



## ON THE SCENT

### A HISTORY OF “THE KING OF THE FOXES” AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT

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#### 1897-1898: A HUNTING MORNING

Two indisputable facts: First, Arthur Conan Doyle published the short story “The King of the Foxes” in the July 1898 issue of *The Windsor Magazine*.<sup>1</sup> Second, today, his original autograph manuscript resides in the Dartmouth College Library.<sup>2</sup>

Bookplates and notations provide some clues about the journey in between, but the complete provenance of this manuscript remains elusive. Nevertheless, enough is known to sketch an approximate timeline from its writing by Conan Doyle to its arrival at Dartmouth, as well as a brief biography of several holders along the way.

The last page of the undated manuscript includes the penciled notation “Undershaw / Hindhead” beneath the signature “A. Conan Doyle,” in what appears to be Conan Doyle’s own hand. This sets the earliest possible date of completion as mid-October 1897, when he moved his family to the newly-built estate.<sup>3</sup> Conan Doyle had arranged Undershaw’s construction for his first wife Louise (nicknamed Touie), hoping that the higher elevation and fresh country air of Surrey would

improve her fragile health.<sup>4</sup> Physicians had diagnosed Touie with a terminal case of “galloping consumption” (tuberculosis) in August 1893, suggesting at the time that she had only months to live.<sup>5</sup>

“I have said little, during these years spent in the quest of health, concerning my literary production,” Conan Doyle wrote in his 1924 autobiography about life at Undershaw.<sup>6</sup> He did not elaborate here about “The King of the Foxes,” although he did highlight writing “a considerable number of short tales during those years.”<sup>7</sup> In December 1897, Conan Doyle penned a letter to his mother Mary, declaring: “I want now to write some short stories to raise the wind. Extras of different kinds in connection with the house run to about £2000, which I must pay off.”<sup>8</sup>

“The King of the Foxes” was likely inspired by Conan Doyle’s own participation in a fox hunt on December 18, 1897. “A hunting morning,” he wrote in a Christmas greeting to Mary, “and the meet a long 8 miles off . . . . All seems to be going well here. I have just finished a 2000 word story for the ‘Star’, which will be a help, and as to verses I pour out hunting songs & ballads. Some of them will be heard hereafter.”<sup>9</sup> His diary, now housed in the British Library, contains an entry just a few weeks later: “13-16 Jan 1898 – Wrote

1. A. Conan Doyle, “The King of the Foxes,” *Windsor Magazine: An Illustrated Monthly for Men and Women* (July 1898), 123-32. The story would soon reappear, *sans* illustrations, in a compilation of previously-published short stories. See A. Conan Doyle, *The Green Flag, and Other Stories of War and Sport* (New York: McClure, Phillips & Co., 1900), 269-91.

2. Arthur Conan Doyle, “The King of the Foxes” (autograph manuscript), Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Collection (MS-93), Box 1.

3. Letter from Arthur Conan Doyle to Mary Doyle, October 12, 1897, in Jon Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley, eds., *Arthur Conan Doyle: A Life in Letters* (London: HarperPress, 2007), 391 (hereafter cited as *Letters*) (“We move in this day (Tuesday) week, come what may”).

4. See Martin Booth, *The Doctor and the Detective: A Biography of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 1997), 207.

5. Booth, *Doctor and the Detective*, 184.

6. Arthur Conan Doyle, *Memories and Adventures* (1924; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 145.

7. *Ibid.*, 145.

8. Arthur Conan Doyle to Mary Doyle, December 1897, in *Letters*, 394. Adjusting for inflation, £2,000 in 1897 would be at least £250,000 today. “Inflation Calculator,” Bank of England (accessed June 26, 2020), [www.bankofengland.co.uk](http://www.bankofengland.co.uk).

9. Arthur Conan Doyle to Mary Doyle, December 18, 1897, in *Letters*, 395. This story was “The Confession,” which appeared in the January 17, 1898 edition of the evening newspaper. Richard Lancelyn Green & John Michael Gibson, *A Bibliography of A. Conan Doyle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 402.

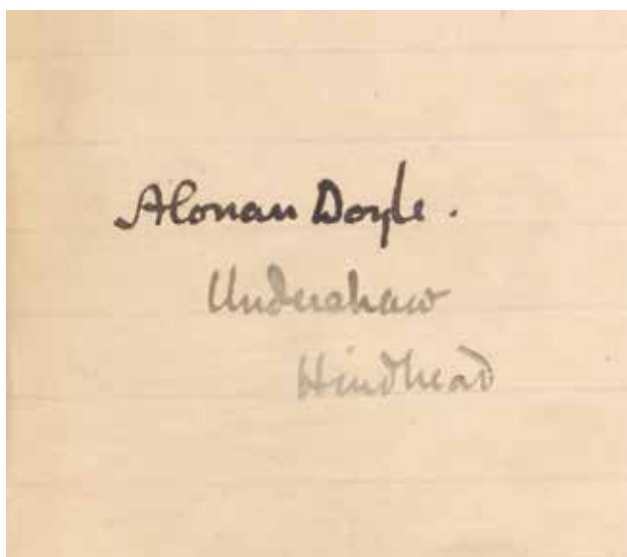


Figure 1 (previous page): Dartmouth College's Rauner Special Collections Library (in Webster Hall) is the current home of the manuscript of "The King of the Foxes" (courtesy of Kane5187, commons.wikimedia.org). Figure 2 (above): Signature and pencil notation at the end of the manuscript.

'The King of the Foxes'.<sup>10</sup> The quick turnaround was typical for Conan Doyle's output in the first half of 1898; he spent much of the spring writing what would later comprise his collection of *Round the Fire Stories*.<sup>11</sup> The copyright for the 13-page "Foxes" manuscript was registered in London on June 11, 1898.<sup>12</sup>

Biographers have suggested that Conan Doyle's own foray into fox-hunting was motivated by his growing infatuation with Jean Leckie, an avid equestrienne whom he had met earlier in 1897.<sup>13</sup> Throughout their lengthy courtship, Conan Doyle tried on several of Jean's personal interests for size, including fox-hunting and an ill-fated detour into learning the banjo.<sup>14</sup> "To hunt and to play a musical instrument would 2 years ago have been picked out as the two things in the world that I was least likely to do," he mused to his mother in the spring of 1898.<sup>15</sup> Conan Doyle would

later criticize the concept of recreational hunting in his 1924 memoir, but he approved of fox-hunting, which he placed in a different category:

If I have alienated half my readers by my critical attitude to the Turf, I shall probably offend the other half by stating that I cannot persuade myself that we are justified in taking life as a pleasure. To shoot for the pot must be right, since man must feed, and to kill creatures which live upon others (the hunting of foxes, for example) must also be right, since to slay one is to save many; but the rearing of birds in order to kill them, and the shooting of such sensitive and inoffensive animals as hares and deer, cannot, I think, be justified. I must admit that I shot a good deal before I came to this conclusion.<sup>16</sup>

Whatever his successes and failures may have been while riding to hounds or playing the banjo, his affections for Jean Leckie never waned: she would become Conan Doyle's second wife in September 1907, 14 months after Touie's death.<sup>17</sup>

#### 1923-1925: TO MARKET

The first sale of the "Foxes" manuscript occurred in New York on January 31, 1923, at the American Art Association's galleries at 30 East Fifty-Seventh Street.<sup>18</sup> By this point, Doyle was deeply immersed in the spiritualism that would occupy the remainder of his life: hosting séances with Jean, writing and lecturing about the existence of psychic powers, and defending the veracity of the notorious Cottingley fairy photographs.<sup>19</sup> Doyle's keen interest in the paranormal damaged his reputation, making him the subject of scornful press reviews and even a popular joke "declaring him to be the first member of the audience to clap his hands on request to revive Tinkerbell" at performances of *Peter Pan*.<sup>20</sup>

This commitment to spiritualism dented Conan Doyle's finances, in addition to his public image.<sup>21</sup> After more than a decade as a rental property following his marriage to Jean Leckie and the couple's subsequent

10. Mark Jones, email to Ross Davies, October 20, 2020.

11. See Andrew Lycett, *The Man Who Created Sherlock Holmes: The Life and Times of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* (New York: Free Press, 2007), 252-53; Brian W. Pugh, *A Chronology of the Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* (London: MX Publishing Ltd., 2009), 47-48.

12. U.S. Library of Congress, *Catalogue of Title Entries in Books and Other Articles*, vol. 15, no. 12 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, June 29, 1898), 954. The U.S. Office of the Register of Copyrights received two copies on deposit by June 25.

13. Booth, *Doctor and the Detective*, 213-16; John Dickson Carr, *The Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* (New York: Harper, 1949), 108; Daniel Stashower, *Teller of Tales: The Life of Arthur Conan Doyle* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2001), 212.

14. Booth, *Doctor and the Detective*, 216.

15. Arthur Conan Doyle to Mary Doyle, late March or early April 1898,

in *Letters*, 399.

16. Conan Doyle, *Memories and Adventures*, 270.

17. *Letters*, 534-35; Booth, *Doctor and the Detective*, 266-67.

18. "Conan Doyle Manuscripts: Sale in New York Next Week," *Times* (London) (January 26, 1923), 13; "The Sale Room: £468 for Conan Doyle Manuscripts," *Times* (London) (February 2, 1923), 8.

19. See Booth, *Doctor and the Detective*, 310-36; Conan Doyle, *Memories and Adventures*, 395-408. See Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Coming of the Fairies* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1922), for his book-length defense of the fairy photographs. The young cousins who posed alongside the paper cut-out fairies would not admit to their staging until the 1980s. Margalit Fox, "Geoffrey Crawley, 83; Gently Deflated a Fairy Hoax," *New York Times* (November 7, 2010), 34.

20. Booth, *Doctor and the Detective*, 322.

21. Stashower, *Teller of Tales*, 399.



Figure 3: Spealls stamp from manuscript binding process, circa 1913, on the front pastedown of the "Foxes" manuscript.

move to their Windlesham estate, Undershaw went on the auction block in late 1920. It sold in May 1921, for £4,000.<sup>22</sup> The final sale price was less than the £6,000 that Conan Doyle had estimated as his cost for "the whole show lock stock & barrel" back in October 1897, and well below the £9,000–£10,000 value that he had originally anticipated "it will be worth in very few years, if not now."<sup>23</sup>

It was in this era that Conan Doyle's autograph manuscripts began to enter the market. He arranged for their binding at Spealls, a London stationery and design shop owned and operated by Lady Victoria Sackville, the mother of author Vita Sackville-West.<sup>24</sup> In the top left corner of the manuscript's pastedown, a faint stamp of "SPEALLS 61 SOUTH AUDLEY STREET W" can still be seen. Future sales appeared to be on the author's mind: "I am having mine bound in vellum by Spealls," he wrote in a December 1913 letter, "so as to be ready for the capricious millionaire whom we all hope for and never see."<sup>25</sup>

Conan Doyle's earliest autograph manuscript auctions had benefited a charitable cause: "The Adventure of the Empty House," which Doyle donated to the Red Cross Sale efforts during World War I, sold at Christie's in April 1916.<sup>26</sup> He gave several more autograph

manuscripts to the Red Cross Sale in 1918.<sup>27</sup> A few years later, Conan Doyle began gradually selling off the rest of his autograph manuscripts. In January 1922, he auctioned six Sherlock Holmes short story manuscripts in New York: "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax," "The Adventure of the Devil's Foot," "The Adventure of the Red Circle," "The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist," "The Adventure of the Priory School," and "The Adventure of the Second Stain." The auction catalogue described these items as "Original Manuscript by, and the Property of, SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, the Celebrated Novelist, sold through the agency of the PAGENT [*sic*] LITERARY AGENCY of New York City."<sup>28</sup>

The January 1923 auction at the American Art Galleries, similarly consigned via the Paget Literary Agency, contained "more than twenty" of Conan Doyle's bound autograph manuscripts.<sup>29</sup> "The King of the Foxes" was the sixth of 25 manuscripts on offer during the afternoon session of Wednesday, January 31, listed with this catalogue description:

242. DOYLE. (SIR ARTHUR CONAN). AUTHOR'S ORIGINAL AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT. "The King of the Foxes." Written in ink on 13 sheets, one side only, containing about 400 words to the page, with cancellations and insertions by the author. Folio, vellum, BY SPEALLS.

This manuscript is entirely in the handwriting of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, with his autograph signature and title of the work on the front cover of the binding, "The King of the Foxes. A Conan Doyle." The title-page, with title, name and the words "Original Manuscript," is in the author's handwriting. On the last written sheet appears his autograph,—"A Conan Doyle, Undershaw Hindhead."

Published in, "The Green Flag and other Stories of War and Sport." London, 1900.<sup>30</sup>

22. Pugh, *Chronology*, 103; Stashower, *Teller of Tales*, 261; "Sales by Auction," *Times* (London) (November 6, 1920), 22; "The Estate Market: Houses Near Town: A. Conan Doyle's Sale," *Times* (London) (May 10, 1921), 8. The 1921 ad hinted at increasing desperation: "To ensure an immediate sale a very low price would be accepted." Conan Doyle had previously abandoned a plan to sell Undershaw shortly after Touie's death, "mostly because I cant [*sic*] get any offer near the price I want." Arthur Conan Doyle to Mary Doyle, January 29, 1907, in *Letters*, 540.

23. Arthur Conan Doyle to Mary Doyle, October 1897, in *Letters*, 392.

24. Matthew Dennison, *Behind the Mask: The Life of Vita Sackville-West* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2014), 53–54.

25. Randall Stock, "The Trail of the Semi-Solitary Manuscript," *Baker Street Journal* 55, no. 4 (Winter 2005), 49 (quoting letter from Arthur Conan Doyle to unidentified recipient, December 1913).

26. E.H. Courville, ed., *Autograph Prices Current* (London: E.H. Courville, 1916), 1:55. Its buyer resold it five years later for £2. 10s. A.J. Herbert, ed., *Autograph Prices Current* (London: A.J. Herbert, 1922), 6:58; "The Sale Room," *Times* (London), November 29, 1921, 7. For a fuller accounting of this manuscript's history, see Randall Stock, "Unlocking 'The Empty House': Its History and Manuscript," in Andrew Solberg, Steven Rothman, and Robert Katz, eds., *Out of the Abyss: A Facsimile of the Original Manuscript of 'The Adventure of the Empty House' by Arthur Conan Doyle, with Annotations and Commentary* (New York: Baker Street

Irregulars, 2014), 133–43.

27. These were the autograph manuscripts for the novel *The White Company* and the Sherlock stories "The Adventure of the Norwood Builder" and "The Adventure of the Dancing Men." See Randall Stock, "Tracking 'The Dancing Men': Its History and Manuscript," in Ray Betzner and David F. Morrill, eds., *Dancing to Death: A Facsimile of the Original Manuscript of 'The Dancing Men' by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle with Annotations and Commentary on the Story* (New York: Baker Street Irregulars, 2016), 126.

28. "Statement of Ownership" (item nos. 337–342), in American Art Association, *Illustrated Catalogue of a Notable Collection of First Editions: Costume and Colored Plate Books, Manuscripts and Association Items of Superlative Interest from Various Collections including those of Mr. David G. Joyce of Chicago, Illinois, Captain E. W. Martindell of Ashford, England, To Be Sold Without Reserve or Restriction By Order of Owners Hereinafter Designated on Thursday Evening, and Friday Afternoon and Evening, January 26th and 27th, 1922 n.p.* (New York: The American Art Association, 1922).

29. "Conan Doyle Manuscripts," *Times* (London) (January 26, 1923), 13.

30. American Art Association, *Illustrated Catalogue of a Splendid Collection of Books, Manuscripts and Drawings: Many in Superb Bindings by Master-binders including the Private Library of the Late George B. Baker of Paterson, N.J., Selections from the Private Library of Mr. Charles F. Kennedy*

Other Conan Doyle autograph manuscripts at this sale included the complete novel-length drafts of *Micah Clarke*, *The Refugees*, and *Rodney Stone*; the Sherlock Holmes stories “The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter” and “The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton”; and later works such as “An Iconoclast” and “The Fall of Lord Barrymore.”<sup>31</sup> In its sale preview, the *Times* described the career-spanning manuscript series as “extraordinary” and declared, “There can be no doubt that this collection is, as the auctioneers claim, the most important one of the MSS. of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle ever offered.”<sup>32</sup> The auction house was a suitably elegant setting; the American Art Association had relocated uptown to its newly-built headquarters just the previous year.<sup>33</sup>

A week later, the *Times* proclaimed the sale “probably a somewhat disappointing one for the vendors,” reporting a total of \$2,340. The *Times* mentioned only four novel-length works that accounted for more than half the gross: *Micah Clarke* commanded \$360; *The Refugees*, \$300; *Rodney Stone* and the Sherlock Holmes tale *The Valley of Fear* each sold for \$275.<sup>34</sup> In its own report, *American Book-Prices Current* provided prices for ten titles, accounting for \$1,750 of the total.<sup>35</sup> The final sale price for “The King of the Foxes” went unreported by all official publications, but marginalia in a copy of the auction catalogue at the UMKC Miller Nichols Library indicates that it sold for \$30.<sup>36</sup>

“The King of the Foxes” next appeared in a January 1925 sale at London’s Hodgson & Co., bundled with the autograph manuscripts of two other Conan Doyle

stories from the January 1923 auction – “An Iconoclast” and “The Horror of the Heights.”<sup>37</sup> Other Conan Doyle autograph manuscripts in this sale included the novel *Sir Nigel* and a bundle of three Sherlock Holmes stories.<sup>38</sup> None of those manuscripts were mentioned in the auction newspaper advertisements, which primarily highlighted the sale’s 18th-century, fine arts, and law book offerings.<sup>39</sup>

Many of the rare books at the January 1925 auction were drawn from the library of Col. G.B. Lempriere at Pelham in Hampshire, “including first editions of Fanny Burney, Evelina[,] Lamb, Dickens, Thackeray, and others, and an interesting presentation copy of Coleridge’s ‘The Friend,’ with MS. notes by the author.”<sup>40</sup> George Beresford Lempriere (1858-1943) came from a storied family of *seigneurs* and military officers; Conan Doyle’s World War I chronicle *The British Campaign in France and Flanders* even referenced the battlefield death of his younger brother, Col. Henry Anderson Lempriere of the Dragoon Guards.<sup>41</sup> Other possible owners of the “Foxes” manuscript whose treasures were also auctioned at this sale included several lawyers: the late A.C. Crosse, Esq., of St. Leonard’s-on-Sea;<sup>42</sup> the late G.W. Tallents, Esq. and G. Baldwin Hamilton, Esq.; and the retiring H. McN. Humphry, Esq., of Lincoln’s Inn.<sup>43</sup>

of Brewer, ME., *Manuscripts by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*, item no. 242 (New York: American Art Association, 1923).

31. American Art Association, *Illustrated Catalogue*, item nos. 237-261.

32. “Conan Doyle Manuscripts,” *Times* (London) (January 26, 1923), 13.

33. Thomas E. Norton, *100 Years of Collecting in America: The Story of Sotheby Parke Bernet* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1984), 13.

34. “The Sale Room: £468 for Conan Doyle Manuscripts,” *Times* (London) (February 2, 1923), 8.

35. *American Book-Prices Current: A Record of Books, Manuscripts, and Autographs Sold at Auction in New York and Elsewhere, From September, 1922 to August, 1923, Being the Season 1922-1923* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1923) 887-88. *American Book-Prices Current* gave the most detailed official breakdown of both titles and prices at the January 1923 auction. Only the price paid for *Micah Clarke* was recorded in *Book-Prices Current: A Record of the Prices at which Books Have Been Sold at Auction, From October, 1922, to August, 1923, Being the Season 1922-1923* (London: Eliot Stock, 1923), 273.

36. American Art Association, *Illustrated Catalogue*, item no. 242 (marginalia). Although the penciled notes in UMKC’s copy of the catalogue are all consistent with the prices-realized reports for various individual titles, there is a discrepancy between its total of \$2,270 for these 25 autograph manuscripts and the *Times*’s reported figure of \$2,340. It seems likely that the *Times* also included the \$160 that the UMKC collector noted for item no. 236, an author’s edition of the 8-volume set *Writings of Arthur Conan Doyle*, which would bring the total for Conan Doyle materials at this auction to an easily transposable \$2,430.

37. *Book-Prices Current: A Record of the Prices at which Books Have Been Sold at Auction, From October, 1924, to August, 1925, Being the Season 1924-1925* (London: Eliot Stock, 1925), 294. “The King of the Foxes” was erroneously listed here as “The King of Foxes.” Catalogue marginalia in UMKC’s copy indicate that “An Iconoclast” and “The Horror of the Heights” sold for \$35 and \$40, respectively. American Art Association, *Illustrated Catalogue*, item nos. 251, 256.

38. *Book-Prices Current 1924-1925*, 294. Two of these Sherlock stories (“The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist” and “The Adventure of the Priory School”) had been auctioned at the January 1922 American Art Galleries sale. American Art Association, *Illustrated Catalogue of a Notable Collection of First Editions*, n.p. The third (“The Adventure of the Dancing Men”) had previously appeared at a separate sale of several Conan Doyle autograph manuscripts that was held at the American Art Galleries on February 13, 1923. *American Book-Prices Current 1922-1923*, 888.

39. “Rare Books and Modern First Editions,” *Times Literary Supplement* (London) (January 15, 1925), 44; “Rare Books and Modern First Editions,” *Times* (London) (January 19, 1925), 24; “Valuable Law Books,” *Times* (London) (January 19, 1925), 24.

40. “In the Sale Room,” *Daily Telegraph* (London), January 27, 1925, 3.

41. “Notice sur les Lempriere, Seigneurs de Diéclament,” *Société Jersiaise Bulletin* 8, no. XLI (1918), 289; Arthur Conan Doyle, *The British Campaign in France and Flanders*, 2nd ed. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1916), 1:331.

42. “Rare Books and Modern First Editions,” *Times* (London) (January 19, 1925), 24.

43. “Valuable Law Books,” *Times* (London) (January 19, 1925), 24. This auction catalogue’s statement of ownership could not be obtained for review by press time. See (if you can) Hodgson & Co., *Auction Catalogue, Books of G. Baldwin Hamilton ... [et al.]*, 28 to 30 January 1925 (London: Hodgson & Co., 1925).



Figure 4: The room in the Hodgson & Co. premises at 115 Chancery Lane, London, where the “Foxes” manuscript was sold in January 1925. “The Auction Room,” in *One Hundred Years of Book Auctions* (London: Chiswick Press, 1908).

Of the Conan Doyle manuscripts for sale at Hodgsons, the bundle of Sherlock stories unsurprisingly commanded the highest price (£66), while the bundle containing “Foxes” garnered £25 from the London bookseller Maggs Bros.<sup>44</sup> “The King of the Foxes” lingered in Maggs’s shop at 34 & 35 Conduit Street for some time, appearing in catalogues as late as Christmas 1928 for £18. 18s. (“An Iconoclast” likewise remained in stock from the same auction bundle for several years, offered for £14. 14s.<sup>45</sup> “The Horror of the Heights” seems to have resold quickly, initially listed in a 1925 catalogue for £21 and then disappearing from the pages containing its former bundle companions by 1926.<sup>46</sup>)

Just a few months after the “Foxes” manuscript was put up for resale in 1925, Conan Doyle and Jean opened The Psychic Bookshop in central London. This combination bookstore, library, publishing house, and museum was dedicated to advancing the spiritualist movement.<sup>47</sup> Conan Doyle continued to invest heavily in spiritualism; one biographer estimated that he spent a substantial portion of his fortune on the quest, “reckoned to be in the region of £250,000 at the time.”<sup>48</sup> Despite never turning a profit, The Psychic Bookshop continued operations for several years, closing shortly after Conan Doyle’s 1930 death from a heart attack.<sup>49</sup>

44. *Book-Prices Current 1924-1925*, 294. *Sir Nigel* sold for £30.

45. Maggs Bros., *English Literature of the 19th & 20th Centuries: Being a Selection of First and Early Editions of the Works of Esteemed Authors & Book Illustrators: Together with Books on Sports and Pastimes*, Catalogue No. 511 (1928), 146; Maggs Bros., *Autograph Letters and Historical Documents*, Catalogue No. 513 (Christmas 1928), 72-73.

46. Maggs Bros., *English Literature of the 19th & 20th Centuries: Books on Sports & Pastimes*, Catalogue No. 460 (1925), 176; Maggs Bros., *Autograph Letters, Historical Documents, and Authors’ Original Manuscripts*, Catalogue No. 486 (1926), 68-69.

47. See Booth, *Doctor and the Detective*, 332; Stashower, *Teller of Tales*, 399.

48. Booth, *Doctor and the Detective*, 332. This same figure is reported in Carr, *Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*, 278. It is unclear whether Carr’s £250,000 estimate was Conan Doyle’s spending at the time, or if the figure was already adjusted for inflation in the 1949 biography. Either way, the amount would equal multimillions today.

49. Stashower, *Teller of Tales*, 399-400. The *New York Times* announced the bookshop’s imminent closure in early 1931. “News of Literary London,” *New York Times* (January 18, 1931), 66.



Figure 5: The gallery where the “Foxes” manuscript almost certainly was displayed after it was acquired by Maggs Bros. in 1925. “View of Ground Floor, 34 & 35 Conduit Street, London,” in *Views of Some of the Rooms in the House of Maggs Brothers* (London: Emery Walker Ltd., 1927); Ed Maggs, email to Ross Davies, May 28, 2021.

## 1945: THE HOGAN SALE

The “Foxes” manuscript next resurfaced in New York, as part of the massive auction of collector Frank J. Hogan’s estate at the Parke-Bernet Galleries.<sup>50</sup> Created by former partners at the American Art Association, Parke-Bernet was now housed in the same East Fifty-Seventh Street location where “Foxes” first sold in 1923.<sup>51</sup> A copy of the description has been cut out from the auction catalogue and pasted into the manuscript’s front matter:

246. DOYLE, SIR A. CONAN. AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT S. “A. Conan Doyle,” entitled “*The King of the Foxes*”. 12¼ pp., folio. Bound in full vellum.

THE AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT OF DOYLE’S SHORT STORY “The King of the Foxes”, written in ink, with a number of autograph corrections and interlineations. The author himself preserved the manuscript by having

it neatly bound in vellum, supplying the title page in his own handwriting and also affixing the title and his name on the cover.<sup>52</sup>

Frank J. Hogan was the legendary attorney who founded powerhouse law firm Hogan & Hartson (now Hogan Lovells). His distinguished career sprouted from hardscrabble roots. Born on January 12, 1877 in Brooklyn to Irish immigrants, young Francis lost his father to tuberculosis by age five, and was the only one of the five children in his family to survive to adulthood.<sup>53</sup> Due to his own ill health, by age seven Hogan was sent to live with an aunt in South Carolina. He dropped out of school by age twelve to work in the stockroom of a store, where he developed his lifelong love of reading outside of a formal classroom. Various clerk positions soon led to progressively more responsible civilian postings in the War Department during

50. Parke-Bernet Galleries Inc., *The Frank J. Hogan Library, Part Two: English Literature, Mainly of the XVIII and XIX Centuries: First Editions, Autograph Letters, Manuscripts*, No. 665 (1945), 76.

51. Norton, *100 Years of Collecting in America*, 18.

52. Parke-Bernet Galleries, *The Frank J. Hogan Library, Part Two*, 76.

53. Lester Cohen, *Frank Hogan Remembered: Reminiscences* (Washington, DC: Hogan & Hartson, 1985), 7.

the Spanish-American War.<sup>54</sup> Hogan married Mary Cecile Adair in Savannah, Georgia, on Valentine's Day 1899.<sup>55</sup> After moving to Washington, DC with his new wife and his mother, Hogan began his legal studies in Georgetown's night program, graduating in 1902 at the top of his class.<sup>56</sup>

He began his own law practice in 1904, which future partner Nelson T. Hartson joined in 1925.<sup>57</sup> Hogan built his legal reputation on successfully defending such high-profile clients as oil magnate Edward Doheny in the Teapot Dome scandal (for which he was reportedly paid \$1,000,000) and philanthropist Andrew Mellon in his tax fraud trial.<sup>58</sup> *Newsweek* once declared, "many a Goliath of industry or finance has successfully hidden from Federal legal assaults behind Hogan's 5-foot form."<sup>59</sup> Capping his distinguished career as a trial lawyer, Hogan also served as President of the American Bar Association from 1938 to 1939.<sup>60</sup>

It is unclear how and when the "Foxes" manuscript came into Hogan's possession. He may have purchased it directly from Maggs Bros. (who acquired it at the 1925 Hodgsons auction), or it may have passed through other hands before it reached his. Hogan did not begin his own book-collecting until 1931, when he purchased a copy of Blackstone's *Commentaries*.<sup>61</sup> His personal library soon became as remarkable as his legal work, with *Newsweek* writing in 1936, "Frank J. Hogan, Washington's best-known trial lawyer, collects rare books, first editions, and the scalps of government attorneys."<sup>62</sup> He amassed his collection quickly, thanks to the rock-bottom prices of the Depression era.<sup>63</sup>

Arthur Conan Doyle was never a focus of Hogan's collection, although he once expressed an interest in

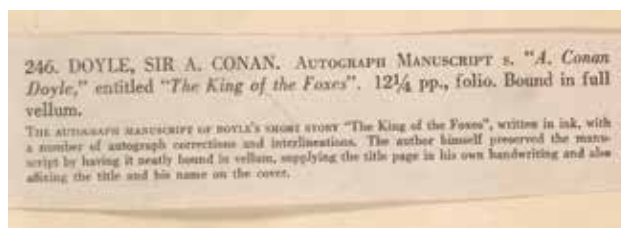


Figure 6 (top): Catalogue entry 246 from the 1945 Frank Hogan sale, pasted into the front matter of the "Foxes" manuscript.

Figure 7 (above): Frank J. Hogan (left) with his client Edward L. Doheny, circa 1924 (Library of Congress, National Photo Company Collection).

collecting Thomas Hardy (a contemporary of Conan Doyle) to the bibliographer at Philadelphia's Rosenbach Company. Appalled, she informed him "that I could not understand why anyone should want to collect Thomas Hardy" and steered him toward their Elizabethan literature instead.<sup>64</sup> A 1939 examination of Hogan's library in *The Colophon* did not mention Conan Doyle, although it provided a lengthy description of more than a dozen other "English moderns" (Hardy included) in his collection.<sup>65</sup>

One might reasonably suspect that Hogan acquired "Foxes" through the Rosenbach Company, from whom he purchased regularly. The company and its co-founder, Dr. A.S.W. Rosenbach, maintained a strong presence in the London rare book market, including the 1933 auction at Sotheby's where a company buyer

54. William L. Ransom, "Frank J. Hogan - 1877-1944," *American Bar Association Journal* 30, no. 7 (July 1944), 394.

55. Chatham County (Georgia) Marriage License, issued February 14, 1899.

56. Ransom, "Frank J. Hogan - 1877-1944," 394; "Frank J. Hogan, 67, Ex-Head of U.S. Bar," *New York Times* (May 17, 1944), 19.

57. David M. Walden, "Hogan & Hartson L.L.P.," in Tina Grant, ed., *International Directory of Company Histories* (Detroit: St. James' Press, 2002), 44:220.

58. "Rich Men Scared," *Time* (March 11, 1935), 17. Doheny's wife Estelle would later become a world-renowned book collector herself, partly due to Hogan's encouragement. Nicholas A. Basbanes, *A Gentle Madness: Bibliophiles, Bibliomanes, and the Eternal Passion for Books* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1995), 218.

59. "LOBBIES: Committee Bedeviled Not the Bedeviler for a Time," *News-week* (March 21, 1936), 14.

60. Ransom, "Frank J. Hogan - 1877-1944," 393.

61. Percy Horace Muir, "The Library of Frank Hogan," *Times Literary Supplement* (London) (July 28, 1945), 360.

62. "LOBBIES: Committee Bedeviled," 14.

63. John Carter, "The Library of Frank Hogan at Washington, D.C.," *The Colophon: New Graphic Series* (September 1939), 56-58.

64. E. Millicent Sowerby, *Rare People and Rare Books* (London: Constable, 1967), 207. Hogan then surprised her by purchasing thousands of dollars' worth of books that day, something that no one else had done at the Rosenbach for some time, "[o]wing to the Depression." Sowerby, *Rare People and Rare Books*, 208.

65. Carter, "The Library of Frank Hogan at Washington, D.C.," 58-60.



Figure 8: This building, which filled the east side of Madison Avenue from East 56th Street to East 57th Street in New York City (the view here is south down Madison), twice briefly housed the manuscript of “*The King of the Foxes*” – during its first public sale in 1923 (by the American Art Association) and during its third public sale in 1945 (by Parke-Bernet Galleries). John Wallace Gillies, “American Art Association Building in New York City, 1922” (Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art, American Art Association Records).

procured a pristine First Folio of Shakespeare for Hogan’s collection.<sup>66</sup> Rosenbach had dealings with virtually every bookseller in London, either by direct purchase or through consignment arrangements.<sup>67</sup> He was also no stranger to Maggs Bros.: In 1924, Rosenbach famously purchased a collection of Napoleonic relics that Maggs had obtained from the family of Abbé Vignali, the priest who conducted Bonaparte’s last rites. The collection included, among clothes and other personal effects, the emperor’s penis (allegedly severed postmortem by Vignali). Rosenbach delighted in displaying his acquisition for the next quarter century, with exhibition catalogues and newspapers politely describing the artifact as a “mummified tendon.”<sup>68</sup>

66. Mary Day Winn, “America’s Book Collector Number One,” *Sunday Star* (Washington, DC) (July 30, 1933), 10; Basbanes, *A Gentle Madness*, 216-17.

67. Edwin Wolf 2nd and John F. Fleming, “The Conquests of Dr. Rosenbach,” *Horizon: A Magazine of the Arts* (November 1960), 99.

68. *Ibid.*; see also “Relics of Napoleon to be Shown Here: Death Mask, White Breeches, and Bit of Emperor’s Body Arrive in New York,” *New*

Beyond his known dealings with Maggs Bros., Rosenbach traded in Conan Doyle rarities, once purchasing the author’s crime reference library for himself and enthusing to the press about the handwritten marginalia found within.<sup>69</sup> But there is no mention of the manuscript in private correspondence between Hogan and Rosenbach, nor a sale record for “Foxes” in the Rosenbach archives.<sup>70</sup> Of course, Hogan also patronized other booksellers (including Los Angeles’s Maxwell Hunley and Jake Zeitlin), any one of whom could have been the supplier.<sup>71</sup>

*York Times* (May 11, 1924), E2; Judith Pascoe, “Collect-Me-Nots,” *New York Times* (May 17, 2007), A25.

69. Winn, “America’s Book Collector Number One,” 13.

70. Jobi Zink, Registrar at The Rosenbach, email message to author, October 15, 2020.

71. Madeleine B. Stern, *Antiquarian Bookselling in the United States: A History from the Origins to the 1940s* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985), 161-64.



Considering the relative dearth of Conan Doyle materials in Hogan's collection, it is also possible that the "Foxes" manuscript was a gift. However and whenever it came into Hogan's hands, he added it to his large library, pasting a slightly-askew bookplate in the center of the inside cover: "*Ex Libris* Frank J. Hogan" in script, encircled by the quotation "THE TRUE UNIVERSITY OF THESE DAYS IS A COLLECTION OF BOOKS. – CARLYLE."

During his year of service as ABA president, Hogan was diagnosed with the early stages of Parkinson's disease.<sup>72</sup> As his health deteriorated in the late 1930s, his book buying slowed, and then stopped by 1942.<sup>73</sup> Still, his dozen years of voracious collecting "brought together on the top floor of his Washington home in Sheridan Circle one of the world's finest private collections of priceless books. He knew and loved their contents."<sup>74</sup>

Hogan died on May 15, 1944, after a long illness.<sup>75</sup> He was survived by his widow, their daughter, and three grandchildren.<sup>76</sup> Many expected Hogan to donate the collection to an institution, as he had with a 1941 gift to the Library of Congress containing 86 rare children's books from 1775–1850.<sup>77</sup> Hogan *had* apparently once considered leaving his extensive library to Georgetown University; he changed his mind after a disappointing trip with a friend to view some manuscripts there, when a staff member presented them with dusty volumes from the basement after an hour of searching.<sup>78</sup> Instead, Hogan's will directed that his personal library be sold at public auction, and explained his reasoning:

I had thought of bequeathing my valuable books and collection of autographs and literary manuscript material, including my collection of first and rare editions of English and American literature, to some institution to be permanently kept together as a collection, but this idea I have abandoned in favor of a plan that will accomplish their dispersion among those coming after me, who

72. Cohen, *Frank Hogan Remembered*, 95.

73. Basbanes, *A Gentle Madness*, 220; Sowerby, *Rare People and Rare Books*, 219–20.

74. Ransom, "Frank J. Hogan – 1877–1944," 395.

75. *Ibid.*, 393.

76. "Frank J. Hogan, 67, Ex-Head of U.S. Bar," 19. The Hogans' only child, Dorothy, married John W. Guider in 1923, two years before he joined Hogan & Hartson. Two decades later, John and Dorothy Guider's daughter, Dorothy Adair Guider, would marry a bright-future young associate at the firm named Edward Bennett Williams. "Although the firm never had a nepotism policy," recalled one former partner, "these are the only family alliances in Hogan & Hartson history." Cohen, *Frank Hogan Remembered*, 39.

77. "Congress Library Gets Rare Primers," *New York Times* (January 6, 1941), 34.

78. David A. Randall, *Dukedom Large Enough* (New York: Random House, 1962), 309.



Figure 9: Frank J. Hogan bookplate affixed to the front paste-down of the "Foxes" manuscript.

will experience, as I have felt, a profound happiness and satisfaction in possessing these precious monuments of human thought and progress. There is something sacred in the spiritual and intimate companionship of a book, and I do not deem it fitting that these friends of many happy hours should repose in unloved and soulless captivity. Rather, I would send them out into the world again to be the intimates of others whose loving hands and understanding hearts will fill the place left vacant by my passing.<sup>79</sup>

The sale was ordered by the executors of Hogan's estate, the Riggs National Bank, which he had represented early in his career when the federal government sought to indict several of its officers for perjury in a securities-trading dispute.<sup>80</sup> The size of Hogan's collection required the auction to be held in multiple parts, from January 1945 to April 1946.<sup>81</sup> "The King of the

79. Basbanes, *A Gentle Madness*, 221.

80. "Rich Men Scared," 17. In this 1935 cover story on Hogan's career, *Time* described how a young and relatively unknown Hogan prevailed against government lawyers Louis Brandeis and Samuel Untermyer, making headlines first for subpoenaing former Presidents Roosevelt and Taft as character witnesses, and then taking the witness stand himself. Riggs retained Hogan as counsel from then on. The case is detailed in Paul Ryscavage, *The Riggs War, 1913 to 1916: Reform and Revenge* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2017).

81. Randall, *Dukedom Large Enough*, 311–12. Part I of the auction, held on January 23–24, 1945, focused on American literature; Part III, containing Hogan's Elizabethan and other early English literature collection, was sold in April 1946. Part IV of the auction, held in the afternoon of April 24, consisted of "comparatively minor pieces and reference works." Jacob Blanck, "News from the Rare Booksellers," *Publishers' Weekly* (May

Foxes" was listed in Part II (April 24-25, 1945), which focused on Hogan's collection of 18th- and 19th-century English literature.<sup>82</sup> The "Foxes" manuscript sold for \$80, a respectable but modest sum compared to the auction's marquee rare editions in Part III.<sup>83</sup> The entire auction grossed \$495,726.50, with Hogan's prized First Folio selling for \$50,000 and his copy of the *Canterbury Tales* for \$13,000.<sup>84</sup>

Commentators agreed that World War II depressed the prices for the rarest titles, with one close friend in the business estimating that Hogan's entire collection sold at a loss of approximately one-third. It was an outcome that Hogan might have found fitting, considering that his own library had been built on Depression-era bargains. His friend acknowledged that Hogan would likely "have cheerfully written off" the losses, knowing that his treasured books had found appreciative new homes.<sup>85</sup>

### 1952-53: DESTINATION DARTMOUTH

Perc S. Brown, the eventual Dartmouth donor, most likely bought "The King of the Foxes" at the Hogan sale in April 1945. Brown, an executive at the Nopco Chemical Company, definitely purchased other items at the Hogan auction, including several rare editions from Herman Melville's library.<sup>86</sup> Like Hogan, Brown was an avid collector of rare books and manuscripts. However, Brown did not share Hogan's reluctance to donate items to libraries and museums; he presented materials regularly to the library at his sons' *alma mater*, as well as to other research libraries and historical societies.<sup>87</sup>

The last bookplate that was added to the manuscript's inside cover commemorated Brown's gift:

Dartmouth College  
Library  
*Presented by*  
PERC S. BROWN  
*in memory of his Wife*  
MARIE BEACH BROWN  
*mother of*  
BRUCE L. BROWN '41  
*and*  
GORDON S. BROWN '42  
*Through the Friends of the*  
*Dartmouth Library*<sup>88</sup>

Born in Bayard, New Mexico in 1895, Perc Summers Brown was educated in Portland, Oregon before serving in the Army's Third Machine Gun Battalion during World War I.<sup>89</sup> Allie Marie Beach was his high school sweetheart, a rancher's daughter who was a frequent presence in Portland newspapers' society pages.<sup>90</sup> The couple married in August 1917 in San Francisco, on a break from Perc's training at the Presidio.<sup>91</sup> During Perc's military service, Marie continued her studies at the University of Oregon. She graduated in 1920 and remained an active alumna of the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority.<sup>92</sup>

After Perc's war service, the young couple settled in the Seattle area, where sons Bruce Langdon Brown and Gordon Summers Brown were born in 1920 and 1921.<sup>93</sup> The Brown family lived frugally in these early years, at one point sharing a three-bedroom house with the patron who funded Perc's grain brokerage.<sup>94</sup> After his Brown-Jeklin & Co. was acquired by the National Oil Products Corporation (Nopco), Brown moved his family to San Francisco.<sup>95</sup>

In 1936, the family moved again, this time by boat, to the East Coast, relocating to New Jersey after stops

11, 1946), 2,578.

82. Colton Storm, ed., *American Book Prices Current: A Record of the Books, Manuscripts, Autographs, and Maps Sold in the Principal Auction Rooms of the United States During the Season 1944-1945* (New York: R.R. Bowker Co., 1945), 559.

83. "The Hogan Sale - II," *Times Literary Supplement* (London) (August 4, 1945), 372. Erroneously listed by the *Times* as "The King of the Forces," the \$80 price tag was the smallest of the Conan Doyle materials for sale: a copy of "Adventures" and "Memoirs" went for \$95, while the first English edition of "The Sign of Four" sold for \$170.

84. Blanck, "News from the Rare Booksellers," 2,578.

85. Randall, *Dukedom Large Enough*, 316.

86. "Moby-Dick: A Century of an American Classic; Catalogue of an Exhibition," *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 13, no. 2 (Winter 1952), 79-80. Perc Brown is listed as the lender for two of Melville's source materials for *Moby-Dick*, both obtained from Part I of the Hogan sale.

87. See, e.g., "The Brown Rarities," *Dartmouth College Library Bulletin* 5, no. 3 (April 1950), 40; Joseph R. Knowland, "News of the Society," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (June 1953), 176 (describing gift by Brown to the California Historical Society of Figueroa's *Manifiesto* in honor of second wife Tamara); "News from the Field," *College & Research Libraries* 19, no. 2 (March 1958), 141 (describing gift by Brown to U.C. Berkeley of several American rare editions).

88. Conan Doyle, "The King of the Foxes" (autograph manuscript).

89. "Perc S. Brown, 68, Collected Books," *New York Times* (November 16, 1963), 22.

90. Gertrude P. Corbett, "Society News," *Morning Oregonian* (August 18, 1917), 12; Gordon S. Brown, *To No Nameless End: A Memoir* (Seattle: Gordon S. Brown, 2004), 25-26.

91. Gertrude P. Corbett, "Society News," *Morning Oregonian* (August 22, 1917), 10; "Beta Omega," *The Kappa Kappa Gamma Directory* (1919), 233.

92. "News of the Classes," *Old Oregon* (June 1945), 7.

93. 1930 U.S. Census, King County, Washington, population schedule, enumeration district (ED) 17-25, sheet 59A, dwelling 415, family 415, Perc S. Brown; NARA microfilm publication T626.

94. Brown, *To No Nameless End*, 22.

95. *Ibid.*, 29; "Obituaries," *Rubber Age*, December 1963, 480.

in Central America, Colombia, and Cuba.<sup>96</sup> Closer to the auction houses of New York, and having by now achieved a good measure of success in business, it is likely that Perc Brown first took up book collecting during this period.<sup>97</sup> By September 1946, he had joined the California Historical Society, whose quarterly newsletter highlighted their new member's "growing collection of Western Americana."<sup>98</sup>

Both of Brown's sons attended Dartmouth, undoubtedly a point of pride for the self-made executive who had himself neither attended college nor finished high school.<sup>99</sup> Following their graduation, the Brown brothers served in the Navy during World War II; at the time that his father was likely purchasing "Foxes" and other items at the Hogan sale, younger son Gordon was on a flotilla in the Pacific theater.<sup>100</sup>

Marie Beach Brown, in whose memory the "Foxes" gift would be made, died of cancer in the late 1940s.<sup>101</sup> By the end of 1949, Perc had remarried to Tamara Leuba, a 32-year-old Russian emigrée whom the 54-year-old widower had met on a train.<sup>102</sup> Brown returned to California in 1950, in order to direct Nopco's new Western division.<sup>103</sup> Although he and his second wife called the Bay Area home for the rest of Perc's life, he maintained close ties with the Dartmouth College Library, gifting them parts of his collection each year for nearly two decades.<sup>104</sup> Herbert Faulkner West, the professor who founded Dartmouth's Friends of the Library organization, later described Brown as "the single greatest benefactor to the Library ... I think it is fair to say that as long as the college endures, future scholars and students will be indebted to the late Perc S. Brown for his genius as a collector."<sup>105</sup>

96. Brown, *To No Nameless End*, 252.

97. *Private Book Collectors in the United States and Canada*, 9th rev. ed. (New York: R.R. Bowker Co., 1948), 131. Perc Brown appears in the 1948 edition (with a stated specialty of "Americana"), but not the previous edition in 1936. *Holden's Private Book Collectors in the United States and Canada: With Mention of Their Hobbies*, 8th rev. ed. (New York: R.R. Bowker Co., 1936).

98. "Marginalia," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (September 1946), 285.

99. Brown, *To No Nameless End*, 77.

100. *Ibid.*, 46.

101. *Ibid.*, 71. Although her son cites his mother's death as occurring in 1949, some biographical directories for Perc S. Brown recorded Marie's year of death as 1948. *World Biography*, 5th ed. (Bethpage, NY: Institute for Research in Biography, Inc., 1954), 137.

102. Brown, *To No Nameless End*, 71-72; Petition for Naturalization, No. 100606 (February 24, 1950) (listing Perc and Tamara Brown's date of marriage as December 3, 1949).

103. "Nopco Forms Pacific Division," *New York Times* (April 8, 1950), 24.

104. Herbert F. West, "In Memoriam: Perc S. Brown," *Antiquarian Bookman* (March 2, 1964), 898.

105. Herbert Faulkner West, *The Impecunious Amateur Looks Back: The Autobiography of a Bookman* (Hanover, NH: Westholm Publications,

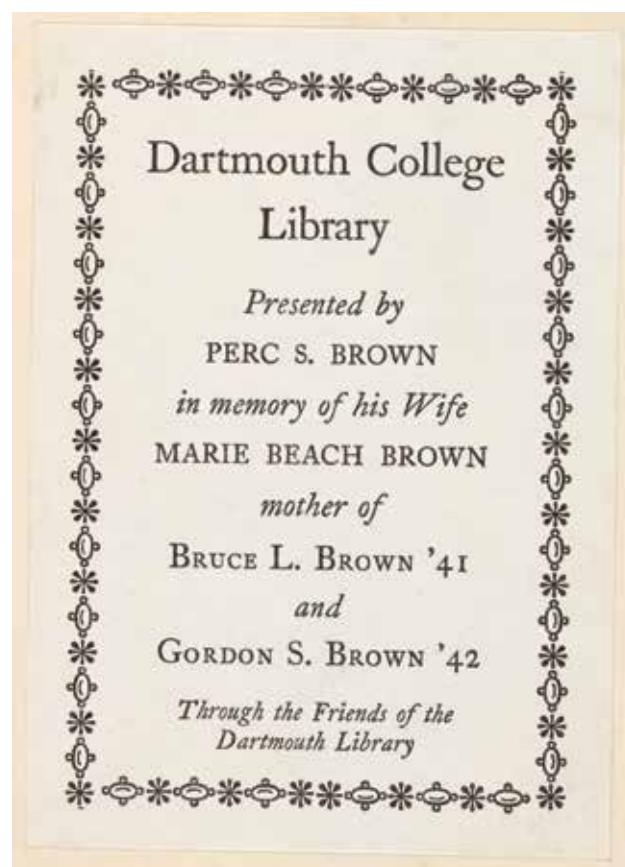


Figure 10: Dartmouth College Library bookplate commemorating Perc Brown donation, 1952-53, affixed to the front pastedown of the "Foxes" manuscript.

Shortly before his cross-country move, Brown donated 535 rare items to Dartmouth, a collection that the library described as "unmatched ... we have never before received so large a group of books which are singularly so remarkable."<sup>106</sup> He supplemented this gift the following year with 39 more books, including unspecified presentation copies of Arthur Conan Doyle.<sup>107</sup> The "Foxes" manuscript arrived the year after that, in a donation that included "two autograph manuscripts by Arthur Conan Doyle, a document signed by Lord Dartmouth (1774) ... [and] a most handsome and exciting Christmas present in the form of a rare first edition, first issue of Gray's *Elegy*."<sup>108</sup>

1966), 165-66.

106. "The Brown Rarities," *Dartmouth College Library Bulletin*, 40.

107. "Gifts," *Dartmouth College Library Bulletin* 5, no. 5 (February 1952), 74.

108. "Gifts," *Dartmouth College Library Bulletin* 5, no. 7 (April 1953), 120. The second Conan Doyle autograph manuscript was "The Terror of Blue John Gap," which is listed alongside "Foxes" in the library's catalog record. Arthur Conan Doyle et al., "Papers," Dartmouth College Library. The "Blue John Gap" manuscript first sold in the January 1923 American Art Association auction for \$55. *American Book-Prices Current 1922-1923*, 888.

Perc S. Brown died on November 14, 1963, following his own battle with cancer.<sup>109</sup> He had retired from Nopco in 1960, but kept busy with the Friends organizations for various libraries, including Dartmouth as well as Berkeley's Bancroft Library and the Orinda (Contra Costa County) Public Library.<sup>110</sup> Brown was survived by second wife Tamara, as well as his two sons with Marie Beach Brown.<sup>111</sup> After their war service, the Brown brothers both continued their family's tradition of extensive travels before eventually returning to their hometown. Older brother Bruce, a real estate developer, moved from the Bay Area to Little Rock, Arkansas before re-settling in Seattle in 1990.<sup>112</sup> Younger brother Gordon toured the globe, claiming to have visited every country on Earth but five; he, too, maintained a home in Seattle, where he was a local artist of some repute.<sup>113</sup> Gordon (known to friends and art patrons as "Gordini") died in July 2010; Bruce passed away in December 2013.<sup>114</sup>

## 2020: CLOSING HUNT

Some mysteries remain unsolved along the "Foxes" manuscript's path to Dartmouth, most significantly the identity of the January 1923 buyer as well as the circumstances of Frank Hogan's acquisition sometime between the start of his book-collecting in 1931 and the illness that stopped it in 1942. It is clear, though, that the manuscript traversed the Atlantic Ocean more than once in the three decades between its first sale in 1923 and its arrival at Dartmouth in 1952. It passed from its renowned author to a distinguished lawyer and then to a successful business executive, with stops at major auction houses in New York and London along the way.

Just as all of the players in this story have long since passed, most of the places described here are no longer recognizable. Conan Doyle's Undershaw now houses the Stepping Stones School, a private academy for special-needs children.<sup>115</sup> The luxe East Fifty-Seventh Street auction house in Manhattan, where "Foxes" sold in both 1923 and 1945, was demolished for an office tower after the Parke-Bernet Galleries moved to 980 Madison Avenue in 1949.<sup>116</sup> In January 1966, these

Madison Avenue galleries would house an auction featuring some rare books and manuscripts from the estate of Perc S. Brown.<sup>117</sup> Parke-Bernet itself was acquired by Sotheby's in the 1960s; after several decades as "Sotheby Parke Bernet," the company rebranded as simply "Sotheby's" in 1983.<sup>118</sup> London's Hodgson & Co., whose auction house at 115 Chancery Lane was the site of the 1925 "Foxes" sale, met a similar fate: the company was absorbed by Sotheby's in 1967, and its former building is now occupied by a cocktail bar and restaurant.<sup>119</sup> Maggs Bros., which purchased "Foxes" at the Hodgsons auction, moved from its 1925 location on Conduit Street in 1938; within two years, the booksellers' former building would be destroyed in the Blitz.<sup>120</sup> Hogan's home on Sheridan Circle in Washington, DC, which housed his impressive library on the top floor, is now the site of the Korean Embassy.<sup>121</sup> Whatever misgivings Hogan may have harbored about sealing his beloved books in an institution, Dartmouth has remained one of the few constants in the history of "The King of the Foxes," preserving it for nearly seven decades and counting. While the autograph manuscript never commanded high prices at auction, it tells a richer tale for its travels.

109. "Perc S. Brown, 68, Collected Books," *New York Times* (November 16, 1963), 22.

110. Bertha D. Hellum, "In Memoriam: Perc S. Brown," *Antiquarian Bookman* (March 2, 1964), 898.

111. "Perc S. Brown, 68, Collected Books," *New York Times*, 22.

112. "Bruce Langdon Brown," Legacy.com (accessed May 22, 2020).

113. "Gordon Summers Brown," Legacy.com (accessed May 22, 2020).

114. "Bruce Langdon Brown," Legacy.com (accessed May 22, 2020).

115. "Undershaw," Stepping Stones School (accessed May 23, 2020), [www.steppingstones.org.uk](http://www.steppingstones.org.uk).

116. Norton, *100 Years of Collecting in America*, 19.

117. Parke-Bernet Galleries, *MSS & Rare Books: Important Lincoln Material: Property of the Estate of the Late Perc S. Brown, Col. George A. Spiegelberg, and Other Owners, Public Auction Wednesday, January 19 at 1:45 p.m., Sale No. 2399* (New York: Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., 1966).

118. Norton, *100 Years of Collecting in America*, 21.

119. O.F. Snelling, *Rare Books and Rarer People: Some Personal Reminiscences of "The Trade"* (London: Werner Shaw, 1982), 194-95; "About Us," Cigalon (accessed May 25, 2020), [www.cigalon.co.uk/about-us/](http://www.cigalon.co.uk/about-us/).

120. "An Introduction to the History of Maggs Bros.," Maggs Bros. Ltd. (accessed June 27, 2020), [www.maggs.com](http://www.maggs.com).

121. Sowerby, *Rare People and Rare Books*, 211.