

# Recent Developments in Graves' Bibliography

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**Harvey Sarner.** *A Collection of the Works of Robert Graves.*  
**Cathedral City: Brunswick Press, 1995. Contributions by Carl Hahn.**  
**£10**

An unassuming little book that proves absolutely fascinating for the Graves collector or scholar, *A Collection* has several aims: it catalogs Harvey Sarner's massive Graves collection, adds to and corrects the Higginson and Williams bibliography, and records the location of some of the manuscripts and letters, those of which are a part of Harvey Sarner's collection. Sarner, a life-long collector, and author of five medical/legal texts, of teleplays, and a *Checklist of the Works of Herman Wouk*, has a distinct advantage over Higginson: where the early bibliography was compiled apparently from single copies and by queries to publishers, Sarner's collection has, for example, 68 copies of *Good-Bye to All That*; 55 copies of *I, Claudius*; 33 copies of *Claudius the God*; 15 copies of *Watch the North Wind Rise*. Such riches make following the progression of first editions and variants much simpler.

Some of the variations Sarner and Hahn note are very minor. For example, Sarner's dust jackets for the second edition of *Over the Brazier* have red flame in the brazier, rather than blue. Sarner's copy of the Cecil Palmer edition of *The Meaning of Dreams* is in a light blue dust jacket; Higginson's copy had no dust jacket. There are, as one would expect for the products of Graves' complex publishing history, many variations in binding, in printers' devices, in jacket insignia, in spacing of titles, and the like. For example, Sarner identifies a variant green binding of the first edition of *Antigua, Penny, Puce*. Sarner and Hahn are modest throughout: in their long description of the printing

history of *Good-Bye*, after quoting Halliday, Reese, Higginson, and Ahearn on the controversial first American edition, they admit to no conclusion except that the first and book club editions may have been simultaneous. Very helpfully, when Sarner and Hahn speculate, they label their opinions as speculation, and they refuse to offer speculations as hard conclusions.

Other variations Sarner and Hahn note will certainly interest scholars and editors. Sarner's proof copy of *Treasure Box* calls for four corrections in the text, only three of which were apparently made, for example. Sarner's collection also includes the 1960 Postscript to *The White Goddess*, five and a half pages that appear in the 1961 British third edition and the 1966 American edition, along with a 21-page typescript of "Amendments to the *White Goddess* by Robert Graves," both corrected in Graves' hand. Even the "Miscellaneous" section, the section listing "Contributions by Graves Which Do Not Appear in Higginson," and the list of books about Graves in Sarner's collection are valuable lists of resources for scholars, though these may lack the interest collectors will naturally have in the rest of *A Collection*.

Some of Sarner and Hahn's conclusions will be controversial. For example, based on meticulous work with jackets, inserts from Book Clubs, flyers, and department/bookstore stickers, they conclude that Higginson incorrectly identified the book-club edition of *Claudius the God* as the first edition. (The controversy arises when one considers how many people, Sarner and myself included, paid first edition prices for book club editions—I console myself that I only bought one; Sarner has eleven copies). Hahn concludes that it may be impossible to identify the first Mallorcan printing of *Winter in Majorca*, and that the previously identified first issue may not even be an early edition. Only 400 copies of *The More Deserving Cases* were to be signed and bound in red morocco, but I have a copy in morocco numbered "538," so I agree with Hahn that the numbered sheets for the original issue and the subsequent issue (of 350 signed copies in blue buckram binding) must have been mixed in the binding process. Are there extant any copies of *The More Deserving Cases* with blue buckram binding that have numbers lower than 400?

Other collectors of Graves will grind their teeth over the riches in Sarner's collection. Many of the copies are signed, or inscribed presentation, copies in Graves' hand. Still others are signed by Sassoon, introducing Graves ("a Charterhouse friend of mine") to "J.B." Three copies of the first American edition of *Fairies and Fusiliers* have a hand-

written 16-line poem, "For Two Children" signed "R.G. 1919." An inscribed proof copy of *Sergeant Lamb of the Ninth* has a dust jacket Graves made himself from an envelope addressed to him; the proof copy of *Proceed*, *Sergeant Lamb* is entitled "The Escapades of Sergeant Lamb" (not "The Escapes of Sergeant Lamb," as in the early drafts). There are many letters of Graves included in the collection, and many letters about Graves, tucked into these editions.

The text of *A Collection of the Works of Robert Graves* is marred by a number of proofing errors, mainly in spelling, and none of a critical nature. (Some of the errors no doubt are sources of chagrin: "Richard Perceval Grave," for example.) One assumes this is the result of private printing; in fact, though we may be loath to admit it, I think bibliographers and collectors alike rather enjoy these reminders of the difficulty inherent in creating and publishing any book. And it helps differentiate one edition from another.

Collecting Robert Graves is fascinating and fulfilling. Correcting the bibliographic record for Robert Graves is a difficult task, one which may never be finished. In my own efforts to help, as a young scholar, I was fortunate enough to discover the personal generosity of Fred Higginson that complemented his bibliographic skills. Similarly, Harvey Sarner's modesty and generosity complement his meticulous precision as a collector. *A Collection* is a valuable contribution to the bibliographic records of Robert Graves' work, one of serious, even vital, interest to Graves scholars and collectors. Some day, one hopes, an enterprising student can gather up all these records, correcting and adding to Higginson (from *Focus*, *Malahat Review*, Sarner's *A Collection*, *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, etc.) in one definitive description, but as the bibliographic record of Robert Graves continues to grow, that definitive list is not likely to appear anytime soon.

Adrian Gregory. *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day, 1919-1946*. Oxford: Berg, 1994. Cloth: £44.95. Paperback: £14.95

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