

Guide to John Buchan's writing – issue no. 4

Please contact me for full details of any book which may be of interest.

Section A

A19 Some Eighteenth Century Byways (1908)

A collection of essays, all of which had been published in various magazines over the previous 10 years. They deal mostly with individuals (politicians and writers) and political matters. Attractive binding. A cheap edition was bound in light blue cloth with black lettering. An interesting read.

Copies available (22.07.19)

- First edition – 6 copies £50 to £80.
- Variant first (blue cloth) – 1 copy £60.
- First + signed letter – 1 copy £200.
- Cheap edition – 4 copies £25 to £27.

A20 Nine Brasenose Worthies (1909)

Brasenose College celebrated 400 years since its foundation in 1909 and published a 2-volume work entitled Brasenose College Quatercentenary Monographs. Volume II included JB's essay on 9 notable former scholars of the nineteenth century. This monograph was also published as a separate 30-page booklet bound in black card. The booklet is extremely rare but the larger work is more readily available although still scarce.

Copies available (22.07.19)

- Booklet – no copies available at present.
- 2-volume collection of monographs – 1 copy £100.

A21 Prester John (1910)

Buchan's first major seller, an exciting story of an uprising in Southern Africa. Originally published in *The Captain* magazine, under the title *The Black General*, accompanied by illustrations which were not included in the book. The first US edition was entitled *The Great Diamond Pipe* although subsequent editions reverted to the UK title. It went through many different Nelson editions and has remained in print ever since its first publication; deservedly so as it is an exciting, fast-paced yarn, albeit there are times when the language used is not in tune with current usage.

The first edition was bound in green cloth with the title in gold on the spine against a white enamel background. This background very easily flaked away and copies with it intact are rare. A variant first edition binding was in patterned light and dark blue cloth with gold lettering on the spine and dark blue on the front. Even this variant has its own variant, occasionally seen, with gold lettering on the front. An early illustrated edition has an attractive illustrated binding in green (more rarely, blue) cloth.

This title was published in the Nelson Uniform, 1/6 and 2/- editions but not in Hodder's Yellow Jacket edition.

Copies available (22.07.19)

- First edition – 4 copies £23 to £50.
- Variant first edition – 2 copies £25 to £50.
- Variant of the variant first edition – 1 copy £30.
- Various illustrated editions – 8 copies £3 to £30.
- Various US illustrated editions – 5 copies £12 to £30.

- Other Nelson editions – 9 copies £5 to £20.
- *The Great Diamond Pipe* – 3 copies £65 each.

A22 Sir Walter Raleigh (1911)

Not a 'formal' biography of Raleigh but rather a series of vignettes of Raleigh's life written in a style intended to be of interest to young people. Bound in an attractive illustrated and decorated binding in either white or russet cloth. Issued with a dustwrapper but copies which retain this are extremely rare. This title was issued in the Nelson Uniform edition.

Copies available (22.07.19)

- First edition (white) – 5 copies £30 to £75.
- First edition (russet) – 4 copies £40 to £70.
- Signed first – 1 copy £150.
- Nelson Uniform (leather) – 2 copies £20 to £30.
- Nelson Uniform – 1 copy £6.

A23 Buchan's Diagrammatic Chart (1911)

A remarkable work being a large single sheet setting out in multi-coloured diagrammatic form the development of the political parties from 1845 and annotated with notes by JB. Not only is it a fascinating item it is a remarkable piece of printing skill for this period. Originals are extremely rare; I know of only 2 copies, one in the British Museum and one in a private collection. However, Crask Books is able to supply on demand printed (not photocopied) full size facsimiles. These are priced at £30 including UK postage. For overseas orders an inclusive price will be quoted at the time of ordering.

Section B

B4 Selected Essays 1884-1907 (1909)

Augustine Birrell was a Liberal Party politician in the early part of the 20th century who fell from favour having been complicit in the mishandling of the Easter Rising. He was also an essayist of some popularity for a time. There is no formal contribution to this work by JB but Birrell's preface states "When lately asked by my friend Mr. John Buchan to allow a selection from my essays (made by him) to be added to this series, I readily assented..." They make pleasant, undemanding reading although, in my view, there is perhaps too little of Birrell and too much of quotations from others. Usually inexpensive.

Copies available (22.07.19)

- First edition – 2 copies £6 to £7.

B5 The Long Road to Victory (1920)

As JB writes in his preface "This is a book of soldier's tales." It contains accounts of major engagements of World War I and was aimed at young readers. As well as the preface, one of the stories is by JB. There are over 20 illustrations by Stephen Spurrier. There were no subsequent editions. Scarce.

Copies available (22.07.19)

- First edition – 5 copies £22 to £25.

Section C

C13 W.H.B. (1913)

Just short of a year after the death of his father, JB's brother Willie died of an unknown illness whilst home on leave from the Indian Civil Service. This affectionate tribute to him was compiled by Anna and published privately. It includes one of JB's best and most well-known poems *Fratri Dilectissimo*. Published in a very small print run for family and close friends it is exceptionally rare.

- No copies in stock at present.

C14 Songs of Angus (1915)

Violet Jacob was one of the foremost Scots vernacular poets of the first half of the 20th century. Much of her poetry is about, and in the dialect of, Angus. JB contributed a 4-page preface. First editions are rare but subsequent impressions are more readily available. Enjoyable poetry.

Copies available (22.07.19)

- First edition – 1 copy (with dustwrapper) - £35.
- Subsequent impressions – 2 copies £7 to £8.

C15 The Records of the Chatham Dining Club 1910-1914 (1915)

The Chatham Dining Club was established in 1910 and continues in existence to this day. It has always been a forum for frank and confidential debate on defence matters. Although not a founder member, JB joined in its early years. This book collected the papers read in those early years including one delivered by JB in June 1911 entitled *Democracy and Representative Government*. It is very rare.

- No copies in stock at present.

C16 The Queen's Gift Book (1915)

A fund-raising book in aid of Queen Mary's Convalescent Hospitals for Soldiers and Sailors Who Have Lost Their Limbs in the War – not the snappiest charity title! A well-produced volume with a number of high-profile contributors including JM Barrie, Jerome K Jerome and Jeffrey Farnol; there is a foreword by John Galsworthy. JB's contribution was the short story *Divus Johnston* which had appeared in a magazine in December 1913. The book was issued with a 4-page leaflet explaining the work of the charity. Copies with this leaflet are rare.

Copies available (22.07.19)

- First edition – 4 copies (1 with d/w) £15 to £50.

Books about JB and His work (these are not in Blanchard)

This is not an exhaustive list but is simply compiled from my own collection. There are other books about JB and if you feel they should be included, please let me know. There are around 100 further books to be added to this section so be patient!

I do not carry a wide range of these titles but if there is one you would like please let me know and I will try to find it for you.

Members of the University of Glasgow and OTC Who Served 1914-19 (1922)

A simple record of all serving members as indicated in the title. It records JB as Director of Information and also Alastair's death. Very rare.

- No copies in stock at present.

From Pigeon Post to Wireless by Henry M Collins (1925)

Collins was one of the pioneers of Reuters and in this book he reflects on his career. In the introduction he states that the book was inspired by John Buchan who was, of course, a director of Reuters.

- No copies in stock at present.

Contemporary Scottish Studies: First Series by CM Grieve [Hugh MacDiarmid] (1926)

40 short essays on Scottish writers of the day and on writing styles. JB is the subject of the first essay.

Copies available (22.07.19)

- First edition – 1 copy £15.

The Bookman (1927)

Hodder & Stoughton's house literary magazine. The Christmas 1927 issue included a colour portrait of JB. Scarce.

- No copies in stock at present.

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