
MINIATURE BOOK
SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER



Hyakumantō-darani.
Nara, Japan: c. 764–770 CE

ONE OF THE REMARKABLE ITEMS FROM THE
GROLIER, NYC EXHIBIT FROM THE
COLLECTION OF MBS MEMBER
PAT PISTNER



2019 MBS Membership Renewal



If you haven't already, it's time to renew your MBS membership.

We ask all Personal & Business Members to please inform us of any changes in your contact information. You can download the membership form from our website and mail it in, or use the website "Join" page to pay as an "Existing Member".

To mail in: Donna LaVallee, Membership Coordinator
178 Brewster Street
San Francisco, CA 94110
donnaMBSmembership@gmail.com

Or use our PayPal account: cathieMBStreas@gmail.com



Jim Brogan

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The change of seasons is always an interesting time of year as the weather turns from cold to colder, the bright colors of the fall foliage that lit up the landscape are but a distant memory now.

With the new year comes a time of reflection and to revisit where we have been and where we want to go in the future.

Our Conclaves are always special events and Charlottesville was no exception. Well done and congratulations to everyone for making it a success. The next Conclave is scheduled to be held at the University of Indiana, Lilly Library in August; please do plan on attending.

The new MBS website has brought in many new members and a returning component will be the 'Resources' page for member presentations. An additional feature to be added to our 'For Families & Teachers/Activities & Tutorials' page will be a writing contest focused on the book collections of young bibliophiles. It is the children of today that will become our ongoing membership. Joan Knoertzer is chairing this committee.

We are an organization of volunteers and with somewhat limited resources it is important to engage the entire membership to fully grow the organization. Some of the new member names you will be seeing are focusing on our Student Grants; producing our Handbook; and overseeing the Facebook Media processes.

As with every new year there is change in the air; let us all stop and take time to reflect on our lives and how we can bring more joy and happiness to those we interact with each day.

I hope everyone had a very happy holiday season and I wish all a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Thank you,
- Jim

FROM THE GUEST EDITOR: TODD SOMMERFELD

For those of you who don't know me, I'm a 'fill in the blank' kind of guy. If something needs done, I fill in and get it done, which is why you find me in the editor's box now. I am hoping to see someone else's name in this place, so please do contact us if you have graphic arts skills and would like to tackle this important job.

Starting with this issue you will notice a new section titled *To Be Continued...* which replaces the *Miniature Book News*, and is in honor of MBN editor, Julian Edison, who was fond of ending miniature book conversations in this way. In it you will find a delightful article by Cynthia Cosgrove about the bindings on Schloss' Bijou Almanac. Because Julian left such big shoes to fill it will take all of us to make this new feature a success.

Please think about your niche collection and consider writing about it. If you don't think you can write an article, let us know and we will help.

I hope you all enjoy this humble effort and hope to see you all in Bloomington! 🍷



This illustration is used with the permission of the illustrator:

Dorothy Yule.

"Julian was devoted to the Miniature Book Society from it's beginning and wrote the Miniature Book News before it became incorporated into The Miniature Book Society. He would be so pleased with

"To be continued....."

"I hope that your interest in miniature books will add as much pleasure to your lives as it did to Julian's, not just from the books, but from the relationships he had with so many of you."

- Hope Edison

SOME BIG NEWS

If you know **Tony Firman** then you already know we think he's big stuff. Sixty-two books published through his Plum Park Press; chosen, by then President Stephen Byrne, the 2017 recipient of the MBS Glasgow Cup; a Conclave favorite speaker; long time chair of the Distinguished Book Award Committee and someone who is always ready to share his talent and knowledge.

Firman announced that British author, Simon Garfield, has asked him to produce extra copies of Simon's new book *Miniature* in miniature, seen above in full size and in Tony's miniature handy work.

"This has been a very exciting project," says Tony. "It makes me feel as though I have *arrived*."



Tony Firman, in 2017, receiving the Glasgow Cup Award from President, Stephen Byrne.



Photos provided by
Tony Firman

Garfield has allowed Tony to produce an open edition in miniature of *Miniature*. Released in Great Britain on November 1, 2018, to be available in the States in March. 📖

Garfield became an MBS member so he could attend our 2017 Conclave in San Francisco. He could be seen chatting with many of our attendees, asking:

"What got you interested in miniature books?" 📖

2018 DISTINGUISHED BOOK
AWARD WINNERS

Congratulations to the winners:



Pat Sweet, Publisher, Bo Press
Miniature Books, Riverside California

THE WINDHOVER

"...every time I read it, I
want to shout with joy. I
tried to get that same

emotion into the binding and presentation."
Pat Sweet.



Sue Huggins Leopard, Publisher, Leopard
Studio Editions, Rochester, New York

89, LXXXIX, (WORD)

"What became clear and
interesting to me...was that I
was commenting on the use of color in her
(Emily Dickenson) poems." Sue Huggins
Leopard.



Patrice Miller, Publisher,
Aredian Press, Dallas Texas

THE MARSHES OF GLYNN

"I found (this poem) haun-
tingly beautiful and (Sidney)
Lanier's personal story... exceptional." Patrice
Miller.



Information, photos & comments used with the permission of the winners.

Congratulations also to our MBS Award Winners:

Anderson-Yarnell Award: Michael Garbett
Norman W. Forgue Award: Gabrielle Fox
Glasgow Cup Award: Cathie Abney (right)



CONCLAVE XXVI CHARLOTTESVILLE VIRGINIA



No one can say that August 2018 in Virginia wasn't hot. But it didn't stop, a near record, 97 MBS members from gathering to pay tribute to charter member **Caroline Brandt**, who has never missed a conclave.

"Dear MBS friends,

What a wonderful Conclave! My expectations were surpassed ... Many thanks are due to all who contributed to the huge number of keepsakes. They are all beautiful and interesting. I was happy to add my exhibition catalogue to the list. Everyone was so lovely to me and so complimentary of the Small Library's beautiful exhibition of my "Eminent Miniatures". Molly Schwartzburg and her talented team deserves high marks for their fine work.

It was wonderful to see so many old friends and to meet new ones. My years with our Society are amongst my happiest. And I felt like a queen at the Banquet with all the accolades and gifts, crowned with the beautiful wreath of hearts created by our super-talented twins, Dorothy Yule and Susan Hunt Yule... My heartfelt thanks to you all.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!

~ Caroline Brandt

The University of Virginia and our own, **Molly Schwartzburg**, curator of the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, assembled a remarkable display of miniature books from Caroline's 15,000 she has archived there. Caroline's wreath of hearts was made and presented to her at our Sunday Awards Banquet by members **Dorothy Yule** and **Susan Hunt Yule**.

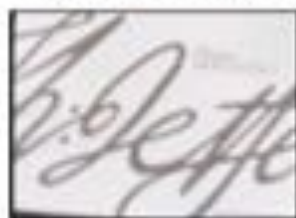
Although Charlottesville was dealing with the anniversary of the unfortunate riot of 2017, we remained focused on our purpose; enjoying friends and promoting an interest in miniature books.



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We enjoyed many activities despite the temperature. Friday evening started off right with the Silent Auction and dinner followed by our Live Auction, with **Greg Jung** of **PBS Galleries** again at the podium. Sadly, Greg passed away earlier this year, he will be greatly missed. Both auction did well and brought into the general fund a total of \$5,203.

An early Saturday morning trip to Monticello included a wonderful tour of The Jefferson house and a beautiful walk around the grounds. Of course the shade of the many trees provided a cool spot for enjoying Mr. Jefferson's ice cream. There were also many smiling faces and full shopping bags leaving The Jefferson gift shop.



Pat Caernarven-Smith gave one of the three workshops available at the Conclave. Pat handed out packets for all her listeners and urged them to write with purpose, plot and passion. At the second workshop **Tony Firman** gave a talk and a wonderful demonstration on creating tight miniature bindings. Then **Gabrielle Fox**, narrated a slide show of her own beautiful and artistic bound miniature books.

The Virginia Center for the Book offered a tour and reception for us, which was casual and comfortable, allowing for great conversation and interaction.

Sunday everyone eagerly awaited the opening of the MBS Book Fair. **Tine Krijnen** and her husband **Hans**, members from the Netherlands, were just one of the 28 vendors who participated. We also had a first time participant, **Eli Kahn**, attending his first Conclave, worked the **Lux Mentis** vendor table.

Even sharing the hotel with the security personnel brought in by the city didn't dampen the enthusiasm that anyone who has ever attended a conclave experiences. We wished our men in blue "Have a safe day" and offered our vocal support.

Of course, **Joan Knoertzer**, thought we were cheering for the University of Michigan. 🍷

日本

NOW TO THE OTHER SIDE
OF THE WORLD.

Japan

STILL A PRIZE INSIDE...

IN 2006, MBS MEMBER, MIYAKO AKAI FOUND THAT MOST PEOPLE IN JAPAN WERE NOT FAMILIAR WITH MINIATURE BOOKS. SHE WANTED TO FIND A WAY TO MAKE IT EASY AND FUN FOR EVERYONE IN JAPAN TO TAKE THEIR OWN MINIATURE BOOK INTO THEIR HOMES.

WHAT TO DO?



SHE HAD A FRIEND WHO HAD A GUM-BALL MACHINE - *GACHAPON*.

MIAKO MAKES MINIATURE BOOKS - *MAMEHON*.

SO WAS BORN THE - *MAMEHON GACHAPON*.

EACH MACHINE IS TOPPED WITH A LIST OF THE AVAILABLE BOOKS FOR THE MONTH. THE ARTISTS GATHER AND STUFF 100 CAPSULES WITH COPIES OF THEIR OWN MINIATURE BOOKS, WHICH ALL GO INTO THE *MAMEHON GACHAPON* AND THEY SELL OUT EVERY MONTH; COSTING ONLY 100 YEN (LESS THAN \$1 U.S. DOLLAR). AT LAST COUNT THE TOKYO *MAMEHAN GACHAPON* HAD SOLD 18,300 MINIATURE BOOKS. 📖

IN THE HONG KONG AREA A MINIATURE BOOKS IS CALLED AN *EGGWICH*.

Next Stop...

SCOTLAND

Map from Google Maps

*SCOTS AMAZED AT THE
PROLIFIC PRESS OF WORLDWIDE
MINIATURE BOOKS*

By Stephen Byrce
sb@finalscore.demon.co.uk

In a wee, wee town,

In a wee, wee room

Was a collection of wee, wee books.....

That sounds like the beginning of a story for young children. In fact, the 'wee, wee town' is Wigtown in Scotland. Even though it is a very small town, it is Scotland's National Book Town, and each year there is a ten day book festival which attracts visitors from all over the world. They come in to listen to authors and raconteurs talking about their new books and their sometimes amazing escapades.

It was within this Festival that I was able, with the help of Jan and Helen Macdonald (of The Gleniffer Press), to present an exhibition of miniature books. Ian arranged for me to use the Quaker Meeting Room in Wigtown for six of the ten days. Posters were made, flyers taken to the Festival office and various other venues, and we were set to present our exhibition. Jim and Elaine Brogan were visiting, so the MBS had representation at the opening day of the President, two Life Members and a past President. MBS literature was placed for people to pick up. The books for the exhibition were from my personal collection, and selecting the 80 individual books and two bookcases full of doll house sized books made me really examine what I wanted to portray as a representation of the miniature books available worldwide.

Being in Scotland I couldn't omit books published by David Byrce of Glasgow, who was perhaps the most prolific miniature book pub-



On display at the Wigton Book Festival was a sampling of Stephen & Marian Byrne's private collection. *Photographs are courtesy of Elaine Brogan.*

lisher ever. Also included were books from the Gleniffer Press and my own *Final Score*. Other books, from all over the world, were selected to show the artistic creations of present and past book makers, artists and publishers. There were some wonderful bindings and some quirky titles and contents. Ian provided posters from an exhibition at the National Library of Scotland, which had been about David Bryce books and those from the Gleniffer Press. I also placed several reference books around the room to demonstrate that there is a wealth of literature about miniature books.

It was very interesting to see the reaction of most of the 250 or so people who visited the exhibition as they entered the room. Expressions of amazement at a format of book that they had never seen before went on to utter disbelief as they looked through a lens at the Gleniffer Press *'Ole King Cole'*, that marvel of a book which is



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only 1mm square. Answering the many questions people asked sometimes taxed the brain and the memory, sometimes caused laughter (not at the expense of the visitor) and sometimes required detailed explanation of the printing methods used.

I made a visitors book just three inches square, and the comments people wrote demonstrated the wonder they felt at seeing the books.

Thanks go to the management of the Quaker Meeting House in Wigtown who sponsored the exhibition, providing the room and refreshments. 🍷



CONCLAVE XXXVII

The Lilly Library

Indiana University

Bloomington, Indiana

August 9 - 11, 2019



Bloomington is nestled in the rolling hills of southern Indiana. Our friendly, safe and inviting environment embraces visitors and ideas from across the globe.

<https://bloomington.in.gov/>

more information coming soon...

**"A MATTER OF SIZE:
MINIATURE TEXTS & BINDINGS"**

From the Collection of Patricia J. Pistner

THE GROLIER HOSTING RARE MINIATURE PUBLICATIONS
March 5th - May 19, 2019



Almanac, c. 1450

Thousands of years before books were contained within a hand-held technological tablet or phone, there were cuneiform tablets no bigger than the size of a quarter. In the second floor gallery of the Grolier Club will be 275 rare diminutive texts and bindings from around the world that have been created over the span of 4,500 years. These tiny tomes range in size from a maximum of four inches to less than one millimeter. Drawn from the collection of MBS member, **Patricia J. Pistner**, the exhibition represents the history of the book in miniature form.

"My intention with this exhibit is for each person to begin to understand how important these tiny tomes are, not only to me, but also to their previous owners." Pistner said. "These books form a tangible connection to the past with all of those who advanced the design of the book, including the authors, tradesman, artist, dealer and collector who appreciated and undertook the challenge of making miniature books."



Pat Pistner

This exhibit includes cuneiform tablets and other antiquities, medieval manuscripts and early printed materials, books and bindings by women, Benjamin Franklin and Abraham Lincoln imprints as well as contemporary design bindings and artists' books.

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The exhibition is selected and organized by Pistner, along with Jan Storm van Leeuwen, former keeper of rare bindings at the Royal Library in The Hague and winner of the ILAB Breslauer Prize for Bibliography for his important study, *Dutch Decorated Binding in the 18th Century*.

A collector of miniature books for over thirty years, Pistner's love for very small tomes began at the age of seven when she began "publishing" tiny books for her first doll's house. As an adult, her passion was reignited after being inspired to fill the small library shelves of the miniature French townhouse she had commissioned.

"The plan to fill that library with real, readable, printed miniature books led to assembling the most aesthetically compelling, representative samples of the history of the book in the smallest formats," says Pistner. "My hope is that fellow bibliophiles find tomes here that spark their interest and lead to an increased interest in and respect for the format."

Highlights include:

Cuneiform Tablets and other examples of ancient texts dating from 2500 BCE.



Hyakumantō-darani. Nara, Japan: c. 764–770 CE, among the oldest, block printed texts, housed in its original wooden pagoda.

Almanac, written in the style of Nuremberg writing masters, Diocese of Bamberg, c. 1450, illustrated manuscript on vellum, with seven colorful astronomical and astrological circular diagrams, one with a multi-colored patterned centerpiece, with a pinhole for a volvelle.

Septem Psalmi poenitentiales, cum alijs multis devotissimo orationibus. Ac Kalendario Gregoriano. Venetiis: Nicolaus Misserinus. 1593, measuring a mere 2.4" tall, this binding has rock crystal covers painted in reverse in the verre églomisé depicting St. Francis receiving the stigmata and the Adoration of the Magi.



Enchiridion p[re]clare ecclesie Sarum ... [Book of Hours, Use of Salisbury] Paris: Widow Thielman Kerver, 1528, printed by Yolande Bonhomme, the only female printer in Paris and daughter of the famous printer and bookseller, Pasquier Bonhomme. This elaborate mosaic binding by Lortic was done in the 19th century for Charles-Louis de Bourbon (bookplate). The book is in Latin but the captions are in English.

Bird's Egg *Nécessaire* for Sewing Kit, with *Étrennes à l'innocence* [including an almanac], Paris, 1820, a very rare type of object, which was not made for any practical purpose, but is a thing of beauty and was probably given by a young man to his beloved.



Bibliothèque portative du voyageur, 33 vols. 1801- 1804. Napoleonic era traveling library housed in a book-shaped case contains a collection of works written by the most famous French writers.

The Proclamation of Emancipation. 1862. The first separate printing in book form of the Emancipation Proclamation that the Union Army distributed in the South.



Exhibitions are open to the public free of charge.

THE GROLIER CLUB

47 East 60 Street,
New York, NY 10022
212-838-6690
www.grolierclub.org



Information for this article is taken from The Grolier Club press release supplied by Pat Pistner. All photos are used with the permission of Pat Pistner.



To be continued.....

This new feature "To be continued....." was created to honor the many years of unselfish service that was provided to the MBS by **Julian Edison**. Julian contributed uncounted research articles to the Newsletter that were always a source of interest to our members. For those that were fortunate to know and speak with Julian, you will certainly remember he frequently ended his conversations with the words: "To be continued...".

As research type articles are submitted to the Newsletter, they will be published in this new feature with the hope they will be a joy for all readers.

- The phrase "To be continued" is used with the permission of Hope Edison -

Bindings Of The English Bijou Almanac



When Albert Schloss began publishing the Bijou Almanac in 1835 he was clearly inspired by earlier micro-miniature sized almanacs produced in Austria, Germany, and France. They were all created in a stunningly small 64mo format, approximately 2.0 X 1.5 cm or less. Tiny enough to hold on the tip of your finger, they were so delicate that a breath might blow them away. But Schloss took his English almanacs to the next level of sophistication with an amazing array of bindings, cases, and custom presentations. This turned the little books into dazzling, multi-hued gems of beauty, rarity and desirability. His sumptuous and jewel-like treatments of the Bijou made sure it lived up to it's name.

There are 8 editions of the Bijou Almanac, one for each year from 1836 through 1843, but collecting a single complete series of the texts is barely enough to show the true magic of these miniatures. For each year, the variety of bindings that were produced seems to be endless. As an enthusiastic collector of the Bijou, I have attempted to photograph, or acquire photographs of every binding example available, and each year I come across several new designs I have never seen before.

Unifying attributes of the Bijou include gorgeous gilding of all text block edges, gilt tooling in varying degrees of intricacy, and a (usually) matching or (rarely) coordinating slipcase. A narrow ribbon was pasted between endpapers to allow for easy extraction of the book from the slipcase. The text block is sewn into four quires of 16 pages each and case bound with either colored, heavyweight paper, or morocco leather. Contemporary advertising stated that vellum was also available. The morocco bindings sometimes have a contrasting color of leather onlay. The publication date is occasionally featured as part of the binding décor.

The Bijou is one of the few miniature books to have its own reference volume. From the 1969 book, *Schloss Bijou Almanac 1839-1843*, author Ian Bain includes a reprint of original advertising, depicting the options for purchasing an almanac. The denominations are in shillings (s.) and pennies or pence (d.) when there were twenty shillings to a pound and twelve pence to the shilling. The list below is reproduced from Bain's book and it is a helpful guide in trying to match the surviving almanacs of today with Schloss' original descriptors.

Beautifully bound with gilt edges and enclosed in a highly embellished case	17 6d
Elegantly bound in morocco or vellum	21 6d
Extra cases neatly covered with velvet or morocco	21 6d
— gilt — elegantly illustrated and beautifully gilt	21 6d
— gilt — gilt — with spring fastening	21 6d
A powerful microscopic eyepiece (of half an inch focal) is furnished corresponding in size with the almanac	11 6d
— gilt — gilt — binding in a varnished case	21 6d

The starting price for an almanac was one shilling, six pence. The "highly embellished case" in the advertisement most likely refers to the slipcase and the base price binding material was probably paper. For a bit more than double the price, three shillings, zero pence, you could purchase an edition bound in morocco or vellum.

The next option listed is for "Extra cases neatly covered with velvet or morocco", price two shillings, six pence. This surely describes the lovely boxes designed to house the almanac in a presentation case. The cases themselves came in several sizes, shapes, and levels of luxury, ranging in price up to seven shillings, six pence.

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Another option available to enhance your Bijou presentation was a miniature magnifying glass to read it with. These were made of tortoiseshell, either in a standard shape, or in a fancier design where the magnifier could be folded into itself. If it was possible to enter Schloss' book shop and select an almanac on the spot, the grand total for the costliest Bijou would amount to thirteen shillings, six pence. Since there were twenty shillings in a pound, that makes the almanac seem like a true bargain. But to bring some perspective, the annual wages of servants at the time ranged from ten to forty pounds annually. It is probable the Bijou was intended for loftier ladies and gentleman.

Pictured below are some examples of the "basic" binding. These are bound in paper, beautifully stamped with gilt. The colors are in jewel-tones and the designs are seemingly endless. Even though the leather bindings originally cost more, I am always thrilled to come across a beautifully preserved paper copy. They must have been true treasures to their owners to have survived so well.



While most of the exterior slipcases were an identical match to the interior bindings, there was some leeway allowed, although the colors of both were nearly always the same. Below, left, is a photo of one bright pink binding and slipcase in a fabulous floral pattern. This design was likely applied with a single gilt stamp. Below, center, is a slipcase with the same floral stamp and a double flower design on the binding, this time in bright orange. Below, right, is a combination of slipcase and binding which were purchased together recently, but with colors and patterns that do not match. Were they sold that way originally? The answer is unknown.



Morocco bindings, pricier than their paper counterparts, were also available in many colors and patterns. Additional color combinations were achieved with leather onlays. A small assortment is shown below. Several of these are title stamped, "The English Bijou", the same title given to the first three editions of the almanac from 1836



through 1838. Although it was never shown on the bindings or slipcases, the editions from 1839 through 1843 were entitled "Schloss's English Bijou Almanac" on the title page.

"Extra cases," or more accurately, presentation cases, were the next step up in Bijou bling, and Schloss offered many amazing options. The simplest were rectangular, covered in velvet or morocco, and gilt stamped on the cover with a title, often charmingly abbreviated. Lined with velvet and silk satin, they kept their contents safe and snug. The magnifier was advertised as optional. On the smaller cases it could be secured within the inside upper cover by a satin ribbon. Within the slightly larger cases, a recessed area, designed to hold the magnifier, made it an integral part of the presentation.



Two sizes of presentation case are shown at the left. The smallest is just large enough to hold the book

within it's velvet interior. As a collector who enjoys displaying my books in a scale library, this case is a personal favorite. Only 3 1/2 cm wide, it is truly tiny. Grander in design is the larger rectangular case, with the magnifying glass re-



cessed, and the almanac beside it. Notably, the velvet interior of these cases coordinates with the overall presentation. In the smaller case, the light aqua velvet lining and darker aqua morocco covering must have been chosen to go together. In the larger case, the brilliant green velvet lining enhances the green onlay of the almanac.

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Even more luxurious are the cases which were "elegantly illuminated and beautifully gilt". Below are two examples. Both have the more expensive and elaborately designed folding magnifier inside. Many colors of leather onlay adorn the case tops. Reminiscent of jeweled treasure chests, they are as dazzling as the cache they contain.



Schloss' imagination did not stop with advertised fare for his *Bijou*. The bespoke and custom bindings which he created for presentation copies and special orders reached even greater levels of luxe.



Thanks to the research and collecting of Mr. Julian Edison, we know of a very special presentation binding that was designed for the birth of Queen Victoria's first daughter, the



Princess Royal. Pictured on page 97 of the reference by Anne C. Bromer and Julian I. Edison, *Miniature Books, 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures*, this almanac was acquired by Edison from the Spielmann collection, but there are earlier records of it's fascinating history. From the January 20, 1841 newspaper, *The Wolverhampton Chronicle and Staffordshire Advertiser*, there is a remarkable account.

"Mr. Schloss had the honour of attending at the Castle, on Monday week, for the purpose of laying before her Majesty, Prince Albert, and the Duchess of Kent, copies of his *Bijou Almanack*, most elegantly and superbly got up for the occasion. Each almanack was enclosed in a case of elaborate mosaic work, upon which were the initials of the illustrious parties for whom they were intended. They were enclosed in mother-of-pearl cases, in the form of a heart opening with a hinge, on the top and bottom of which were the initials and an imperial crown, elaborately chased, enriched by the rose, shamrock, and thistle. Accompanying each almanack was a powerful, though miniature magnifying glass, beautifully mounted in gold and mother-of-pearl. An almanack,

&c., got up in the same manner, for the Princess Royal, was laid before the illustrious party at the Castle. An outer case, composed of rich silk velvet, of royal blue, enclosed each of these choice specimens of English workmanship, talent, and taste. The illustrious party expressed themselves greatly pleased with the style and elaborateness with which these elegant little bijoux were produced."

From the reference by Ian Bain, the image to the right shows a custom case with a portrait of Prince Albert, a special magnifier, and, possibly, a "spring fastening". The second image is of the Bijou presented to the baby Princess Royal, her very first book.

As a purveyor to the British crown, Schloss capitalized on his success and created a binding with the central design emblematic of the Prince of Wales, featuring the Prince's three feathers stamped in gold. Two examples are shown below, with identical stamping on different combinations of morocco onlay. The same case is used for each, with the top shown in the third photo below.



Schloss clearly had a flair for marketing, and managed to get his almanacs into the possession, not only of royalty, but of many celebrities of the day. As a previously unknown German immigrant and merchant, this was a coup for Mr. Schloss. The English Bijou became his entrée into fascinating circles of British society as he later switched to a career in the theatre business.

Note: What does "&c." mean? In Latin "&" means "et". Using "et" then "c." which stands for cetera means - etcetera!

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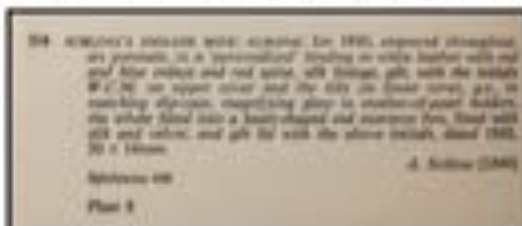
There is evidence of several special bindings of the Bijou, most likely given as presentation copies from Mr. Schloss himself. From an auction not so long ago, I discovered a Bijou with the mysterious initials of Sir E.I.B., in a heart-shaped case with mother-of-pearl magnifier, (pictured right). Some research led me to the name of Edward Bulwer-Lytton, a popular Victorian novelist who penned what is arguably the most famous opening line of a book, "It was a dark and stormy night." In spite of being much-maligned today, the highly memorable words caught the imagination of the public and Bulwer-Lytton grew rich and famous from several bestsellers. Since they were contemporaries, and known to each other in their day, I believe it is likely that Schloss presented this Bijou to the well-known author.



Photo from Reiss & Sohn auction house in Königstein, Tannau, Germany

From the Christie's auction catalog of the Houghton collection, plate 8, item 304, is a custom Bijou similar to the presentation to the left. It is described as having the 1840 edition of the Bijou Almanac, but the case is said to have a date of 1842 on the lid. Both the presentation case and the binding are described with the initials W.C.M. From further research I discovered that W.C.M. is

most probably William Charles Macready, the most famous Shakespearian actor of his time. Bulwer Lytton and Macready corresponded and collaborated on the creation of plays for the theatre, with Bulwer Lytton seeking Macready's insight on effective playwriting. Images of the Macready almanac, from the Houghton catalog, are shown below.



There is one English Bijou Almanac in my collection which does not seem to fit any of the

above categories. Perhaps it was a bespoke binding. It is one of my favorites because the presentation looks so much like a larger

book, shrunk to dollhouse size. The royal blue morocco slipcase is wider than that of a standard Bijou, and opens from the side instead of the top. It is also sturdier than the basic Bijou slipcase and the spine is gilt tooled to give the impression of raised bands. A matching leather wrapper encloses the almanac so it fits perfectly inside the case. The cover of the case is gilt stamped with the title and year. The almanac binding is also a rare design, with three colors of morocco and the word Bijou gilt stamped on the royal blue spine. The front has a white leather onlay with four stamped gilt designs and a central onlay in red morocco, title stamped in gilt, The English Bijou. I have never seen another of Schloss' almanacs with this seemingly rare treatment, shown below. Have you? 📖



I would love to hear from any of you about the topic of The English Bijou Almanac. If you have input to add to the subject, please get in touch. My information is listed in the MBS membership roster as well as on the MBS Facebook page. Please share photos of any Bijou bindings you have and I will add them to the database I am creating. Who knows what new and yet to be discovered treasures are out there? With the amazing variety of Bijou bindings discovered to date, anything is possible.

*- Cynthia Cosgrove
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Note: All color photos are of items in Cynthia Cosgrove's personal collection, unless otherwise noted and are used with her permission. Images on page 17 & 22 are being used under the "fair use" rule under US copyright law.

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