

# Christine Macgregor's Illustrated Private Press Books

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*We are waiting impatiently for the telegram which will tell us [Molly] is through her second trial safely.*<sup>1</sup>

With these words Robert Barr Smith (1824-1915) heralded the imminent arrival into this world of his fifth grandchild.

The child, named Christine Margaret, was born on 23 January 1890 at Ballengeich, the house her parents were renting at Torrens Park, just two weeks after her grandfather wrote these words. She was the child — the second of six — of Joanna and Robert Barr Smith's son Tom, and his wife Mary Isobel (Molly).<sup>2</sup>

Christine Barr Smith's grandfather was reckoned in some quarters to be the richest man in Australia. He was certainly one of this state's greatest benefactors. One small but relevant example of Robert Barr Smith's generosity is represented in the Library of the University of Adelaide. It was named after him in 1899 in recognition of amounts totalling £9,000 that he had given to it in the previous twenty years, solely for the purpose of the acquisition of books. In all he gave to the University of Adelaide over £21,000 before he died. Christine's father carried on in his father's footsteps; in all, his gifts to the Library alone totalled over £55,000, the bulk of that used to finance the original library building.

Tom Elder Barr Smith's children inherited the habit of generous giving and service. They also inherited their grandparent's habit of collecting. Joanna Barr Smith (along with her children) was a great accumulator of Morris 8c Co. furnishings and other home wares. The Barr Smiths had the largest Morris 8c Co. account outside Britain and Joanna's account was Morris's fourth largest overall.<sup>4</sup> The Art Gallery of South Australia has been the great beneficiary of this material. In addition to furnishings and a huge range of other goods - on his trips to Britain Robert would send back to Adelaide thousands of plants - the Barr

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1. Robert Barr Smith, St. Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex, to Tom Barr Smith, Adelaide, 8 January 1890 in Fayette Gosse, ed., *Joanna and Robert: The Barr Smiths Life in Letters 1853-1919* (Adelaide: The Barr Smith Press, 1996), 136.

2. Tom Elder Barr Smith (1863-1941) married Mary Isobel Mitchell (1863-1941) in 1886.

3. Audrey Lady Tennyson, Government House, Adelaide, to Zacynthia Boyle (her mother), 14 June 1899 in Alexandra Hasluck, ed., *Audrey Tennyson's Vice-Regal Days: The Australian Letters of Audrey Lady Tennyson to her Mother Zacynthia Boyle, 1899-1903* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1978), 38.

4. Gosse, xxii.

Smiths amassed an enormous library which Robert fastidiously catalogued. Comprising many thousands of titles it was 'a formidable and catholic collection.'<sup>5</sup>

The generosity of the Barr Smith grandchildren was exemplary. Sir Tom Elder Barr Smith continued to make gifts to the University of Adelaide. His youngest sister Ursula Lady Haywood, a lover of books, music and particularly art, amassed one of the finest and most *avant-garde* art collections in Australia, leaving it together with her home 'Carrick Hill,' which housed it, to the people of South Australia. And Christine Macgregor, brought up in a household that was *not* bookish, inherited her grandmother's love of books, which absorbed her from an early age. A music lover and accomplished pianist, she made in 1966 a large endowment to the University of Adelaide to help fund the Elder Overseas Scholarships in Music. Her books, more than 4,700 of them, she gave to the University Library, named for her grandfather.

The young Christine Barr Smith grew up in a privileged and cultivated *milieu*. Her childhood must have been happy, in beautiful surroundings with adoring parents who were also totally devoted to each other. The family home was 'Birksgate,' left to her father by his maternal uncle Sir Thomas Elder when she was seven. Here her parents entertained on a grand scale and counted among their friends all of Adelaide's 'toffs' and those in the 'uppermost suckles' to use Robert's words.<sup>7</sup> Their guests included the Vice-Regal couple and their family. For example, Hallam Lord Tennyson (son of the poet) and his wife Audrey came to the opening meet of the Adelaide Hunt Club in 1899 soon after their arrival in South Australia.<sup>8</sup> Audrey described Tom and Molly as:

enormously rich. . . . They are quite young people [they were both thirty-six] & she is extremely pretty & nice, a Scotch girl he fell in love with when he was at Trinity [Hall]. . . . He is a very nice fellow too, & I should think they are very happy people. It is a terrible disappointment that she has 3 girls and only one boy . . .<sup>9</sup>

There were eventually four girls and two boys. Audrey herself had three boys.

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5. Gosse, xxvi.

6. M.I. Legoe, *A Family Affair* (Adelaide: by the author, 1982), 41.

7. Gosse, 229.

8. Hasluck, 38-39.

9. Audrey Lady Tennyson, Government House, to Zacynta Boyle (her mother), 14 June 1899, Hasluck, 38-39.

The level of the friendship between the Tennysons and Barr Smiths is indicated by Hallam's gifts of the poet's books to the Barr Smiths. In 1908 Joanna refers to one which was possibly intended as a wedding present to Joanna Barr Smith and also to other 'annotated volumes.'<sup>10</sup> Among the books from the Christine Macgregor bequest in Special Collections in the Barr Smith Library are two Tennyson gifts. The first, a volume of Tennyson's *Poems* published by Macmillan in 1900, is inscribed: 'Christine Barr Smith from Tennyson, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1900.' It is a very attractive edition with a special binding of cream vellum, gold tooled and hand-coloured with an art nouveau floral design by Cedric Chivers of Bath. This is the only book found in Special Collections by this author, which clearly emanates from Christine Barr Smith's childhood. A note lodged inside this volume from Tennyson's son, Hallam, to Tom Barr Smith dated 26 June 1911, clearly refers to the second gift volume. It states:

My Dear Barr Smith,  
 I hope your daughter, Mrs. Wright, received last week a volume of my father's poems which I ventured to send her with the best wishes of my wife & myself.  
 Yours sincerely  
 Tennyson

This second volume is inscribed in a succinct manner similar to the first: 'Christine Wright from Tennyson 1910.' Presumably a wedding gift, it is an 1893 reprint of the 1857 Moxon edition, 'the most famous book of [the] astonishing efflorescence' of illustration of the 1860s. The whole book is very elegant from its special green leather binding with beautiful decorative gold blocking on the very edges of the boards, its green and gold silk headbands and its gilt edges all round, to its marbled endpapers in blue, khaki and cream. Printed on a firm, smooth, thick, light cream paper, it is copiously illustrated with engravings specially prepared after originals by T. Cresswick, J. E. Millais, W. H. Hunt, W. Mulready, J. C. Horsley, D. G. Rossetti, C. Stanfield and D. Maclise. The Dalziel brothers engraved most of the illustrations of the Pre-Raphaelites, but as Bland notes, the combination of eight illustrators and five different engravers results in disharmony, also evident in the relationship between the images and the typography.<sup>12</sup>

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10. Gosse, 237.

11. David Bland, *The Illustration of Books* (London: Faber and Faber, 1962), 75.

12. Bland, 75-76.

Before we become involved with the newly married young woman, let us return, briefly, to her childhood. She was not Joanna's favourite grandchild. According to her younger sister, Molly (Legoe), the granddaughters, who all adored her, vied for Joanna's favour. In Molly's estimation, their eldest sister, Joanna and their cousin Betty (Hawker) proved favourites, as Joanna gave them 'the most magnificent diamonds.' Christine herself was very fond of that particular gem and later had some of her own very large 'sparklers'. However, Joanna did declare that 'the dear little wicked Chris lies very near my heart.'

She really was wicked. This little iconoclast smashed the noses off some of the faces carved into rocks at the family's hills summer residence 'Wairoa.'

In fact the grandmother spoiled all the cousins, treating them to strawberry feasts at the Largs Pier Hotel, visits to the theatre, dress-up parties at the family's own private theatre at Torrens Park, fine opals from Queensland, and extravagant birthday parties at which the girls wore pastel coloured *crepe-de-chine* dresses with bright silk sashes and all the children received presents such as mother-of pearl handled pocket knives for the boys and pearl-studded gold locket for the girls.

Christine and her elder sister, Joanna (Joe) were educated at home by a governess and led sheltered lives, occupying their leisure time in needlework and music and tennis until 'coming out' at eighteen in expensive dresses at grand dances. Both were married at only twenty, Joanna in 1908 and Christine in 1910.<sup>17</sup>

Christine's first husband, Joss Wright, was Aide-de-Camp to the Governor at the time, Sir Day Hort Bosanquet. Their wedding was not such a grand affair as that of her parents, which was preceded literally by a procession of horse-drawn carriages with liveried coachmen from Torrens Park to Walkerville. But it was in the same church, presided over by the same minister. Two days after the wedding, the *Register* reported:

The marriage of Capt. Edwin Wright, A.D.C. to His Excellency the Governor (Sir Day Hort Bosanquet), and Miss Christabel [sic] Barr Smith, second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Barr Smith, was celebrated at St. Andrew's Church, Walkerville, on Tuesday afternoon. His Excel-

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13. Gosse, xxvi.

14. Gosse, 182.

15. Gosse, 231

16. Gosse, 154, 175, 179, 175; C. W. Bonython, ed., *I'm No Lady: The Reminiscences of Constance Jean, Lady Bonython, O.B.E., 1891-?* (Adelaide: by the editor, 1976-1981), 4.

17. Legoe, 36-38.

lency and Lady Bosanquet with their daughters were present. The church was prettily decorated. The Ven. Archdeacon Dove performed the ceremony, assisted by the Rev. A. W. Clampett. The wedding was a quiet one and only intimate friends and the relations were present. Capt. and Mrs. Wright left for the eastern states in the afternoon. They joined the train at Aldgate."

The modest celebration may have resulted from the hasty arrangements necessitated by Joss Wright's posting back to his regiment, the Third Dragoon Guards, for early in 1911 they were already in London where Joss Wright's regiment was involved with the coronation of George V. In fact the whole family (except for the eldest, now Mrs. Joanna Gosse) came to London for the coronation.

No doubt, it was some time during this short stay in England that Hallam Lord Tennyson sent the second volume of his father's poems to Christine Wright. The stay in England was indeed short for in 1912 Joss Wright was posted to Egypt and the young couple made their home there until World War I was declared. The Third Dragoon Guards were immediately recalled to England and were among the first sent to France. Tragically, Joss Wright was a very early casualty, killed in action at Ypres in November 1914 within a few months of the declaration of war. He was buried in the civilian cemetery at Ypres.

The young widow found refuge with her aunt (Joe Hawker) at her home 'Gate House' in Franfield, Sussex, for a short time at least. Despite her inclinations to the contrary, her father persuaded her to return home. She was back in Adelaide by the end of 1915. Her younger sister Molly recollected those days of early widowhood:

she came home unwillingly because she knew she would find it hard to fit in again into the home of her childhood. . . . Chris was highly strung and sensitive and had always been in trouble with her elders [remember her grandmother's reference to 'little wicked Chris?'] [and] was teased unmercifully. She grew up at Birksgate the only one who at that time was interested in her world of books and music, and she felt she was in an unsympathetic environment.

In later life this made her very tender to those whom she thought were badly treated or underprivileged. She was a very private person al-

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18. *South Australian Register* (Adelaide), 22 September 1910, 6.

19. Legoe, 40-41.

ways, and in those days of her early widowhood at Birksgate, she buried herself in music.

While music provided solace, Christine Wright also found some of those around her were now more interested in books. There are no records of books purchased or read at this time, but she did become involved in a book production enterprise. In 1917, with Catherine Stow<sup>21</sup> she compiled *A Gardening Calendar 1918*, which was published by G. Hassell & Son. Her cousin Joanna E. Giles designed the cover, which features an image reminiscent of *The Yellow Book* or *The Studio*. The book contains gardening tips and quotations along with the calendar, plus blank pages for the gardener's own notes. The interest in gardening, incidentally, was shared by many in the family.

It is clear that the attempt to resettle in Australia was not successful for once the war was over, in 1919, Christine Wright returned to England. She stayed for a short time in Bedfordshire with her late husband's parents and then became reacquainted with a man she had first met in Egypt. He was Major General Sir Reginald Buckland, a widower the same age as her father. Within a short time, probably in March or April 1920,<sup>23</sup> they were married. During their marriage the Bucklands lived in Sussex - at least until 1930 - and then in London.

It is during the course of this marriage, from 1920 to 1933, that the first real evidence of a serious interest in book collecting emerges. Lady Buckland's proximity to London, her own secure financial situation and the low prices of books at this time, combined with the ready availability of beautiful limited editions in the heyday of the second generation Private Press Movement, provided her with innumerable opportunities to buy.

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20. Legoe, 41.

21. Catherine Stow (1856-1940) was a good friend to the Barr Smiths. She will be remembered for her interest - as a writer and collector - in Aboriginal legends.

22. Joanna E. Giles (1893-1952), a 'thoroughly modern spinster,' went to England in about 1920, wrote two detective novels and learned to fly but not to navigate. 'She prided herself on her likeness to Savonarola.' (Gosse, 255).

23. Clause 14 in her will refers to a Deed of Settlement between herself and Major General Buckland dated 17 March 1920.



The evidence for particular book purchases at this time is largely inconclusive. However, all three of the great private presses from this period — Nonesuch, Gregynog and Golden Cockerel - are well represented in the collection. In common with other 'serious' collectors, Christine Macgregor rarely made marks of her own on important or valuable items, and scrupulously preserved those already there. So while her name or dates do not often appear, publishers, booksellers or previous owners' details often do. However, it is often difficult for someone like me to decipher a bookseller's 'hieroglyphics.' It cannot always be assumed, but sometimes a complete absence of marks indicates that a book was bought on subscription at publication. There are some books in the collection which have a 'Christine Buckland' bookplate pasted in, with no or few other

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24. I have not encountered any books with a Christine *Wright* bookplate. The bookplates illustrated in this article are reproduced courtesy of Special Collections, Barr Smith Library, University of Adelaide.

marks, which suggests that they were bought during the marriage. Among them are Nicholas Breton's *The Twelve Moneths* (Golden Cockerel, 1927), illustrated by Eric Ravilious;<sup>25</sup> *Ladies' Pocket Book of Etiquette* by A.F. (Golden Cockerel, 1928), illustrated by Hester Sainsbury;<sup>26</sup> and Leonid Andreev's *Abyss* (Golden Cockerel, 1929), illustrated by Ivan Lebedeff.<sup>27</sup> These books have no marks or erasures at all apart from the bookplates and, if they were all bought at this time, provide evidence of a developing knowledge of and sensitivity to good modern design and an *avant-garde* taste in illustration.

There is one important book for which absolute evidence of purchase at publication does exist. This is Nonesuch Press's magnificent *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* of Plutarch (1930), illustrated by Thomas Poulton. The evidence is the original account, lodged in one of the volumes, from John 8c Edward Bumpus Ltd., Booksellers - dated 13 March 1930 - for volumes two and three. Volumes two and three were published on 12 March 1930. There is no indication of a purchase date for volumes one (published 11 September 1929) or four and five (published 27 October 1930), but given the presence of the full set and the consistency of its condition, which is excellent and unmarked, it is not unreasonable to conclude that all volumes were purchased on subscription from Bumpus's as they were published.<sup>28</sup>

Other books in the bequest which are free of marks and which, due to high demand or small editions, may have been purchased on subscription include the only three books illustrated by E. McKnight Kauffer for Nonesuch. Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* was issued in an edition of 750 in December 1925, after its announcement over two years previously. Melville's *Benito Cereno* was published in December 1926 in a much larger edition of 1650, but was also distributed in America where it was very popular. The book was heavily over-subscribed and in 1927 was 'crowned' by the Double Crown Club as one of the

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25. Breton was a minor Elizabethan poet. Ravilious, in modern settings conveys the naivety of Breton's text.

26. Another 'period piece,' but this time the illustrations conform to the period.

27. The heavy, sensuous (even coarse) wood engravings here provide an interesting contrast to the fine white line and reserved style found so often among the English engravers.

28. The brown (serviceable) buckram covered boards belie the luxury of the insides. Demonstrating Nonesuch Press's preparedness to forsake tradition, the illustrations are not wood engravings, or even scraperboard drawings, but reverse blocks. Tom Poulton originally drew all the white lines in black. The plates were printed variously in black, grey and dark brown. Some included portraits drawn from life, for example, the Gracchi are Francis Meynell and Harold Hobson.

29. This was published at the suggestion of the artist who frequently quoted from it. Kauffer's illustrations were reproduced from zinc blocks made photographically from his designs.



three most attractive books published in 1926, thus ensuring its popularity and further demand. The third book featuring Kauffer was also heavily over-subscribed well before publication. Limited to fewer than 1500 copies, with American subscribers demanding over a third of them, it did not come out until December 1930, despite an initial announcement over three years previously. This was the two volume boxed set of Cervantes' *Don Quixote de la Mancha*. Given the circumstances of their publication, the presence of these three books in the collection, in fine condition with no marks, suggests a collector's serious interest in the publisher, in this case working with a particular illustrator. Further, the presence of other rare illustrated volumes of similar quality, which may have entered the collection at this time, shows that Christine Buckland was by now a discerning book collector of considerable sensibility.

Another book worth mentioning at this point is *A Plurality of Worlds* by Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle, published in 1929, for it too was stencilled at Curwen Press - without keylines - pure *pochoir*! Described by Meynell as a 'little peach of a book' with its illustrations by Thomas Poulton, this one was definitely bought in Australia after 1945.

In 1933 Sir Reginald Buckland, or 'Uncle Bucky' as he was affectionately remembered by his Australian nephews, was killed in a road accident (he was knocked down by a motor car). Widowed for a second time, Christine Buckland did not succumb to pressures from home and remained in London.

It is clear from the evidence that we have of books purchased during the 1920s and 1930s, that Lady Buckland had a well-developed interest in history, particularly classical history and mythology. This interest was kindled further by visits to her friend, Muriel Lys in Oxford, where she met Duncan Macgregor, who was to become her third husband. He was a don in Classics at Balliol College. After their marriage in 1937 they travelled to Greece exploring various archaeological sites (which Christine enjoyed immensely), on donkeys (which she did not!).

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30. John Dreyfus, *A History of the Nonesuch Press*, introduction by Geoffrey Keynes (London: Nonesuch Press, 1981), 195.

31. Dreyfus, 217. In the case of both this and the previous the key design was printed first in black (*Benito Cereno*) or grey (*Don Quixote*) and the colours applied by a stencil process perfected by the Curwen Press known as *pochoir*. *Don Quixote* took about three years to produce. E. McKnight Kauffer was very slow with the drawings. But it was worth the wait for it is a very beautiful book. The attention to detail is breathtaking. Francis Meynell declared, 'The frontispiece to the first volume I esteem to be the finest of any modern book that I know.' *The Nonesuch Century: An Appraisal* by A. J. A. Symons, a *Personal Note* by Francis Meynell, and a *Bibliography* by Desmond Flower, of the First Hundred Books Issued by the Nonesuch Press, 1923-1934 London: Nonesuch Press, 1936.

With her third marriage and life in Oxford, Christine Macgregor found a *milieu* which suited her perfectly and in which she was very happy. The happiness was to be short-lived, however, as Duncan Macgregor died of 'consumption' in 1939.<sup>32</sup> She stayed on in Oxford for another six years, seeing out the whole of the Second World War there. It is clear from correspondence with her brother Tom, though, that she was anxious to return to Australia before the end of the war. In 1945, due to Tom's efforts here, passage was finally arranged for August. This time, returning to Australia for good, she brought all her possessions with her, including all her books. For a time she lived with her sister Ursula Haywood at Carrick Hill, but had nowhere to keep her books.

However, her problem was solved by the acquaintance made soon after her arrival, with Harry Muir. She was a customer at his shop, Beck Book Company in Ruthven Mansions, Pulteney Street. The relationship between the bookseller and his new customer was marked by an immediate rapport for they had similar interests and tastes in books, notably special and private press books and illustrated books. Harry Muir was interested in Australian private presses and was concerned to support them. Christine Macgregor was most keen to learn more about them, as well as to expand her collection of English, European and American fine editions. Buying more books must have been tempting but difficult for her as she had nowhere to keep those she already owned.

Harry Muir came up with a solution. At the narrow back end of his shop under Ruthven Mansions were some spare shelves, which he offered her. This offer she took up gladly, moving her books in and making special curtains to protect 'her shelves.' Made of humble burlap, which was all that was available due to rationing, the curtains were neatly tied down the middle with tapes. Thereafter, Mrs. Macgregor was able to come and go, 'borrowing' from her own private library. There is ample evidence that she did not hesitate to add to it, too, purchasing large numbers of books from Beck Book Company as well as other Australian firms including N. W. Seward and A. H. Spencer in Melbourne and Preece's in Adelaide.

At about this time Christine Macgregor and her sister Molly Legoe had bookplates designed by Adrian Feint, the Australian illustrator, printmaker and painter. The Christine Macgregor bookplate appears in numerous books, thus locating their purchase in the post World War II period in Australia.

In December 1945 Mr. Ronald Finlayson, the eminent barrister, died. The reputation and significance of Mr. Finlayson's book collection was sufficient to

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32. Correll, 5; Legoe interview.

33. Marcie Muir, interviews by author, notes, Adelaide, 8 August 1997 and 30 January 2001.

excite Harry Muir considerably when he was asked to value it for probate. Marcie Collett, later Harry's wife, accompanied him so that she could see the books herself. Marcie Muir recalled that most of Ronald Finlayson's library:

had been packed up for the war, and it lay in 11 large packing cases on the floor of his house when Harry and I went to do the valuation. The astonishment and elation when he opened the first case was caused by the stunning array of vellum bindings, brilliant gilt lettering and decorations and rich morocco spines. It seemed as if he had been lucky to open the best case first, but as he continued, his amazement was no less with each case he opened. It was a booklover's dream. . . . The excitement was exhausting and the tension increased later when the lawyers called tenders for the purchase of the library. There was bound to be interstate competition . . . and finance had to be arranged if he should be given the opportunity to purchase it.

But Harry Muir did tender successfully for the books thus ensuring their passage through Beck Book Company to his customers. Before sale, each book was specially marked in Harry Muir's special bookseller's way with the addition of an 'F' for Finlayson.

In the vanguard of those who beat a path to snap up books from the Finlayson estate in June 1946<sup>35</sup> were the Barr Smith sisters Ursula Haywood and Christine Macgregor. One particular book was the subject of fierce competition between the sisters. Harry Muir intervened in the dispute, declaring that he too wished to purchase it,<sup>36</sup> and so they agreed to draw straws for it. Christine won and, humble in victory, promised to leave the book to Harry in her will.<sup>37</sup> True to her word, and to the Muirs' surprise, she did. *Daphnis et Chloe* was the only book in her entire collection which was left to a named beneficiary and did not go initially to the Barr Smith Library.<sup>38</sup>

Available records do not indicate how many books were in the Finlayson estate, or how many were dispersed before Mr. Finlayson's death. I don't know how many of them Christine Macgregor bought altogether. However, since Christine Macgregor did not remove marks from her books and Harry Muir carefully identified all the Finlayson books with an initial 'F' next to the price at

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34. Marcie Muir, *Harry Muir*, 27-28.

35. State Library of South Australia, correspondence records.

36. Harry Muir never 'gave' himself books from the shop, but always *bought* them, insisting that other family members do the same.

37. Sibling rivalry may well have played a part in this act of generosity towards Harry Muir.

38. Muir interview, 8 August 1997.

the top right hand corner of the first free endpaper, it is possible to identify all the books from the estate which remained in her collection. Of the 175 books selected for my research (including the Ashendene *Daphnis et Chloe*), just over a quarter of them were originally in Mr. Finlayson's collection. In addition, as a matter of some interest, nearly half of the 175 books included in my study of illustrated British Private Press products, were bought from Harry Muir.<sup>39</sup>

The special treasures among those from the Finlayson estate include the grandest of the four Kelmscotts, *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*, 1897; two of the four Vale Press books, *Julia Domna* and *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, both from 1903;<sup>41</sup> the 1907 *Areopagitica*, famous for its (unacknowledged) typography and calligraphy by Edward Johnstone, representing one third of the Doves Press books; and the *Daphnis et Chloe*, one third also of the Ashendene Press component of the collection. In addition to embellishing the 'first generation' private press part of the collection, Finlayson books from the 1920s and 1930s also abound. Three of the four Beaumont Press books; the only full Curwen Press publication; nine of the forty-six pre World War II illustrated Golden Cockerels; three of the nine Gregynog books including the magnificent *Stealing of the Mare*, 1930; twenty-two of the thirty-seven decorated Nonesuch Press books including the elegant and 'important' *Mask of Comus* from 1937;<sup>42</sup> and all three Pear Tree Press titles represent the 'second generation' private presses. In addition the only Halcyon Press book in the collection, a most *avant-garde* production of *The Fall of the House of Usher* from 1939, clearly indicates the sophistication of the aesthetic taste of both Ronald Finlayson and Christine Macgregor.

Christine Macgregor's story ended on 14 January 1974. In the last twenty-nine years of her life back in Australia she added enormously to her library. But more importantly she also enhanced the depth and quality of the collection through the later additions. She continued to buy from Golden Cockerel's post war prospectuses. Among her books are some of the finest Golden Cockerels from these years including *The Mabinogion* (1948) illustrated by Dorothea Braby who also illustrated *The Lottery Ticket*, 1945 and *Gilgamesh*, 1948. Four of the six books illustrated by Dorothea Braby for Christopher Sandford at Golden Cock-

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39. I rely on my interpretation of the bookseller's marks, which, for Beck Book Company, are very consistent.

40. Entirely designed by Morris, this is typically intense.

41. These have typically modest bindings designed by Charles Ricketts. The spreads show Ricketts's capacity to adapt his style from the Kelmscott/medieval influence for the Sidney to the nouveau classical for *Julia Domna*.

42. This is the one book that Francis Meynell chose, through illustration, to represent his Nonesuch Press in *English Printed Books* (London: Collins, 1948).

erel are in Christine Macgregor's collection. The only pre-war book, *Mr. Chambers and Persephone* from 1937, came from the Finlayson estate. Other post war Golden Cockerels purchased from 'The Beckery' include five titles illustrated by John Buckland Wright, two by Mark Severin and three by Clifford Webb. All of the later Australian purchases significantly complement and enhance the collection, establishing a strong character in which adventurous design in both typography and bindings and the best of contemporary illustration are distinguishing features.

Christine Macgregor was an early supporter and subscriber to the Folio Society, founded in 1947 by Charles Ede. Her collection boasts five of the first six books produced in 1947 and 1948. Harry Muir also was a great supporter of the Folio Society, especially admiring their habit of commissioning illustrations for all except non-fiction titles, a policy which remains in place in 2003.

There are few fine book titles published in the 1960s in the Christine Macgregor bequest and they are confined to products of the Folio Society. The paucity of 'important' titles from the 1960s is explained by poor health, that of both the Private Press Movement and of Christine Macgregor, herself.

One of the more unusual aspects of Christine Macgregor's bequest is that she left all her books (all, that is, except for one) to the Barr Smith Library. The books were accessioned between March or April 1974 and 1978. Around five hundred titles were considered worthy of a place in Special Collections. Most of the books are still in the Library's collection, although some duplicates went to Flinders University Library, the family bought back some unwanted titles and a few were sold off.

As I mentioned earlier, I have selected 175 books to study, all of which are illustrated British Private Press books. While I would like to be able to say, for example, that four out of the five Kelmscott Press publications in Special Collections come from this bequest (which I think is indeed the case), I cannot be sure of exact numbers of books from publishers because the electronic catalogue is not yet reliable.<sup>45</sup> In addition, it gives only generic information, which makes positive identification of the source of books possible only through personal ex-

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43. At least ninety-seven of the 175 books selected for my study were purchased in Australia from local booksellers. In addition all of the books from the Folio Society, which started operations in 1947, were purchased (many of them on subscription) while in Australia, bringing the total of post World War II acquisitions to 125 books or seventy-one percent of this representative selection.

44. Muir interview, 8 August 1997.

45. When 'Kelmscott Press' is entered, for example, only three titles are listed.

amination. If there were not preserved in Special Collections, a small fading card file labelled 'Christine Macgregor Cards,' my study could not have materialised.

All of the 175 books studied are illustrated British Private Press books; the most interesting aspect to emerge from this research is irrefutable evidence showing that the bulk, and very often the best, of the illustrated private press books in Christine Margaret Macgregor's collection was acquired in Australia after the Second World War. And what is even more fascinating is that, if the bookseller's marks have been read correctly, the majority of these came from Adelaide, from one source, Harry Muir's Beck Book Company.

