The P'u-pan Chinese Library at the University of British Columbia

In the period of nearly three hundred years separating the late Ming Dynasty and the mid-19th century, the most renowned Chinese bibliophiles were to be found mainly in the T'ai-hu region of the lower Yangtze delta.* There were two reasons for this: first, T'ai-hu had been an area relatively advanced in economic development; second it had, in comparison with other regions, produced proportionately greater numbers of successful candidates for official competitive examinations, thus ensuring a higher rate of continuity in the preservation of rare books among members of the same family and an easier circulation and loan of reproduced manuscripts among families of comparable social standing.

This concentration of rare books in the Yangtze delta was, however, brought to an end by two factors beyond the control of the bibliophiles themselves. First, the opening of China to the West, among other things, created a new and powerful mercantile class in the southern province of Kwangtung. Members of this rich class were admittedly not scholars by training; nonetheless they were rich enough to become effective competitors in the open market for the acquisition of rare books. As a result, such persons as P'an Chen-ch'eng (1714-1788) and Wu Ch'ung-yüeh (1810-1863, better known to the West as Howqua) and a score of others became prominent collectors and even publishers of original or copied rare books.

Secondly, in the course of the Taiping Rebellion, during which the rebels occupied Nanking for nearly twenty years and the Manchu loyalists devastated the largest part of the Wu region, many prominent collectors in the area were forced to relinquish their private libraries. Ku Yüan, a native of Soochow, for example, lost practically all his collection of rare books and antiquities in 1860 to Ting Jih-ch'ang (1823-1882), a native of Feng-shun, Kwangtung, who was then in a favorable position to acquire them in his official capacity of Shanghai taotai with authority over the Soochow, Sungkiang and T'ai-ts'ang Circuit, the native cities of celebrated scholar-bibliophiles.

Aside from these two factors, however, it was evident that with the steady change in social structure and economic conditions in China during the last hundred years, no individual collector in the face of soaring prices and international competition, could enlarge or even maintain his private treasures for any long period of time. Indeed, libraries could only be carried on with the financial backing either of the government or a powerful commercial firm. The Chinese themselves perhaps were aware of this changing environment: thus a Chiang-nan Library was founded in 1909 to house the private collection of the late Ting Ping

* This article is intended primarily for the general reader. For a more detailed account see the present writer's report, A Descriptive Catalogue of Valuable Manuscripts and Rare Books from China, Issued during the Sung, Yüan, and Ming Dynasties (960-1644), distributed by the University of British Columbia Library (Vancouver, 1959, 69 pp., mimeographed).
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(1833-1899) after the tragic loss of some 40,000 chüan of Lu Hsin-yüan's (1834-1894) books to Baron Iwasaki Yanosuke of Japan. One may indeed seriously doubt whether the celebrated She-yüan collection of Chang Yuan-chi (1866-1959) and the Chüan-an library of Yeh Ching-ku'i (1876?-1949) could have remained in China for so long had they not received financial backing from the Commercial Press and the Chekiang Industrial Bank respectively.

The previous owner, Mr. Yao Chün-shih, of the Pu-pan collection (acquired in 1959 by the University of British Columbia) may well be classified as one who had become interested in this field as a result of the surplus capital at his disposal. He was reported to have been a physician by training, enjoying a large family fortune amassed by his ancestors over the past two generations, which he enlarged still further by wise management and shrewd investment. Some twenty years ago he began to be interested in building a private library, named Pu-pan after the famous ancient capital of the legendary Emperor Shun to whom Mr. Yao's surname was traditionally traced. About 45,000 single books (ü'e) were collected in his library. Some of them were left in Canton and subsequently destroyed by the advancing Japanese Army in 1939. Mr. Yao was wise enough, however, to have moved the best portion of his collection to Macao in time to escape the military turmoil. During the past fifteen years he took pains to rebuild his collection, which was gradually brought up to its pre-war size. In the face of political instability shortly after the Second World War, he was in constant fear that someday misfortune might again befall him, and for this reason he was most anxious to transfer his collection to a place of greater safety. He almost concluded such an arrangement with Nanyang University in Singapore, but the negotiations were subsequently ended as a result of the sudden resignation of Dr. Lin Yutang (then President of Nanyang) for whom Mr. Yao had great respect and with whom he had been in frequent correspondence.

In offering to sell his library, Mr. Yao laid down one strict condition: everything or nothing. As a result, some institutions older and larger than the University of British Columbia, including Hongkong University, could not make a successful bid since they were not willing to take duplicates of books which they already had. This put the University of British Columbia in an advantageous position: its Chinese Library was young enough to absorb a few duplicates and the University authorities, encouraged by the generosity of the Friends of the Library group, were farsighted enough to make an initial major investment in acquiring this repository of rich resources for eventual use by scholars. After months of negotiation by Dr. Ping-ti Ho, the deal was successfully concluded.

The whole library reached the University in February 1959, in 112 crates each containing about 400 books. After nearly three months' examination and careful comparison of the books with the original catalogue, a task in which this writer took part with great pleasure, the following tabulation was formulated to show the standing of the collection in each of the five major divisions: Classics, History, Philosophy, Literature, and General Works—each further divided according to the date of publication or completion.

This collection is rich in works dealing with Chinese Classics as well as individual literary works written by scholars during the Manchu Dynasty. A preliminary survey reveals nearly two thousand works in the latter category, the rich-
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<td>Ming (1368–1662)</td>
<td>187</td>
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<td>1,054</td>
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<td>2,899</td>
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<td>(up to 1820)</td>
<td>1,192</td>
<td>2,742</td>
<td>2,592</td>
<td>7,239</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>1,826</td>
<td>3,914</td>
<td>11,709</td>
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<td>(from 1821)</td>
<td>2,792</td>
<td>8,762</td>
<td>6,830</td>
<td>21,883</td>
<td>2,064</td>
<td>6,849</td>
<td>6,153</td>
<td>14,672</td>
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<td>Manuscripts</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>1,061</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>160</td>
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Total number of Ts'ie: 44,758; total number of Ts'ian: 148,822.
ness of which can be matched only by those in Columbia University's collection, one of the four principal Chinese libraries in North America. Another impressive item is Mr. Yao's collection of local gazetteers of different editions for almost all the eighty-six districts in his home province of Kwangtung. In this connection it may be noted that local gazetteers are by no means an accumulation of dry entries of disconnected subjects. On the contrary, names and accomplishments of successive administrators, prominent figures in all walks of life (both native-born and temporary resident), local products, literary works of local scholars, lists of successful candidates for official examinations, points of interest and historical geography of the locality, were all carefully and systematically copied or recorded. The importance of this type of work had previously drawn the attention of Western sinologists, and as a result the Library of Congress and the East Asiatic Library of Columbia University have become the two major centers for the collection of China's local gazetteers. For the province of Kwangtung, however, one must say that both institutions are now less well-endowed than the University of British Columbia.

The quality or value of a rare book is generally determined (aside from its condition) first by the date of its publication and second by the standing of the bibliophile who once possessed it. For Chinese books, is is comparatively easy to identify the date, for, if the books are in good condition, they usually carry a preface recording the exact date of publication. It is nevertheless a major problem to determine the name and date of the bibliophile concerned, for Chinese scholars normally are known under a host of alternate names: given name, secondary name (to be referred to after one reached twenty years of age), pen name, study name, and also other kinds of sobriquets. To make things worse, more than one person might use the same name (the surname is traditionally withheld in the seals used on books), and it has been a common practice among Chinese scholars to use as personal identification a seal with the inscription of a direct quotation from the Classics or a colorful (but sometimes meaningless) combination of words of the scholar's own creation. Despite all this, in the present collection one may select as sample cases a few valuable rare books which can be identified with reasonable assurance.

1. Chou-i pen-i (The Original Meaning of the Book of Changes, 8 chüan, 4 ts'ee.) A Ming publication modelled after a Sung edition (1265). It follows the original in every detail. Cf. Lo Chen-ch'ang's Shan-pen-shu so-chien-lu (A List of Rare Books I have Seen), Commercial Press, 1959, p. 2.

2. Shou-wen wu-yin yün-pu (Supplementary Notes on the Phonetics of the Shuo-wen, 12 chüan, 4 ts'ee, 986 edition.) There have been only three references to the Sung edition of the Shuo-wen ever available in China: one set belonged to Chang Wen (1293-1356), one to Tai Ta-chang (fl. ca. 1842), and a third to Lu Hsin-yüan (q. v.), which eventually went to Japan and was the set photographed reproduced in the ensuing Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'au of the Commercial Press. The set in the Yao collection, a different variety, was once owned by Pao T'ing-po (1728-1814), a renowned bibliophile of Anhui who offered more than two hundred different works to Emperor Ch'ien-lung in connection of compiling the Ssu-k'au catalogue and who financed the publication of the famous Chih-pu-tsu-chai ts'ung-shu (see Figure 1).
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Figure 1
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3. Ch'u Kuang-hsi shih-ch'i (Poetry of Ch'u Kuang-hsi, [ca. 725], 5 chüan, 2 t's'e.) A Sung edition formerly owned by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636), a famous painter, connoisseur, and calligrapher who wrote comments on this book in his own handwriting. It was later possessed by Chang Hsieh (a chin-shih scholar of 1782).

4. Huang-chi ching-shih shu (Shao Yung's [1011-1077] System of Philosophy, 12 chüan, 34 t's'e.) A Ming edition formerly in the possession of K'uang Lu (1604-1650), a loyalist to the Ming who killed himself amid his precious books and antiques when the victorious Manchu troops attacked the besieged Canton.

5. Tso-chuan chu-ch'ieh (Commentary to the Tso-chuan, Sung edition, an incomplete set with chüan 1-2, chüan 29-31 existing, 2 t's'e in all), and Huai-nan hung-chieh chieh (by Liu An [d. B.C. 122], 21 chüan, 10 t's'e.) Both belonged to Chi Chen-i (b. 1630), a native of T'ai-hsing and one of the most celebrated collectors of the early Manchu Dynasty.

6. Lu-chia shih ming-wu shu (Six Commentaries to the Book of Songs, 55 chüan, 12 t's'e, 1605 edition) and Po K'ung lu t'ieh (An Encyclopedia compiled by Po Chi-i [772-846] and K'ung Ch'uan [fl. ca. 1130], 100 chüan, 100 t's'e, Ming edition.) Both were preserved in the Ming-shan-t'ang Library first founded by Prince I (1686-1730), the 13th son of Emperor K'ang-hsi, enlarged by his 7th son Hung-hsiao (d. 1778) and finally dispersed with the downfall of Tai-yüan (d. 1861) as a victim to a court intrigue.

7. Su Tung-po chü-an-ch'i (Complete Works of Su Shih [1036-1101], 100 chüan, 22 t's'e, 1534 edition.) Formerly collected by Chu I-tsun (1629-1709), a famous savant who was once dismissed from his office when he engaged a government clerk to copy borrowed books for his own collection.

8. Po-sha-ts'ou (Literary Works of Ch'en Hsien-chang [1428-1500], 8 chüan, 16 t's'e, 1533 edition.) Formerly owned by Wang Shih-chen (1634-1711), member of a prominent family who built up his library by regularly visiting auctions (held on the fifteenth day every lunar month in the Tz'u-jeo-ssu, Peking) over a period of thirty years.

9. T'ao chi (Poems of T'ao Ch'ien [365-427], 8 chüan, 4 t's'e, 1583 edition.) Formerly kept by Ch'eng K'o-tse (chin-shih of 1652), one of the eight leading poets of the Manchu Dynasty.

10. Kuo-ch'ao hsien-cheng lu (Sketches of Prominent Chinese of the Ming, 120 chüan, 120 t's'e, 1616 edition.) This work came from the private collection of Yao Chi-heng (b. 1647), an exceptionally critical scholar interested in determining the authenticity of ancient books.


12. I-kung t'ie-pa (Notes of Chou Pi-ta [1126-1204], 12 chüan, 6 t's'e.) A Ming edition formerly belonged to the library of Huang Jen (1683-1759), a poet of national fame.

13. Fan Te-ch'i shih (Poetry of Fan Kuo [1272-1330], 7 chüan, 4 t's'e.) A Ming edition once possessed by Juan K'uei-sheng (1727-1789).

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Owned by Sun Chih-tsu (1737-1801), an exponent of the School of Han Learning.

15. Pan-Ma ts'eu-pei (A Phonetical Reclassification of Unusual Words used in the Shih-chi and Han-shu, 5 chüan, 4 ts'e.) A Ming edition possessed by Chu Yün (1729-1781), who, among other things, memorialized Emperor Ch'ien-lung to copy 365 rare books from the famous Yung-lo ta-tien, no longer available in its entirety.


17. Chou-i i-hai ts'o-yao (Commentaries to the Book of Changes, 10 chüan, 4 ts'e.) An old edition owned by Huang P'ei-fang (1779-1859), a native of Kwantung and a leading poet.

18. Yü-tung hsü-lu (Literary Works of Ho Meng-ch'un [fl. 1500], 60 chüan, 13 ts'e.) A Ming edition formerly belonging to Pao K'ang (b. 1810), an authority on the study of coins.


20. Li-t'ai hsiao-shih (Minor Works on Histories, 105 chüan, 44 ts'e, 1583 edition.) First belonged to the I-yün shu-she of Wang Shih-chung (fl. ca. 1820) and later to Wu Yün (1811-1883), a specialist in the study of stone and bronze inscriptions.

21. Liu Pin-k'o shih-chi (Poetry of Liu Yü-hsi [772-842], 6 chüan, 2 ts'e.) A Ming edition possessed by the most famous bibliophile of the late Manchu Dynasty, Miao Ch'üan-sun (1844-1919), best remembered for the part he played in the founding of the Ching-shih (now known as Peking) and Chiang-nan (later known as Kiangsu) Libraries where most of rare books formerly belonging to private collectors were brought and permanently housed under government auspices.

The foregoing list may serve to indicate the nature of the rare books now available in this University. One must mention that it also possesses another valuable work, Chang Ch'ü-chiang chi (Complete Works of Chang Chiu-ling [673-740], 20 chüan, 10 ts'e, 1473 edition), which was the original borrowed by the Commercial Press for photographic reproduction purposes in its compilation of the world famous Ssu-pu ts'ang-k'an.

While manuscripts have been universally valued, there have been special reasons why the traditional Chinese scholars attached special value to theirs. In the first place, there may be original drafts handwritten by the authors (or in certain cases copied by immediate members of the authors' families) which have never been published, or if published, issued in a form drastically different from the original version. Secondly, because of the comparative scarcity of rare copies, there developed among Chinese scholars the habit of borrowing published rare works from their owners and copying them with greatest care and in the most scholarly manner. Often such scholars would add to their copies notes of correction, criticism, and comment, and as a result such copied manuscripts were sometimes more valuable than the originals. The following list is therefore divided into two headings, original drafts and copied manuscripts, each illustrated by sample works.
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1. Original Drafts

A. Ch'ü-ch'iu ch'un wang cheng-yüeh k'ao (A Study of the First Lunar Months as Recorded in the Annals of the Spring and Autumn, 2 chüan, 1 ts'ie.) This is a work compiled by Chang I-ning (chin-shih of 1372) and copied from the original manuscript by his grandson, Lung, in 1426. Despite its age, the book remains in excellent condition.

B. Ch'ung-ch'en kung tz'u (Ts'ü-poems written on the Events of the Ch'ung-ch'en Period [1628-1643], 1 ts'ie) by Ch'ü Ta-chün (1630-1696).

C. Yün-lei kuang-ts'ui (On the Use of Rhymes, 5 chüan, 5 ts'ie), prepared by Wang T'ang in 1733.

D. Ch'ien-chih (A Study of Hard Money, 1 chüan, 2 ts'ie), prepared by Yen Ch'ang-ming (1731-1787) in 1758 and once owned by Tseng Chao (1821-1854), a famous bibliophile of Kwangtung.

E. Ch'ing-t'ing Ta-Ch'ing hui-tien tz'u (Maps and General Regulations of Manchu Dynasty, Compiled on an Imperial Order, 40 chüan, 40 ts'ie,) by Ch'ien I-chi (1783-1850).

F. Wu-po-ssu-feng-lang shih-kao (Poems of Li Chien [1728-1799], 1 chüan, 3 ts'ie.) This is part of the original draft handwritten by the author himself, with traces of deletion and correction vividly marked. The manuscript is therefore drastically different from the published version. Li Chien was one of the four master-poets and one of the four most versatile painters of Kwangtung. See Figure 2.

G. Chu chiu-chiang i-mo, being the calligraphy of Chu Tz'u-ch'i (1807-1881), a great teacher of Kwangtung who brought many disciples to prominence.

H. Shuo-wen sheng-t'ang (Phonetic System of the Shuo-wen, 17 chüan, 16 ts'ie) by Ch'en Li (1810-1882). Corrections and comments were handwritten by the author in red. Never published.

I. Yu-shih tsu-chuan nien-p'u (1 ts'ie), an autobiography of Li Ch'ung-i covering the years 1861-1921.

J. Pi-lin-lang-koan ts'ang-shu mu-tu (4 chüan, 4 ts'ie), a catalogue of books in the private library of Fang Kung-hui (fl. 1866).

K. Huang-Ch'ing ching-chih fen-lei pien-mu (A Classified Catalogue of the Huang-Ch'ing ching-chih, 1 chüan, 1 ts'ie), prepared by Ch'iang Hsiüeh-i in 1903.

L. Pen-ts'ao che-yao pei-wang lu (Essence of the Pen-ts'ao, 1 chüan, 1 ts'ie), compiled by Meng Ho-ch'iao in 1934.

2. Copied Manuscripts

A. Chiu-seng shih (Poems by Nine Monk-Poets, 1 chüan, 1 ts'ie), copied by (or for?) Yü Hsiao-k'o (1729-1777), a hard-working scholar who was said to have nearly lost his sight by reading nightly under natural light coming down from the roof of his specially designed study.

B. Wu-ching ching-pen (Readings in the Five Classics, 17 chüan, 20 ts'ie), specially prepared for the Imperial Han-lin Academy and housed in the famous Wen-yüan-ko of the Yüan-ming-yüan (better known to the West as the Old Summer Palace). It reached the market after the pillage of the Palace during the Anglo-French occupation in 1860.
Figure 2
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C. Tu Ch'ā-ling i-kao (Literary Works of Tu Chün-chih [fl. 1275], 1 ts'ê), copied in person by Wu I-feng (1742-1819), a well-known calligrapher whose sizable library was largely made up of books copied by himself.

D. San-hu wang (Notes on Famous Books, Calligraphic Samples and Paintings) by Wang K'o-yü [b. 1587], 48 chüan, 24 ts'ê. Copied for Ch'en Cho (1733-1806?), an artist in his own right who had proof-read this work four times, each time with corrections and written in red ink.

E. Huang-ch'ao pao-yin K'ao (A Study of Seals of the Manchu Dynasty, 1 ts'ê, by an unknown author), and Hui-ts'ên shih-ch'ao (Poetry of Huang Ching-jen [1749-1793], 8 chüan, 2 ts'ê), copied for, and proof-read by, Ch'en Li (q. v.).

F. Nan-ch'ien lu (Miscellaneous Notes on the Events during the Last Years of the Southern Sung, 1 chüan, 1 ts'ê, by Chang Shih-yen [ca. 1300]) and Han Po-ling t'ai-shou K'ung Piao pei (Rubbing of a Stone-Tablet Erected in Honor of K'ung Piao, 1 ts'ê), examined and owned by Li Wen-t'ien (1834-1895), a pioneer scholar in Mongolian studies.

G. Wan-yüeh shan-fang shih-wen chi (Literary Works of Lung Ch'i-jui [1814-1858], 2 ts'ê), proof-read and commented upon by Feng Yü-chi (ch'in-shih of 1841), a high-ranking official and a celebrated calligrapher.

H. Kuan-k'u-k'o ch'ien-shuo (A Study of Coins, by Pao K'ang [q. v.], 1 chüan, 1 ts'ê), examined and owned by Ho Yüan-yü (fl. ca. 1860).

I. Hsi-ch'i hsien-sheng 1 shuo (On the Book of Changes, by Li Kuo [A Sung scholar], 12 chüan, 2 ts'ê), and Shih yen-i (On the Book of Songs, by Liang Yin [1303-1389], 15 chüan, 4ts'ê). Both copied for K'ung Kuang-t'ao (fl. 1860), a well-known bibliophile of Kwangtung in the last years of the Manchu Dynasty.

J. Hua-t'ao ts'ui-pien (Selected Tzu-poems of the T'ang and Sung Dynasties, by Ch'en Yao-wen [fl. 1530], 12 chüan, 12 ts'ê). Prepared for Miao Ch'ien-sun (q. v.).

K. Chung-shan chi (Literary Works of Liu Yü-hsi [q. v.], 30 plus 5 chüan, 12 ts'ê). Copied for Ts'ai Yu-nien (ch'in-shih of 1876) on the model of a similar work proof-read by the famous scholar Ku Kuang-ch'i (1770-1839).

L. Ming-k'o ts'u (Tzu-poems of Chang Hui-yen [1761-1802]) and Chien-t'ang ts'u (Tzu-poems of Yin Ching [1757-1817] bound together in 1 ts'ê). Both copied by P'an Fei-sheng (fl. 1893), one of the most famous collectors in Kwangtung in the last few decades.

In conclusion, one feels obliged to record a deep sense of gratitude to those at the University of British Columbia who have made the purchase of this collection possible. From the start, Mr. Neal Harlow, the University Librarian, worked most energetically and zealously in presenting his case to the University and coming into formal contact with the original owner. Without the farsightedness of President N. A. M. MacKenzie, however, there could have been no successful conclusion to the negotiations for the purchase of the Pu-p'an collection which has greatly strengthened the expanding program of Asian Studies in the University.

As a Chinese proverb says, there are times when double joys reach one's doorstep together (shuang-hsi lin-men). Thanks to a generous gift of Mr. Walter Koerner, a staunch supporter of the Friends of the Library group mentioned above, the University was able to build a new wing to the Library which was of-
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Officially open to use in September 1960. The Japanese and Chinese books, including the P'u-pan collection and some 4,000 other titles (in which one may find the precious Ch'ing shih-lu or Veritable Records of the Manchu Emperors, printed only in a very limited number of copies) acquired during the past five years, are now housed together on the first floor of this new wing, in over 4000 sq. ft. of dust-free floor space. Furthermore, Miss Tung King Ng, formerly Librarian of Peng-shan Library of the University of Hongkong, has joined the Library staff and has charge of the Asian Studies materials. Work on cataloguing is in progress.

University of British Columbia

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YI-T'UNG WANG

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