

Reprinted from *Isis*, Vol. 62, Part 4, No. 214
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To
Dr Eugene Bliss
who is blessed with
the same disease
as the great H. F. Evans
with regards

June 28, 1976
Los Angeles

John Zutter

Éloge

HERBERT M. EVANS

1882-1971

Herbert McLean Evans was born in Modesto, California, September 23, 1882, and died in Berkeley on March 7, 1971. He received the M.D. degree from Johns Hopkins in 1908 and taught there until 1915. From 1915 to 1952 he was Professor of Anatomy at the University of California, Berkeley, during the time he gained international fame for his research, especially in connection with the discovery of Vitamin E and the study of hormones.

Dr. Evans was also something of a pioneer in the history of science in the United States through his promotion of the subject among the Berkeley faculty and through his extraordinary activities as a collector of books. In his memory, and to preserve a record of these noteworthy events, we have asked two close associates to prepare the following memorials. (EDITOR.)

HERBERT M. EVANS, PIONEER COLLECTOR OF BOOKS IN THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE

*By Jacob Israel Zeitlin**

Herbert McLean Evans' dedication to the collecting of books was surpassed only by his dedication to the pursuit of his scientific researches. His important contributions in endocrine and nutritional physiology have gained him a lasting place in the history of these subjects. But for the vagaries of chance he might well have become a Nobel laureate. Parallel to his devotion to experimental biology there ran the equally strong stream of dedication to the humanities. Herbert Evans was indeed a whole man with a gargantuan appetite for living and for all of the splendid things in life. For him there were never "two worlds"; science and the humanities were interwoven and mingled as bright threads in a brilliant tapestry.

In 1934 the University of California at Berkeley published the catalogue of an Exhibition of Epochal Achievements in the History of Science.¹ This was the pioneer effort to publish a selected list of the most significant books in the history of science. Although it has been followed by at least two similar endeavors, one by Bern Dibner,² the other an elaborate and luxurious work by Harrison Horblit,³ neither of them has had the influence of Dr. Evans' pioneer work.

* Zeitlin & Ver Brugge, 815 No. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90069.

¹ *Exhibition of First Editions of Epochal Achievements in the History of Science* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1934).

² Bern Dibner, *Heralds of Science* (Norwalk,

Conn.: Burndy Library, Publication No. 12, 1955).

³ Harrison D. Horblit, *One Hundred Books Famous in Science. Based on an Exhibition Held at the Grolier Club* (New York: The Grolier Club, 1964).

In the introduction Evans states: "Three categories of achievement have been included: first, accounts of significant single discoveries; second, the formulation of laws; and third, the proposal of hypotheses which have been responsible either directly or indirectly for the advancement of science." In preparing the list Evans consulted a group of authorities in each of the fields covered, and this remained a practice with him throughout his collecting career.

His *apologia sua* is stated in the concluding paragraph:

The collection of first editions, one of the chief cults of bibliomania, is perhaps more justifiable in the realm of scientific "firsts" than in any other territory invaded by the hobby. The precise form of an achievement in *belles lettres* is of course the very reason for its being, and it is preserved in the abundant reprints by means of which man reverentially multiplies these ministers to his spirit. Now as Sarton has well said, knowledge as opposed to beauty, is cumulative and progressive. Reprints of scientific works, as originally enunciated, are rare. Yet it is only by consulting the first form of a scientific achievement that one can hope to observe the origin and change of ideas. But, more than this, it may be maintained that one cannot adequately understand any scientific subject without knowledge of the manner in which our present conceptions were established.

This small catalogue has become the most influential work in its particular field of book collecting, perhaps even carrying the responsibility for the phenomenal increase in demand and prices of books which has occurred in the last thirty-five years. Evans himself was probably the most prodigious practitioner of the particular form of bibliomania which he nurtured. He was intensely concerned about bibliographical points, condition, and provenance. From 1934 until 1967 he brought together no less than seven great collections in the sciences. A conservative estimate of the total number of volumes which he assembled would come to no less than 20,000. In addition he formed at least two great collections of Western Americana, two collections of Japanese prints, one collection of the prints of Jacques Callot, and at least one miscellaneous library of important works in poetry, art, and the humanities.

I have made a tentative list of various science collections which he formed and the years in which they were sold, their purchasers and their ultimate location.

Collection Number 1. 1930(?) "Classics in the Medical Sciences." Purchased by Dr. and Mrs. James Waring, Finley L. McFarland, and Mrs. Dora Porter Mason. Presented to the Denver Medical Society, Denver, Colorado.

Collection Number 2. 1950. "First Editions in the Sciences, together with a Reference Collection on the History and Bibliography of Science." Purchased from the conservator of the estate of Mrs. Anabel Evans by Zeitlin & Ver Brugge and John Howell: Books on behalf of Lessing J. Rosenwald and presented by him to the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey.

Collection Number 3. 1953. "First Editions in the Sciences, together with a Reference Library on the History and Bibliography of Science." Purchased by Zeitlin & Ver Brugge. Described in several catalogues. Many of the outstanding items were acquired by the Burndy Library and by E. L. DeGolyer for the DeGolyer Collection at the University of Oklahoma at Norman, Oklahoma.

Collection Number 4. 1957. "First Editions in the Sciences." Purchased by Bernard M. Rosenthal and John Fleming for Louis Silver of Chicago and presented to the University of Chicago. Some duplicates and out-of-scope works were sold by John Fleming (one of these, Semmelweis, *Die Aetiologie, der Begriff und die Prophylaxis des Kindbettfiebers*, 1861, I again purchased for Evans—the second time this book had passed from my hands to his).

Collection Number 5. 1961. "First Editions in the Sciences." Sold by Zeitlin & Ver Brugge and John Howell:Books, as agents for Dr. Evans to Samuel A. Barchas of Tucson, Arizona.

Collection Number 6. 1962. "First Editions in the Sciences, together with a Collection on the History and Bibliography of Science." Sold by Zeitlin & Ver Brugge and John Howell:Books, as agents for Dr. Evans, to Lew D. Feldman, acting for the University of Texas, Austin, Texas.

Collection Number 7. 1967. "First Editions in the History of Science and a Collection on the History and Bibliography of Science." Purchased by John Howell:Books, San Francisco, and Zeitlin & Ver Brugge, Los Angeles, and dispersed in a number of catalogues of both firms, the major part of the collection now at the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

It may well be asked, why did Dr. Evans dispose of such a series of collections, sometimes only a short while after they had been assembled? The answer is that his appetite for books often outran his purse. Sooner or later he would find himself in debt. There was no alternative but to sell the collection that had just been formed. Each time that Evans found himself having to part with his treasures he vowed he would never buy another book. And each time he received payment for his last collection his addiction would assert itself and he would plunge into another passionate campaign by letter, cable, telephone, and overnight drives or flights to all parts of the world to try to recapture the treasures he had parted with a few days before. Thus he remained all his years a happy victim of what Aldous Huxley has called "the most agreeable vice." Even in his last days he was engaged in forming what he hoped would be his finest and greatest collection. He had planned a bookplate for it incorporating his favorite quotation:

*Blessed is he who contemplates the ageless order of immortal nature,
how it is constituted and when and why.*

—EURIPIDES

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA HISTORY OF SCIENCE DINNER CLUB

*By V. F. Lenzen**

The University of California at Berkeley was founded in 1868 by scholars who believed in the value of the classical tradition in higher education. This tradition was

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