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Winter Newsletter 1998

Brian D. Rogers
Connecticut College, bdrog@conncoll.edu

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1998

Friends of the Connecticut College Library

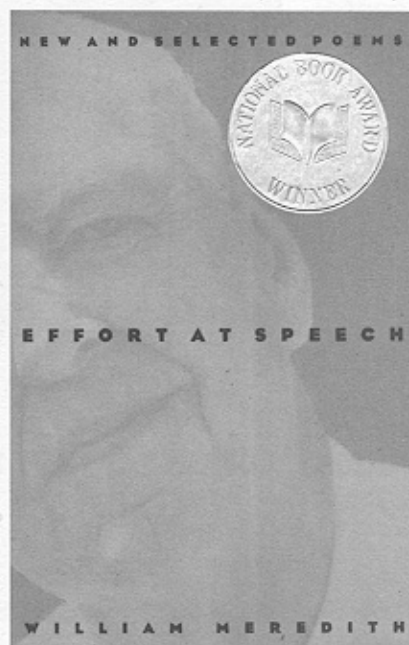
Winter Newsletter

WINTER EXHIBITION:
ANOTHER CORNER OF PARNASSUS:
WILLIAM MEREDITH AND THE 1997
NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FOR POETRY
JANUARY 5 – MARCH 31, 1998

On November 18 Professor Emeritus William Meredith received the prestigious National Book Award for *Effort at Speech*, a collection of eleven previously unpublished poems and a selection from his eight books published between 1944 and 1987. To celebrate this event an exhibition on Meredith's literary career is on view in the Charles E. Shain Library through March 31. The exhibition spans Meredith's career as poet and teacher, from his Princeton senior thesis on Robert Frost to the November award. Books, inscriptions, periodicals and pictures are interspersed with letters from the Library's Meredith Papers to provide a glimpse of the literary life.

Two bronze sculptures are on view: a portrait of Meredith as a young man and a winged *Pegasus*, the token of the 1979 International Vaptsarov Prize for Literature presented to Meredith by the Government of Bulgaria. The exhibition includes photographs of the memorable 1996 poetry reading, attended by many Friends, on the occasion of Shain Library's 20th anniversary. The title of the exhibition is derived from James Merrill's congratulatory letter (on display), sent to Meredith after he received the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for *Partial Accounts*.

Pegasus is on loan from its owner, but all other items on display are drawn from the William Meredith Collection, a virtually complete collection of his published work (including single poems reprinted in more than 150 anthologies or issues of periodicals), and the William Meredith Papers. For more information please call exhibition curator Brian Rogers at (860) 439-2654.



Cover of paperback edition of Meredith's
Effort at Speech; photograph by Resurreccion
Frink



JOHN MERRILL PUBLISHES MEETING THE SUBMARINE CHALLENGE: A SHORT HISTORY OF THE NAVAL UNDERWATER SYSTEMS CENTER

Longtime Friend John Merrill has seen the result of years of research and writing take shape in the form of a 372-page history of the NUSC recently published by the Department of the Navy. An electronic engineer, John was head of the Submarine Electromagnetic Systems Department at the time of his retirement, and had been program manager for the development of the extremely low frequency (ELF) radio wave global submarine communication system. Although the book contains much technical material, it may be appreciated by anyone with an interest in submarines and naval history. The brief historical background of the Fort Trumbull site is particularly interesting in view of the possibility that it may become a Connecticut state park.

"The site of NUSC's New London facility included structures from nearly every generation of its more than two hundred years of military use. The 1790 Revolutionary War blockhouse (Building 42) and Fort Trumbull itself (Building 32) are listed on the National Register of Historic Places." (from "The New London Background," page 9.)

A native of Buffalo, John has been a resident of Waterford for many years and is a frequent visitor to Shain Library. The book is being distributed to research libraries throughout the country as part of the depository program of the U.S. Government Printing Office. We congratulate John and co-author Lionel D. Wyld on their impressive achievement. A copy may be examined in the Palmer Room, where it is part of our New London history collection. (Call Brian Rogers at 439-2654 to be sure the Palmer Room is open when you would like to visit.)

The Friends of the
Connecticut College Library

Connie V. Dowell
Dean of Information Services and
Librarian of the College

Brian Rogers
Special Collections Librarian and
Newsletter Editor

Charles E. Shain Library
Greer Music Library
Connecticut College
270 Mohegan Avenue
New London, CT

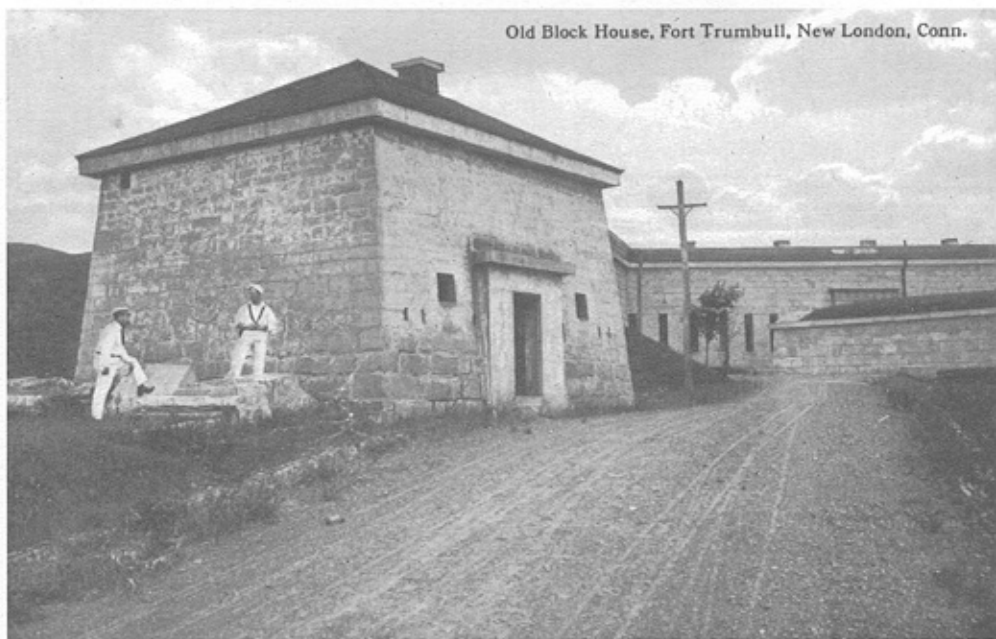
06320-4196

Telephone (860) 439-2654

E-mail: bdrog@conncoll.edu

January, 1998

*Postcard view of
Fort Trumbull Block
House; from New
London postcard col-
lection, Charles E.
Shain Library.*





Oona & Charlie

*Christmas card from
Oona and Charlie
Chaplin to Louis
Sheaffer, 1972*

PURCHASE OF OONA O'NEILL CHAPLIN LETTERS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

We are pleased to report that the purchase of a unique collection of 126 letters written by the late Lady Oona Chaplin to Louis Sheaffer was completed in 1997. Because the Sheaffer estate was willing to accept payment in installments over more than two years, it was possible to fund this purchase with the annual contributions of the Friends of the Library, supplemented with income from the Friends endowment. We are grateful for the continuing generosity of our members which has made this extraordinary purchase possible.

Her letters make clear how important Lady Chaplin's support and friendship was to Louis Sheaffer in writing the two-volume biography of her famous father Eugene. We are grateful to the executors of the Sheaffer estate for giving us the first opportunity to

acquire this immensely significant correspondence for the Sheaffer-O'Neill Collection.

One of the most frequently used parts of the Sheaffer-O'Neill Collection in recent months has been the photograph file. Since the last newsletter, images have been supplied to the producers of a PBS documentary and accompanying book, "The Irish in America"; to the Pittsburgh Public Theater and the Madison (Wisconsin) Repertory Theater for playbills; to the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University, and to a Canadian author for his psychological biography of O'Neill to be published this year by Yale University Press.

A NOTE ON THE TYPOGRAPHY

This newsletter is set in Adobe Garamond, modeled in 1989 by Robert Slimbach on 16th century designs researched at the Plantin-Moretus Museum in Antwerp. The many 20th century versions of Garamond are based on the designs of Claude Garamond (1480-1561), first used in books printed in Paris around 1532. Garamond's original fonts are in the French Imprimerie Nationale.

INFORMATION SOUGHT ON NEW LONDON COMPOSER FREDERICK COIT WIGHT

One of the special strengths of the Library's Special Collections is the history of New London. While much of the material dates back to the 18th century, including the first book printed in Connecticut and dozens of examples of work by New London printer Timothy Green, other holdings are of more recent origin. Among these is a collection of music materials by New London composer Frederick Coit Wight (1859-1933) consisting of libretti, scripts, orchestral and choral parts to his larger-scale works, and a number of his published songs. Wight was especially noted for his band marches, and several of these were performed in the presence of American presidents on ceremonial occasions. An active Rotarian, he composed "Hail,

New London" in 1923 in honor of the New London Rotary Club.

In preparation for making the Wight Collection available to library users, Music Librarian Carolyn Johnson seeks information about Wight, his family, and his music. Among other things she would like to discover where his manuscripts are located. According to his obituary in *The Day* of December 23, 1933, he married Belle Brown, daughter of Dr. W. S. Brown. Their daughter, Nanette, married a George Bragaw, and they also had a daughter. If any reader is able to provide further information about Frederick Coit Wight or his descendants, please contact Carolyn Johnson, Music Librarian, at 439-2710, or Brian Rogers, Special Collections Librarian, at 439-2654.

ANOTHER CORNER OF PARNASSUS;

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Charles E. Shain Library
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Exhibit supported by the
Friends of the Library

YOUR MEMBERSHIP INVITED FOR 1998

- *As another year begins*, we invite you to renew your membership in the Friends of the Connecticut College Library. To those who have recently done so, we sincerely thank you. We welcome new members at any time, and urge readers to let us know of anyone in our area who would enjoy a formal association with one of the New London area's major cultural resources.
- *Membership contributions* are the primary source of financial support for the Department of Special Collections. They enable us to acquire rare books or other materials, and are used to pay any costs associated with public exhibitions, which are the most important way our holdings may be seen by the campus and the regional community. Member support enables the Library to offer public lectures from time to time, provides a scholarship award to a graduating senior or alumna/alumnus attending a graduate program in library and information studies, and underwrites the cost of this newsletter. With this issue we leave behind the format used since 1983 in favor of this fresh new look created for us by Susan Lindberg of the Office of Publications.
- *The Palmer Room*. This attractive reading room on the second floor houses the personal libraries of George S. Palmer and his brother Elisha Loomis Palmer and other collections, and is the location of occasional lectures and receptions. The Room is normally open weekdays from 1 to 5 p.m. and members of the Friends are invited to make it their headquarters when visiting the Library for any reason. If you are visiting the Library specifically to use the Special Collections, it is advisable to make an appointment with Brian Rogers by calling 439-2654.