

Gothic Revival and its impact on nineteenth-century American interiors. Among the architect-designers to be discussed in a series of Thursday evening lectures are Philip Webb, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Charles F.A. Voysey, and Frank Lloyd Wright. For further details, write to the Cooper-Hewitt at 2 East 91st Street, New York, N.Y. 10128.

B. ALDRICH COLLECTION, IOWA STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY, DES MOINES, IOWA

Florence Boos has sent us the following description of this collection:

Charles Aldrich was a nineteenth-century newspaper editor, Iowa state senator, and zealous collector of contemporary documents and letters; eventually, these included four Rossetti sketches, and assorted documents, letters, and manuscripts by Christina and D.G. Rossetti, William Morris, Edward Burne-Jones, Ford Madox Brown, and others associated with the Pre-Raphaelite movement. William Michael Rossetti, who corresponded with Aldrich for twenty-four years, donated most of these items to him, and provided careful annotations. Rossetti must have appreciated Aldrich's steady interest and obvious respect; the forty letters he sent include several expressions of genuine epistolary warmth, and brief reflections on retirement and the death of his wife. In 1894, Aldrich claimed that he had collected for the state "more interesting memorials of the illustrious Rossetti family than can be found elsewhere in this country;" in 1894, he was probably right.

Two undated and rather peripheral Morris notes are in the Des Moines collections, one to D.G. Rossetti, and the other to Brown. The first is no. 121 of Norman Kelvin's LETTERS, tentatively dated there [August 1870]; in it, Morris refuses an invitation, and adds that "I will come round to dinner on Saturday if I may and see Janey and settle anytime you wish for the drawing--". The second, not yet published, tells "My dear Brown" that "Tomorrow (Thursday) I purpose coming about 9 since you are kind enough to be bored by me. You needn't take the trouble to write if it is all right. Yrs ever, W. Morris." (Such memorials may make one obliquely grateful for the telephone.) William Michael Rossetti forwarded the second note to Aldrich in May, 1897, with the following comment: "Morris printed at his Kelmscott Press 2 vols. of Gabriel's poems, purchasable separately: one is Ballads & Narrative Poems, & the other Sonnets and Lyrical Poems. Of course they are fine-looking volumes: but I am not myself over-enamoured of the Kelmscott printing. . . . Morris also re-printed and published G's prose story Hand and Soul."

William Michael Rossetti first sent Aldrich 56 documents in 1884, and added as many more over the next twenty years. His careful explanations of each item's author, recipient, and context often reflect his lifelong tendency to view his literary and artistic contemporaries through the Brotherhood's lenses ("Inchbold was a Landscape-painter influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite move

... who has worked more or less under the
Preraphaelite influence: painted 'April Love,' illustrated Christina Rossetti's
'Sing-Song,' &c."). In December 1903, WMR sent Aldrich a copy of his book
DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI, HIS FAMILY LETTERS (1895), bound with add-
itional pages of captioned recent photographs of his own family. In the marg-
ins, he also queried various details--for example, whether his brother had left

school in 1841 or 1842--and recorded the editions of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's works which had appeared since 1895. Often, he took scrupulous care to gloss well-known facts and figures for a possible wider audience on the remote midwestern prairie: G.F. Watts, for example, as "the painter now highly celebrated," and the "National Gallery" as the "National BRITISH Gallery."

Some individual documents are genuinely interesting: an April 13th, 1863 letter, for example, in which D.G. Rossetti announced to his mother his marriage; and more obliquely, a note from Oscar Wilde to Charles Norton, in which Wilde employed half a page of expansive scrawl for a single sentence. In an 1888 letter to her mother, Phillipa Fawcett described a mock election at Clough Hall: "I am Home Secretary. I think our tenure of office will be very short indeed, as we are going to bring in a bill tomorrow for the reform of the House of Lords. . . ." Four letters by Archdeacon Manning and Dr. Pusey, copied by Maria Rossetti, scrutinize their audience for any signs of deviation from the true faith (which for Pusey was still the Church of England); and in one unusually amiable note, Coventry Patmore invites the Rossetti brothers and Morris to Highwood Cottage in Finchley: "Could you & your brother & Morris come on Saturday evening and stay over Sunday? We can manage beds for you all. If you can't do this (which would be much the jolliest), perhaps you can come down early on Sunday . . .". (Perhaps it's all right about the telephone, after all.)

Prominent in the collection are four Rossetti sketches (Virginia Surtees, DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI, 1828-1882; THE PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS. . . . Oxford, 1971, nos. 7, 81B, 515, and 702): one in pen, by the twelve-year old DGR, depicts "The Genius about to kill the Princess of the Isle of Ebony" in THE ARABIAN NIGHTS; the other three are undated pencil sketches: two portraits of Christina Rossetti and Elizabeth Siddal, and one portrayal of the death of Beatrice.

The collection also includes two early drafts of DGR's sonnets, "II. Not as These," untitled in this draft, and signed "1848" (a revised version appeared in 1870 as no. lxxv of "The House of Life"); WMR assigned its composition to 1849 in the 1911 WORKS; and "On Refusal of Aid Between Nations" (1870; originally "On the refusal of aid to Hungary by the European powers, 1849"). The 1870 "Refusal" deviates from the 1849 manuscript at four points, most notably its replacement of the banal phrase, "Seems its appointed period," with "Seethes ever as a winepress ever trod." In 1870 "Not as These" replaced in lines 12-13 "Unto the lamps of the strong natures, lit/ Along the daily world, look thou instead" with "Unto the lights of the great Past, new-lit/ Fair for the future's track, look thou instead. . . ."

Aldrich had arranged to donate his collection to the state of Iowa in 1884, on the condition that it be provided with special cases for display, and he continued to add to it until his death in 1908. The cases languished at first in the statehouse basement, as several of his fellow legislators remained unconvinced of the value of "Aldrich's trash." They later became part of the State History Society's public collections, but have not fared well in recent years. Two years ago the Society removed the documents . . .

...the Society removed the documents from their cases and re-
gated them to its basement, where they remain piled in loose heaps in folders
and large envelopes. The Society's librarian has asked for training in the
appropriate conservation methods, but her request was denied. At one point,
to my distress, I watched a line of William Michael Rossetti's handwriting
crumble and vanish into eternity, in the over-100 degree Fahrenheit heat
of Iowa's worst summer since 1936; I shuddered to think of Aldrich's suff-

ering ghost. A letter of protest to the current library administrator brought a vigorously noncommittal reply.

At least a part of Aldrich's original collection is now better-housed in the air-conditioned rare books room of the University of Iowa library at Iowa City. The university's holdings include another note from Morris to D.G. Ross-etti, from the early 1860's (Kelvin, No. 25), and a letter, acquired in 1968 and dated "October 15th," which has not yet appeared in Kelvin's edition. In this note, Morris expresses cheerful exasperation with autograph seekers, which obviously included his correspondent:

Dear Sir,

I fear I don't much sympathize with the autograph-hunter; but I have no excuse to give for not writing my name for you except that I don't like the trouble of doing so, which would perhaps make my refusal seem churlish, so take this scrawl since you want it.

Yours truly

William Morris

Might the "autograph-hunter" have been Charles Aldrich?

C. NEWS OF MEMBERS

Carolyn Collette will give a paper on nineteenth century attitudes to Chaucer (and so William Morris will surely be discussed) at the next New Chaucer Society Conference, this one to be held in Vancouver, B.C., during August, 1988. Details about the paper and the conference can be obtained from Carolyn Collette, Department of English, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts.

Joseph R. Dunlap has called our attention to a provocative short article in the last issue of ENGLISH LITERATURE IN TRANSITION (30, no. 4): 450-55. The article, "A STORY OF THE DAYS TO COME and NEWS FROM NOWHERE: H.G. Wells as a Writer of Anti-Utopian Fiction," is by Robert M. Philmus of Concordia College. Philmus argues that the novel by Wells is a type of anti-utopian fiction that "defines itself against--which also means in relation to--NOWHERE, particularly as it derives its own dystopian possibility from the pastoral world that Morris there envisions as ideal. This ideal it more or less explicitly evokes in Denton and Elizabeth's "dream" of escape from the mechanized ways of the London of the Twenty-Second Century; it even locates their longing for a better life in the self-same "valley of the Thames" that Nowhere occupies."

Harriet Dyer Adams, long-time member from Albany, New York, has written to recommend THE JOURNAL OF DECORATIVE AND PROPAGANDA ARTS, a periodical with interesting short articles and fine color reproductions. This new quarterly is published