

Four Kinds of Provenance, Four Books

- **Associational provenance**

LEON EDEL, *Henry James: The Untried Years, 1843–1870* (1953).
Max Beerbohm's copy, later given by Rupert Hart-Davis to Leon Edel

- **Collector provenance**

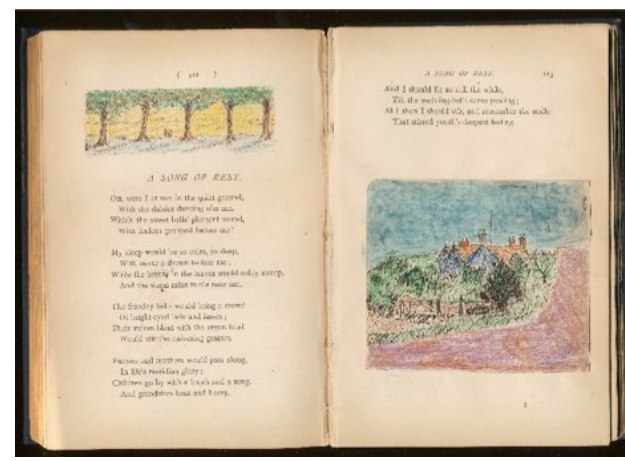
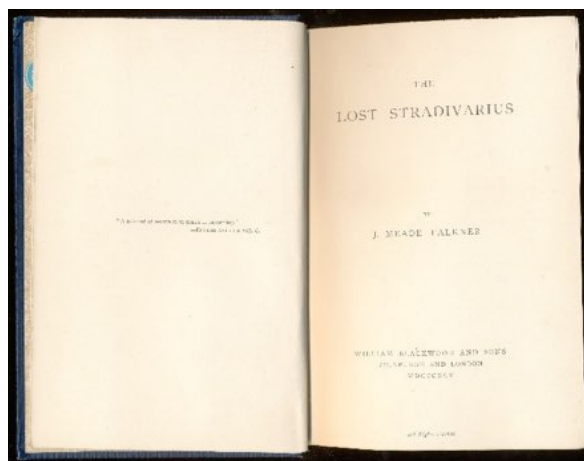
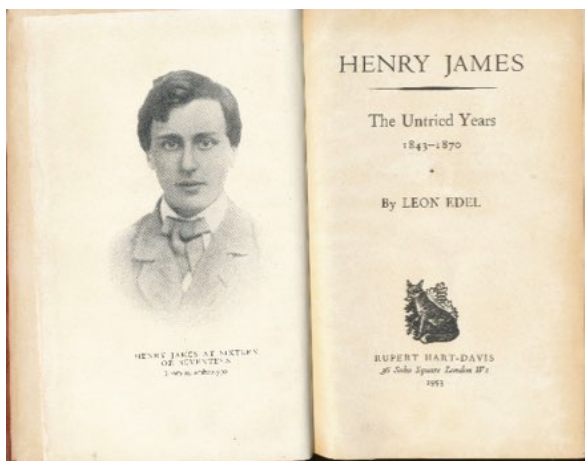
JOHN MEADE FALKNER, *The Lost Stradivarius* (1895)
Thomas Hardy–Hugh Walpole–Michael Sadleir–H. Bradley Martin–
Mark Samuels Lasner copy

- **Obscure provenance**

MAXWELL GRAY, *Westminster Chimes: And Other Poems* (1890).
The author's copy, later presented to J. Robertson Trowbridge

- **Spurious provenance**

OSCAR WILDE, *The Sphinx* (1894). With forged inscription



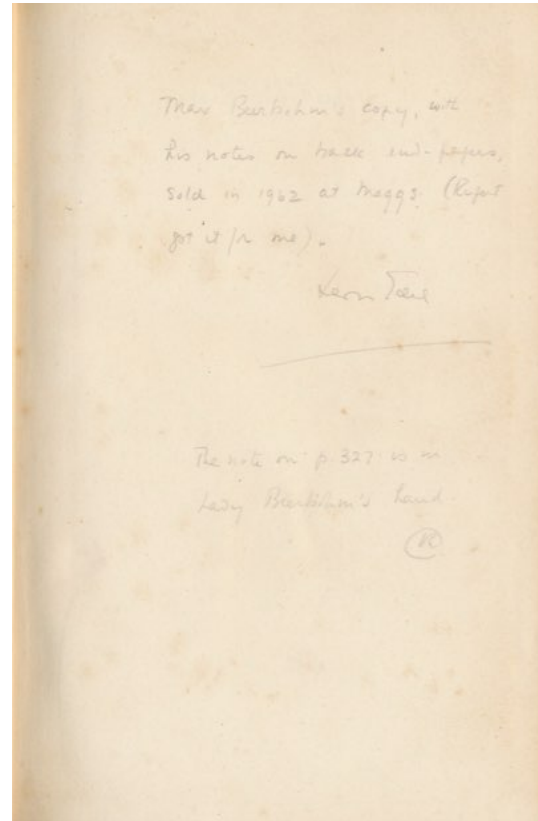
The Ideal Book

Associational Provenance

“Provenance is interesting in proportion to the interest of the previous owners, whether contemporary with its publication, or as persons of importance in their own right, or because they were book-collectors of note.”

—John Carter

- The book has an intellectual or sentimental connection with its creator or creators, with its original owner, or with a subsequent owner



Dream, meaning of.

"Two of seven."

Images, cadence, master.

Mrs. Brown

W. J. Story

Italian Hours

Sonnet
with
Gorse

Latin manner

Dream miscolored
and confused

Scientific
d. Thelloger

"Love of Part"

all in your old
enigmas.

Early impression.

Roomer's
Berry

XVI

All Mrs. Craip's

Twelve

Gross fully of a waiting
Palaces
Scientific

"bird in the
cage" - copy

no food or wine
a day or cats

"one poor
soul"

Making Out

Part

Out

at the Lecture

to the Lecture

Gorse

Letter

The Letter and

Letter

Find

Piccadilly

"The Yellow

Glow"

The War

with Colfax

C. B. and

Part of a party
making a scene

"he knows all
the names of
the flowers"

with Connel
at Colons

"Guy Duvall
Alexander

"Catal"

and other
account

"Paraded"

Poor

"Poor Howells"

5/17/60

11

13

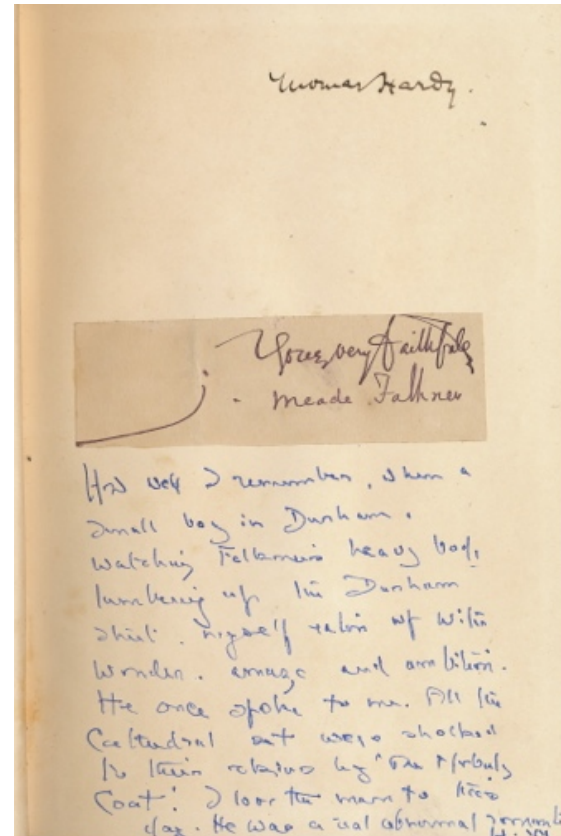
A “Value Added Tax”?

Collector Provenance

There is a satisfaction, not easily expressed in words, of owning a book which the cataloguer describes as ‘the James Bindley-Upcott-Utterson-Daniel-Title-Beckford-Wadhul-Ashburnham-Huth-Huntington-Jones’ copy . . . Some day the provenance of a book will play a much greater part than it does now in determining value.”

—George H. Sargent

- The book belonged to one or more collectors (or institutions) we can identify





FROM THE LIBRARY
OF
THOMAS HARDY, O.M.
MAX GATE



Mark
Samuels
Jasner



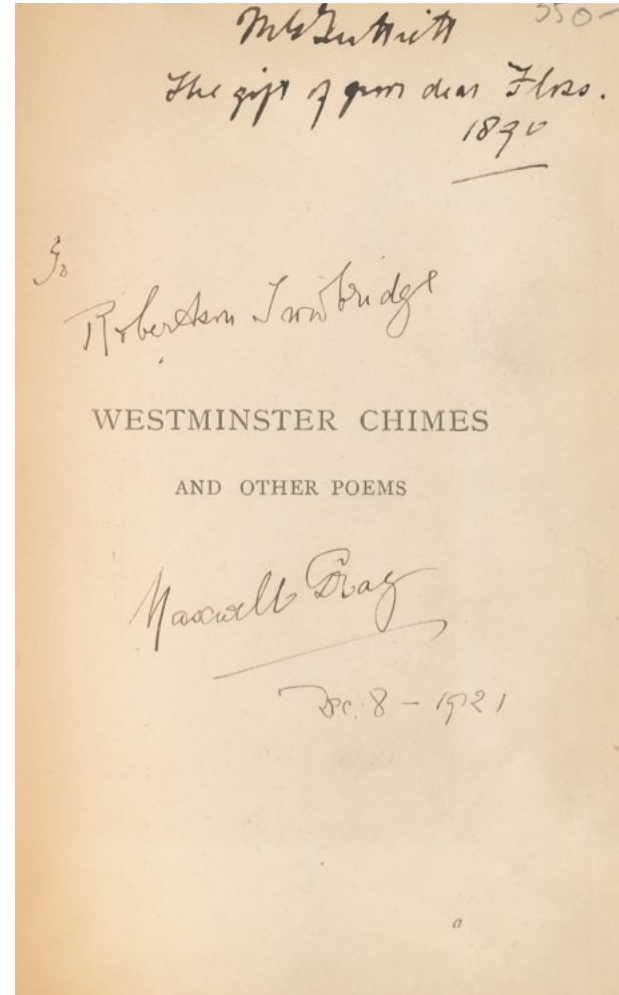
H. Bradley Martin

Obscure Provenance

“It is the general ambition of the [book collector] class to find value where there seems to be none.”

—John Hill Burton

- Significance is discovered through research
- Almost all provenance is of interest—to someone
- Ease of provenance research online: no owner left behind





A SONG OF REST.

Oh, were I at rest in the quiet ground,
With the daisies dancing o'er me,
Within the sweet bells' pleasant sound,
With lindens grouped before me!

My sleep would be so calm, so deep,
With never a dream to fear me;
While the breeze in the leaves would softly sweep,
And the warm rains rustle near me.

The Sunday bells would bring a crowd
Of bright-eyed lads and lasses;
Their voices blent with the organ loud
Would stir the quivering grasses.

Fathers and mothers would pass along,
In life's meridian glory;
Children go by with a laugh and a song,
And grandsires bent and hoary.

And I should lie so still the while,
Till the wedding-bells came pealing;
Ah! then I should stir, and remember the smile
That stirred youth's deepest feeling.

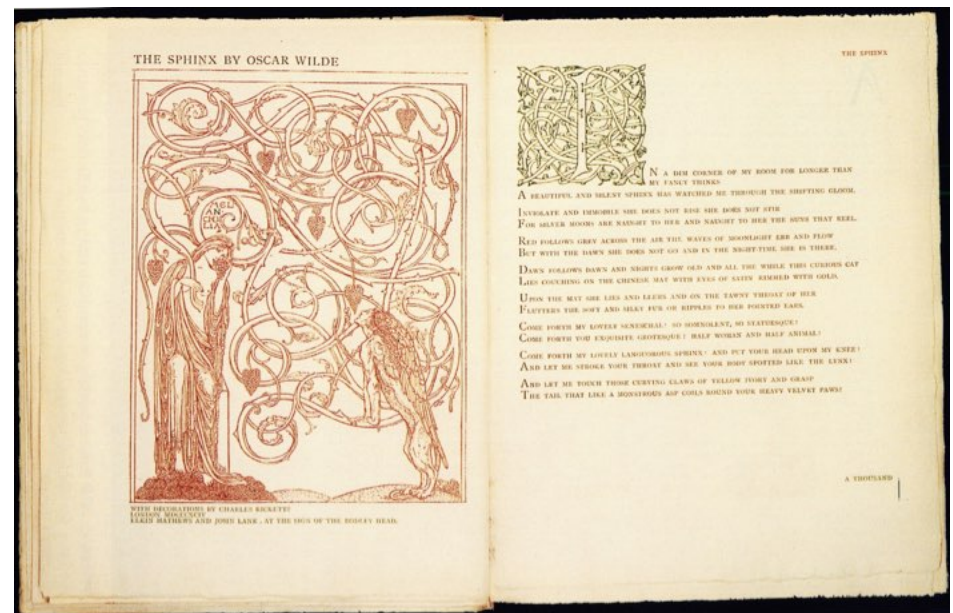


Spurious Provenance

"The whole thing proves one more that, easy as it appears to be to fabricate reprints of rare books, it is in actual practice impossible to do so in such a matter that detection cannot follow the result."

—Thomas J. Wise

- Provenance is a tool for determining authenticity
- Not all provenance is honest
- What are dealers and collectors to do with pieces with false provenance?



Authentic Wilde inscription

THE SPHINX

For Arthur Clifton
from
his affectionate
friend
the author

Oscar Wilde

Wilde
/4

Forged Wilde inscription

TO
MARCEL SCHWOB
IN FRIENDSHIP
AND
IN ADMIRATION

I made my life a lyre
on which all winds should play

Walter de Burgh
with my warmest regards.

Oscar Wilde

15. 9. '97.

Conclusion: Current Provenance

- Collectors, the book trade, and librarians should pay attention to provenance
- Indications of ownership should never be removed
- *We* are caretakers of *tomorrow's* provenance

