

Editor/President

Dr Mark Ferson
4 Sofala Ave
Riverview NSW 2066
02 9428 2863
m.ferson@unsw.edu.au

Secretary

Bronwyn Vost
59 Gladstone St,
Enmore NSW 2042
bronwynvost@bigpond.com

Designer

Mary Keep
PO Box 555
Dulwich Hill NSW 2203
tnabs_mkeep@hotmail.com



CONTENTS

The Society's fifth Annual General Meeting	1
Charles William James Praetorius RA FSA, bookplate artist	2
Exhibition review	3
Book review	4
Notes and happenings	5
Bookplate 'of large proportions'	6
Editorial	6

The Society's fifth Annual General Meeting

On the evening of Wednesday 4 July, the Society was privileged to hold its 2012 Annual General Meeting in the Friends' Room of the State Library of New South Wales which had at one time been the reading room of the Mitchell Library. Before formal business began, the President introduced Richard d'Apice AM KCSG, Society member and President of the Australian Heraldry Society, who spoke on 'The Honourable John Francis Lane Mullins KCSG: Father of the Australian bookplate movement and his collection'. The speaker gave an overview of the life and family connections of John Lane Mullins, on his passion for heraldry in which he attempted to interest his relatives, and his passion for bookplates which saw him commission perhaps 100 bookplates for his own family members and led to his gathering

of a very large bookplate collection, now in the Mitchell Library. Mark thanked Richard for his fascinating and erudite talk, and hoped that he would continue the theme on another occasion. Mark also thanked Paul Brunton, Senior Curator, Mitchell Library, who had kindly arranged use of the Friends' Room and generously provided a very high standard of catering. Both Richard and Paul were presented with certificates and small gifts in appreciation of their efforts.

In his report, the President highlighted the success of the four quarterly issues of the *Newsletter* published in 2011, augmented by the Supplement, an Index to the first 20 issues, the idea of Ronald Cardwell; work on the *Directory of Members 2011* (which was delivered in 2012 and will be covered in the President's



Photo, Mark Ferson.

Members and friends at the 5th Annual General Meeting, 4 July: (l-r), standing, Ronald Cardwell, June Sanderson, Lee Sanders, Richard d'Apice, Terry and Jean Anderson; front, Bronwyn Vost, Brenda Heagney, Mike Carter. Missing, Mark Ferson, Robert Littlewood, Anne Taylor.

report to the 6th AGM); continuing efforts to maintain the website, although it is not as up-to-date as would be desirable; and the annual meeting. He concluded by thanking office bearers, Secretary Mary Keep who put tremendous effort into the design of the *Newsletter* and the Society's other publications and printed materials, Treasurer Ronald Cardwell who had also made substantial input into the Directory and continued to generate useful ideas to promote the Society, and Vice President Mike Carter who had undertaken a deal of research into means to promote the Society.

The Treasurer tabled the financial statement for the 2011 calendar year which showed that the Society had a small balance, after which the Vice President addressed the meeting on his research and considerations in relation to the mounting of exhibitions to promote the Society and interest in bookplates generally. Members made many suggestions in response to Mike's presentation, who offered to write the discussion up for publication in the *Newsletter* after receiving written feedback from those present. There was also discussion about other means of promoting the Society and interest in bookplates generally. These included the idea of designing a bookplate for a celebrity known to be interested in books; producing a finely printed bookmark for distribution through booksellers and other venues; mention was made of an upcoming cricket bookplate event associated with the Melbourne Cricket Club; and promoting the Society through other society or cultural email lists.

Office bearers were elected: Mary Keep decided to stand down as Secretary (although continuing her vital role of publications designer), Bronwyn Vost was nominated and agreed to stand as Secretary. In the absence of other nominations, the President, Vice President and Treasurer agreed to continue in their positions. A successful meeting concluded after photographs were taken of participants.

Charles William James Praetorius RA FSA, bookplate artist

Rie Fletcher and Ian Thwaites, Auckland

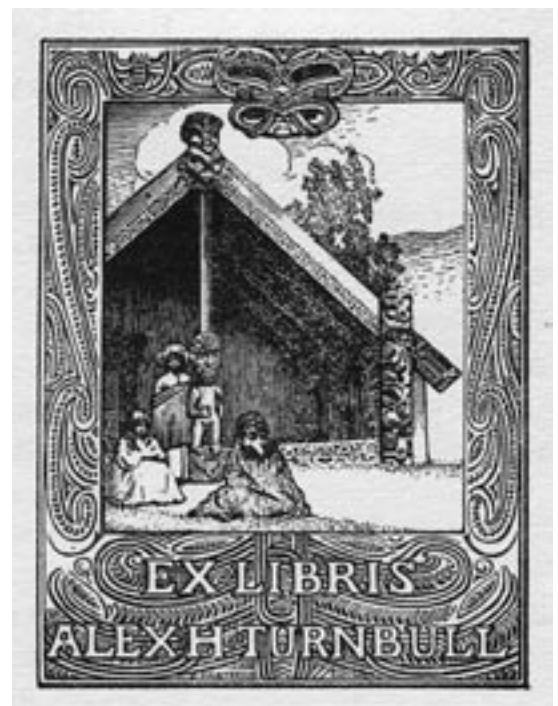
C J Praetorius is nowadays something of a forgotten figure, but this English illustrator was very active from the 1890s through to the outbreak of the First World War. He also designed at least eight ex libris which are held in the British Museum's George Heath Viner Collection.¹ The designs were almost all pictorial, and comprised: Association of Men of Kent and Kentish Men, 1909 (2); George Clinch; W J Heslop FRCS Edin; James Edge-Partington (3); Alex H Turnbull. Of interest also is the fact that C J Praetorius in 1898 designed a bronze plaque and roundel of Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks (1826–97), Keeper of British and Medieval Antiquities, British Museum, whose own bookplate collection forms a significant part of the British Museum's bookplate holdings. Praetorius himself was a photographer and lithographer attached to the British Museum.

Our attention was drawn to Praetorius through the article by the late Dr Roger Neich in a recent issue of the *Records of the Auckland Museum*.² The well-known ethnologist was friendly with Praetorius and commissioned three plates for himself, all variants of the same pictorial/armorial design. They are reproduced in Dr Neich's article and one was modified to use in numbered copies of Edge-Partington's three published ethnographic albums: James Edge-Partington and Charles Heape, *Album of the Weapons, Tools, Ornaments, Articles of Dress of Natives of the Pacific Islands* (1890–1898), for which Praetorius also supplied many illustrations.

Of the Praetorius bookplate designs, probably the best-known is 'Ex Libris Alex H Turnbull', executed for the bibliophile whose collection

became the basis for New Zealand's greatest historical research library. The commission for Praetorius to design the plate was arranged by James Edge-Partington.³ Neich's paper reminds us of Praetorius' competence as an illustrator, and certainly it was appreciated by Alexander Turnbull who used this bookplate in many of his books.

Charles William James Praetorius was born at South Kensington in 1868, the son of Charles B and Susannah Praetorius. His Austrian-born father (1818–1900) was an established print-maker and photographic artist, noted for producing several photolithographic facsimiles of Shakespeare's quartos. Charles junior or C J, as he seems to have been generally described, was twice married, firstly to Mary Jane Maria Cormack (née Everett), born in 1862 at Skibbereen, Cork. Also known as Minnie Cormack, she was an active painter and engraver, principally engaged in making mezzotints of famous British portrait painters and also her own pictures. His second marriage was to Margaret M Bridger at Chichester in 1937.



Design by C J Praetorius for Alexander Turnbull

After 1914, Charles Praetorius seems to have entered a long period of relative artistic inactivity, with the apparent exception of 1924, when he produced a series of watercolours depicting marine scenes of Selsey, Sussex. His death on 21 August 1956 was recorded in the Registration District of Gosport, Hampshire, and the website www.sussexpostcards.info indicates that he died at a nursing home at Emsworth, Sussex and that his usual address was the Studio, Manor Road, Selsey.

[1] Stephanie Schofield & Brian Schofield, 'The George Heath Viner Collection in the British Museum Print Room: bookplates by artists', *Bookplate Journal*, vol. 17, no. 2, Sept. 1999, p.32-3

[2] Roger Neich, 'James Edge-Partington (1854-1930): an ethnologist of independent means', *Records of the Auckland Museum*, vol. 46, 2009, pp. 57-110

[3] Eric H McCormick, *Alexander Turnbull: his life, his circle, his collections*. Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library, 1974, p.211. A letter from James Edge-Partington to Alexander Turnbull dated 11 January 1908 is quoted, indicating that Praetorius had already designed several bookplates for Turnbull and was willing to incorporate pieces of Maori carving in future designs.

Exhibition review

Ex Libris Exhibition

The Firestation Print Studio, Armadale, Victoria
(8 August to 2 September 2012)

Review by Robert Littlewood, Melbourne

The Firestation Print Studio at 2 Willis Street, Armadale, Victoria has launched an Ex Libris exhibition featuring the graphic prints of sixteen women graphic printmakers, two of whom are resident in Brisbane and the rest are from Melbourne.

According to Workshop Manager, Edith May, the motivation for such an exhibition was to provide a platform for a joint showing following on from the Print Studio's successful 'After Image' Exhibition earlier this year. Planned well in advance to coincide with the Melbourne Literary Festival (23 August to 2 September 2012) the Curator of the exhibition, Trudy Rice, decided on the theme of pairing Ex Libris Bookplate designs with old books. Print Studio patrons have the opportunity to purchase a limited edition proof of one or all of the bookplates or to purchase both the bookplate and the book in which it has been pasted.

The exhibition space at the Firestation Print Studio, which once would have garaged a fire engine, is little more than six

by three metres, but seems ideally suited to exhibit these miniature art works housed within books. All of the art works exhibited are original graphic prints: either wood engravings, etchings, drypoints or linocuts.

What is remarkable about this exhibition is that all of the artists have competently handled the miniaturisation of design to readily accommodate the ultimate purpose of ex libris. That is, to be tipped into a book of a certain size. However, topographical subject matter rarely meets the demands of the bookplate design aesthetic.

A bookplate collector will quickly categorise the eighteen bookplates on offer into one of three categories. Firstly, personal bookplates that bear not only the golden words 'Ex Libris' but also the name or initials of the person for whom it was created. Secondly, there are a larger number of 'universal' bookplates bearing the words 'Ex Libris' and with a space left blank for a name of the potential owner to be written in by hand. And, lastly, there are a number of graphic prints created in the size and

manner of bookplates that are totally void of lettering.

The need for a bookplate design to bear the words 'Ex Libris' or 'Her Book' or 'His Book' or 'This Book Belongs To' together with the name or initials of the person for whom the bookplate is intended is without compromise. Bookplate collectors worldwide would struggle with any other notion. This exhibition inadvertently questions the international bookplate design protocols that have established themselves by mutual acclaim over the past century.

Traditionally, a pictorial bookplate design speaks of its owner's interests, abilities, personal circumstances or vocational achievements and is consequently linked to individual egocentricities. With the emergence of post-modernism, bookplate design in Australia became dominated with design motifs that said more about the artist than the person for whom the bookplate was commissioned. At the Firestation Print Studio we have bookplate designs that, in the main, use a single existing book title as



Linocut universal bookplate by Vivienne Tate, 2012

a prompt for design and, as such, this 'Ex Libris' exhibition is unique.

The Firestation Print Studio artists are not ex libris anarchists. They are simply feeling their way into a delightful aspect of the book arts. This exhibition is the Print Studio's first tasting of bookplate design and little further effort would be required to graduate these designs to maturity as legitimate ex libris. What all sixteen artists are telling us is that they are 'bookplate aware' and that they are extremely capable of creating bookplate designs.

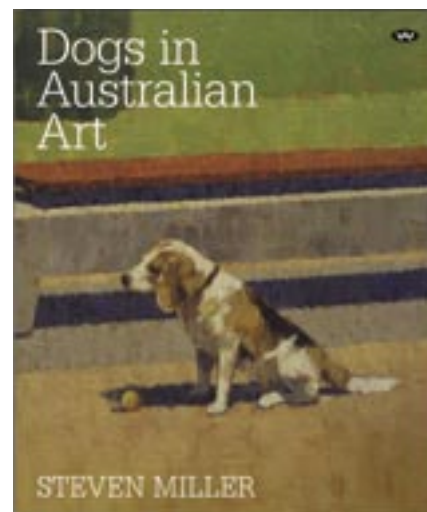
While it is possible to purchase an individual bookplate, one is left with the unrequited desire to find out how much it would cost to commission a personalised bookplate—whether linocut, wood engraving or etching. This surely is the next step for all of these artists.

To review these artworks purely in terms of bookplate design values there are several stand-outs. Without doubt, Vivienne Tate's 'Cook's Plate' linocut is a strong graphic statement that says just about everything you would hope for if your interests were purely culinary. Sue Poggioli's 'Chooks in the frangapani tree' are reflective of that great Melbourne bookplate designer and

linocut artist Helen Ogilvie (1902-1993). The juxtaposition of Poggioli's 'Chooks' suggest further development into the pattern making to which linocut lends itself as can be seen in the work of another master, Jacques Hnizdovsky (1915-1985). Carmel O'Connor's 'For Susan Swingle', with its appealing and obvious romantic ménage à trois displays a strength of modernist linocutting design reminiscent of the late 1930s and once again excites thoughts of future development. Gwen Scott's delightful 'Tucking In' is a very attractive design and extremely competent two colour reduction linocut, but sadly, not a bookplate. Fortunately for Gwen Scott and some of the other artists in this exhibition, the Firestation Print Studio boasts letterpress type and printing facilities to enable the conversion of their designs into real bookplates. Michele Newman's 'Dark Call' is the one true personal bookplate in this exhibition and worthy of high recognition as she is closest to understanding the design theory of bookplates.

This is a very refreshing ex libris exhibition born out of the love of literature, printmaking and an emerging love of bookplates.

Book review



Dogs in Australian Art by Steven Miller; Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2012

(xii + 188 pp. \$39.95) ISBN 978 1 74305 017 0
Reviewed by Mary Keep, Sydney

I was delighted to see among the many books that come into my work office for review, this wonderful and quite whimsical art book written by one of our Society members, Steven Miller.

You may remember Steven's interesting overview of the Pat Corrigan Collection of Australian artists' bookplates at our third AGM in 2008. Steven is Head of the Research Library and Archive of the Art Gallery of New South Wales (now known as the Edmund and Joanna Capon Library), where the Corrigan collection is housed.

Steven Miller has written extensively on Australian art, photography and Indigenous art. His 2005 publication *Degenerates and perverts*, about the first exhibition of modernist and European paintings to visit Australia, won the NSW Premier's Australian History Award for 2005.

Dogs in Australian art, subtitled *A new history of antipodean creativity*, includes over 150 masterworks that showcase the close bond between Australians and their dogs. He argues that all the major shifts, which occurred in Australian art from colonial times to the present, rather than being attributed to the environment or historical factors, have really been down to the dogs!



Linocut bookplate by Michele Newman for herself, 2012



Linocut bookplate by Adrian Feint for Nola McGregor, 1933

After an introduction, entitled, 'The Untold Story of Australian Art', over 80 dog breeds are lovingly portrayed, by many well-known artists, including, William Dobell, Russell Drysdale, Norman Lindsay to name a few, and many contemporary artists. Each entry, listed alphabetically, includes comprehensive and often quirky, short essays on the breeds, the artwork and the artists.

As much as I love dogs and was excited to see them described and portrayed in such a diverse range of painting, printmaking, photography and sculpture, I was particularly interested to see the entry for the 'English Pointer'. It features a 1934 linocut bookplate of a pointer, pointing – for Carlyle S Baer by well-known bookplate artist, George D Perrottet. Baer was one-time president of the American Society of Bookplate Collectors and Designers. Three other Perrottet bookplates are present, for Diana Goldsmid, Dorothy Cowie and Jennifer Jean, all designed in the 1930s. These pages prompted our president, Mark Ferson, to add another canine ex libris to the theme with a lovely ex libris scottie (shown above) designed for Nola McGregor by another prominent bookplate artist, Adrian Feint, who is also mentioned in Steven's text. Incidentally, the Scottish

Terrier entry in *Dogs in Australian art* is by May Gibbs.

Another bookplate connection is the inclusion of 'The Professional Dog Show', a delightful etching by our Society member, Townsville artist, Ron McBurnie. It is in the entry 'Lakeland Terrier' though shows a number of other breeds besides and is also featured as the end papers of this beautifully presented book.

This book is not only a history of dogs in Australian art, but of the dogs themselves. As someone who loves art, dogs and bookplates, what more could I want? A most enjoyable and informative read to add to any book collection.

Notes and happenings

Bookplates at Blake Library,
University of Technology, Sydney

In his *New from Brandywine* #15 for September 2012, passionate bibliophile and archivist of book arts Jürgen Wegner, reports on two bookplate related activities at the University of Technology, Sydney. His first note relates to the acquisition at auction

of the Norman Lindsay collection of the late James Kemsley (1948-2007), a well known Sydney black and white artist. This is an extensive and important collection and the current display includes a cabinet of 10 Norman Lindsay bookplates. The Blake Library is also the recipient of bookplates donated by Patrick Corrigan, and some are on display in the library. Your Editor is arranging a visit to the University and hopes to report in the next issue of the *Newsletter*.

Recently unearthed publications

RICHARD D'APICE. Lachlan Macquarie, fifth governor of New South Wales, Scots clansman and armiger. *Heraldry News*, no. 55, Nov. 2010; pp. 3-40

Shows a bookplate used by Lachlan Macquarie's son (Lachlan jnr) and found in two editions of the *Book of common prayer* held in the Mitchell Library

ADAM DUTKIEWICZ. *Lidia Groblicka: suburban iconographer*. Adelaide: Moon Arrow Press, 2010; p. 38

This survey makes reference to commercial commissions for bookplates whilst the artist was based in Kracow, Poland, with two designs reproduced

LESLEY HARDING AND KENDRAH MORGAN. *Sunday's garden: growing Heide*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2012; p. 74

Linocut bookplate for Sunday & John Reed, by M S

[**GEORGIA MARKAKIS.**] On display – Pat Corrigan Bookplate Collection. *Axis UTS: Library News* Dec. 2012, issue 04; p. 12. Accessed on 22 Sept. 2012 at <http://www.lib.uts.edu.au/other/publications/axis/dec2011/index.html?pageNumber=1-1/> Short note on this collection in the Blake Library of the University Technology, Sydney, showing a view of the bookplate display case

STEVEN MILLER. *Dogs in Australian art*. Adelaide: Wakefield, 2012; pp. 92-3
Reproduces images of four bookplates designed by G D Perrottet which feature dogs

LYNN REINACHER. Dream a little dream. *OUTthere Skytrans*, Apr.-May 2012; pp. 12-3

Features the work of Queensland artist Kathryn Lovejoy, who in interview highlights her membership of the New Australian Bookplate Society and her first personal bookplate commission

MICHAEL TASKER. Hunting and gathering ... and giving. *Look* (Art Gallery of New South Wales), Aug. 2012, pp. 32-3
Short article on art patron and collector Pat Corrigan with images of bookplates by John C Goodchild and Lionel Lindsay

Bookplate 'of large proportions'

An item picked up at an arty book fair a couple of years ago, the catalogue (in Spanish only) of the exhibition *La pintura contemporanea Norteamericana*, which toured various cities in Latin America during May to December

1941, had an unusual bookplate – the whole front wrapper with title (and English sub-title), decorated and with the words 'ex libris maurice cork 1945', in all measuring 18.2 by 25.5 centimetres. Incidentally the catalogue featured a wonderful selection of paintings from the 1920s and 1930s, quite a treat for an Art Deco enthusiast, even if most of the images were in black and white.

Maurice Cork (1914-2003) was a Sydney illustrator and commercial artist, who studied with the Julian Ashton art school c. 1930 – a breeding ground for bookplate designers. Cork joined the art department of K G Murray's *Man* magazine (1936-1974) on its foundation and became the magazine's art director. During the Second World War he was based in Darwin as a camouflleur.

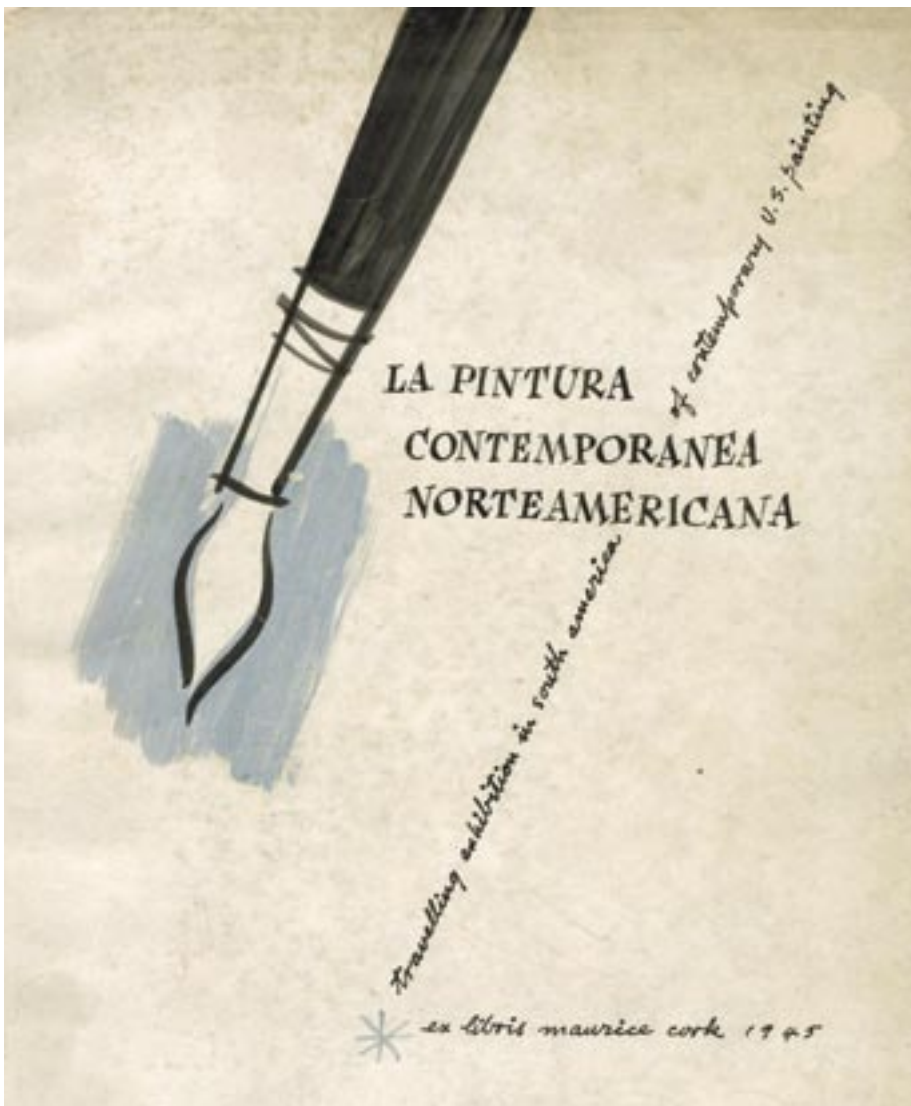
In 1949 he joined the George Patterson advertising agency. Our artist-owner had acquired the catalogue at the Craftsman Bookshop of 10 Hosking Place, Sydney in January 1945 for 12 shillings.

Cork's archive and art collection are now held by the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney and an outline of the archive can be found at www.powerhousemuseum.com/collection/database/?irn=422095&collection=Maurice+Cork+Archive

Editorial

We open the *Newsletter* with a precis of the Society's fifth Annual General Meeting which was not only held, courtesy of the Mitchell Library's Paul Brunton, in the lovely Friends' Room, but marked by an erudite and fascinating talk by Richard d'Apice on John Lane Mullins' twin fascinations with heraldry and bookplates – some would consider this a match made in heaven! As promised in *Newsletter* no. 25 we continue with a little international flavour in the form of a delightful article by New Zealand members Ian Thwaites and Rie Fletcher; Ian and Rie draw attention to an English designer who produced bookplates for the great New Zealand book collector Alexander Turnbull.

Earlier in the year I became aware of the plan by Melbourne's Firestation Print Studio to hold an exhibition of bookplates by some of its printmaker members. When I finally managed to get in touch with the Studio's manager, Edith May, at the end of August, I found that the exhibition had already opened and would close a few days later. Having put out a request to Melbourne members to visit and if possible to write a review for the *Newsletter*, I was very pleased to, within days, receive a frank but positive review by Robert Littlewood, who has done more than most to introduce artists to the joys, and conventions, of bookplate design. Robert tells me that he very soon thereafter gave a talk to printmakers attached to the Firestation Print Studio, and is hopeful of more bookplates emanating from the same.



Pen and ink bookplate by Maurice Cork for himself, 1945

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