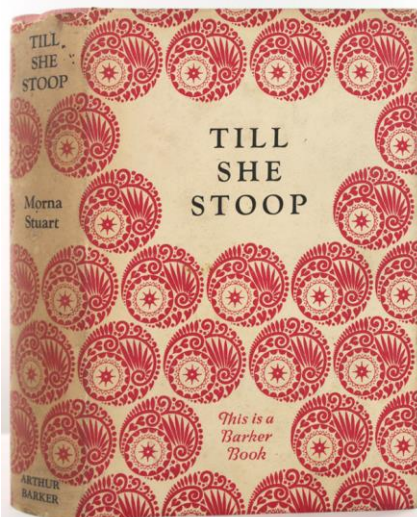
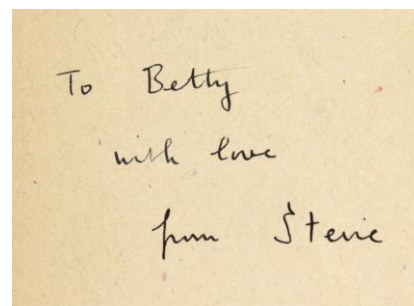
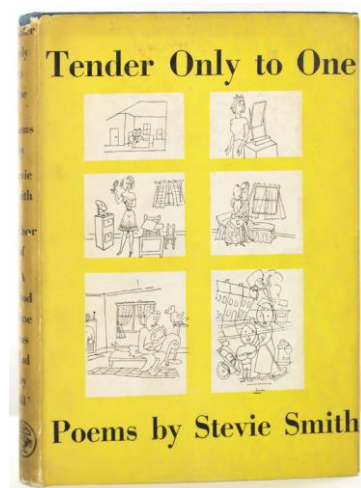
The printed dedication is to her husband, the illustrator and poet Haro Hodson - who provides the dustjacket illustration here.

INSCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR

22. Smith (Stevie) *Tender Only to One*. Poems and Drawings. Jonathan Cape, 1938, FIRST EDITION, several line-drawings, some full-page, by the author, pp. [ii], 77, crown 8vo, original blue cloth, backstrip lettered in silver, top edge blue, others roughtrimmed, slight crease to top corner of rear free endpaper, dustjacket with the author's drawings to front panel, backstrip panel browned and slightly chipped at head, faintly browned to borders, very good **£400**

Inscribed by the author on the flyleaf: 'To Betty, with love from Stevie, Chirstmas, 1947'.

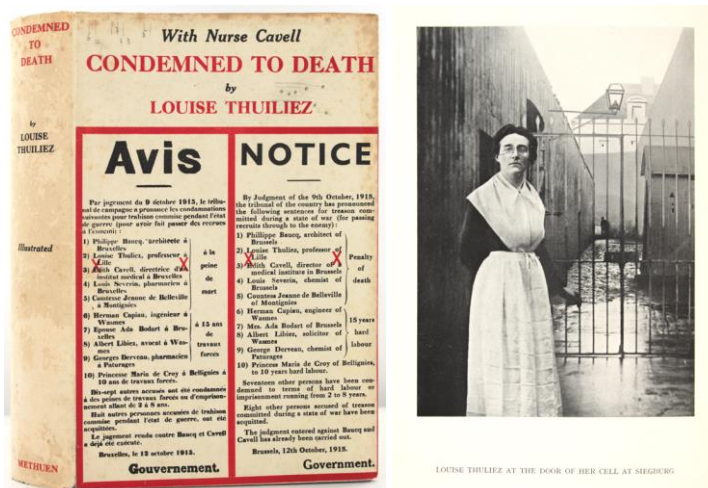
The recipient was her friend, the novelist and biographer Betty Miller - the two were part of a 'sort of Hampstead set' (McBrien & Barbera, 'Stevie Smith', p. 156) that included Inez Holden, Cicely Mackworth, Naomi Lewis, Marghanita Laski, and Kay Dick, but Miller and Smith fell out a couple of years after this inscription, following the publication of a thinly-veiled depiction of Miller and her children (one of them being Jonathan Miller, theatre director and member of 'Beyond the Fringe') drawn from a family holiday with Smith in tow. This is a record of a significant association, before that betrayal.



23. Stuart (Morna) *Till She Stoop*. Arthur Barker, 1935, FIRST EDITION, a few faint spots to prelims, pp. 315, [4, ads], crown 8vo, original pink cloth, backstrip lettered in black and gently faded, top edge slightly dusty, edges very faintly spotted, free endpapers with faint browning to inner margin, dustjacket with browned backstrip panel slightly chipped at head, very good **£200**

Scarce, her second novel - a 'drama of human character', with the inter-generational vendettas that drive the narrative played out against the setting of a 'great provincial emporium' (blurb). The author was educated at St. Anne's

College, Oxford; the greater part of her writing career was as a playwright, including as a scriptwriter for the BBC - her 'break-out' novel came with the Haiti-set 'Marassa and Midnight' in 1968.



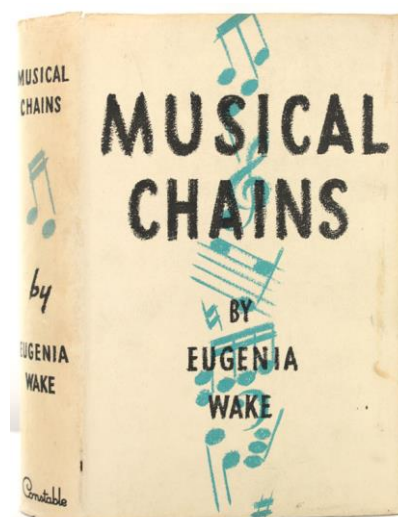
24. Thuliez (Louise) *Condemned to Death*. Translated from the French by Marie Poett-Velitchko. Methuen, 1934, FIRST EDITION IN ENGLISH, frontispiece photographic portrait of author, 7 further photographic plates, full-page map preceding text, pp. xv, 241, crown 8vo, original blue cloth, backstrip lettered in black and gently faded, a couple of small patches of discolouration around head, edges spotted, ownership inscription to flyleaf (dated 'Janvier 1938'), dustjacket with some small pencil numerals at head of front panel, a little rubbing to backstrip panel and a few spots to margins, very good **£2,500**

An 'epic of gallantry and patriotism' (blurb) by a friend of Edith Cavell, whose ethics and occupation she shared - risking her own life to help Allied soldiers stranded behind enemy lines.

Scarce in the dustjacket, which depicts on its front panel, in parallel French and English, the notice condemning both Thuliez and Cavell to 'Penalty of death' for 'treason committed during a state of war'.

25. Wake (Eugenia) *Musical Chains*. Constable, 1937, FIRST EDITION, pp. [vi], 245, crown 8vo, original pink cloth, backstrip lettered in blue with decoration in red, backstrip gently faded, a few very faint spots to cloth, dustjacket with backstrip panel very faintly sunned, a couple of tiny nicks and lightest of handling, very good **£275**

Inscribed by the author on the flyleaf: 'To dear Jack, with love & kisses from Auntie Madge (Alias Eugenia Wake!)'. This her only novel, the author is obscure - evidently a pseudonym. It has a musical theme, the protagonist 'a little peasant waif' (blurb) whose musical genius makes him the protégé of a famous violinist and saves his life.



To dear Jack, with love &
kisses from
Auntie Madge (Alias Eugenia
Wake!)