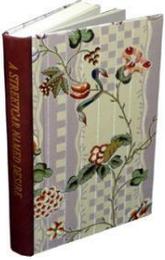


A Guide to Collecting Books by the Limited Editions Club

By Edward Halpern of [Bookman Extraordinaire](#)



A Streetcar Named Desire
By Tennessee Williams
Illustrated by Al Hirschfeld

The [Limited Editions Club of New York](#) was started in 1929 by George Macy. At 29-years-old, he was an avid reader who wanted to make his living from books. His business revolved around publishing beautifully illustrated classic titles in relatively small quantities with club members paying a subscription.

Today, the Limited Editions Club (LEC) is an important part of the rare book business and the books are adored by collectors.

From 1929 to 1985, the Limited Editions Club published 548 titles. George passed away in 1956 but his widow, Helen, ran the company until the early 1970s when she retired and sold to Boise Cascade who sold the firm again in 1978.

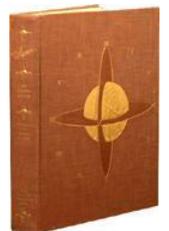
The Limited Editions Club is famous for original illustrations by the best book illustrators and artists. Between 1929 and 1985, 10 to 12 titles featuring 1,500 numbered copies each were published annually although the print run expanded to 2,000 numbered copies in later years.

Each title was unique, using special papers, special cover material including many in leather, and almost all came in a slipcase or clamshell box. Many of the titles were already regarded as classics and produced by private small presses throughout the world. Almost all were signed by either the illustrator, author, publisher or designer. Sometimes three signatures can be found on the colophon page.

During the depression years, many of the world's greatest artists struggled to find regular work and a large number were employed by Macy.

[Pablo Picasso](#), Henri Matisse, Edward Ardizzone, Thomas Hart Benton, Rockwell Kent, Reginald Marsh, [Edmund Dulac](#), [Arthur Rackham](#), Norman Rockwell, Edward Steichen and Grant Wood are just a few of the artists connected with the Limited Editions Club.

Other highlights include the editions of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* that were signed by Alice Hargreaves, who inspired the books as a child. The typography is also exceptional and involved masters of the age. Each book is a work of art in its own right.



[Ulysses](#) by James Joyce
Illustrated by Henri
Matisse

From the mid-1980s until 2009, the number of copies published per title was reduced to mostly 300 and usually just three or four titles appeared per year. During this period, a new generation of renowned artists were involved - prices increased dramatically and the books became larger. Limited Editions Club books are very collectible for their beauty alone but many famous authors have been published over the years. Hans Christian Andersen, Jane Austen, Honore De Balzac, James Boswell, Ray Bradbury, Robert Burns, Lewis Carroll, Willa Cather, Anton Chekhov, Confucius, Joseph Conrad, Charles Darwin, Daniel Defoe, Charles Dickens, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Alexandre Dumas, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy and Victor Hugo can be found on the list.

There are [thousands](#) of Limited Editions Club books for sale on AbeBooks, varying by price, description, and condition. In the world of used and antiquarian books, condition is everything for collectors.

Here are a few tips for collectors:

- Become familiar with the market before spending your money in order to get value for money.
- Ask for additional photos for copies that interest you.
- BookFinder and Amazon are also good places to search for them.
- Consider the used book sales at your local library, you can sometimes get lucky and find a treasure for a bargain.
- Ask around to learn about book collectors who may have LECs to sell.
- Check your local used bookstore and visit more shops when on vacation.

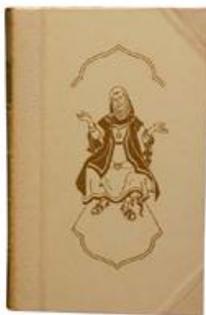
[Edward Halpern's](#) bookselling business is based in Spring Grove, Illinois, and specializes in antiquarian, art, Limited Editions Book Club, illustrated, color plate, leather bound, children's, biographies, Chicago, Illinois, and the Orient. Visit his website at <http://www.edwardhalpernartist.com>.

** See [video](#) on *Beautiful Books: The Art of The Limited Editions Club*

Limited Editions Club Books

(Click [here](#) to go to links for book selections)

A Selection of Limited Editions Club Books



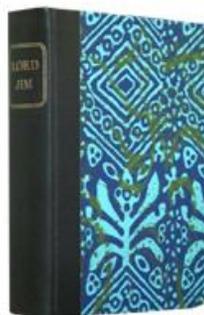
[The Book of Job](#)
illustrated by Arthur Szyk



[The Circus of Dr Lao](#)
by Charles G. Finney
& illustrated by Claire Van Vliet



[Peer Gynt](#)
by Henrik Ibsen &
Illustrated by Per Krohg



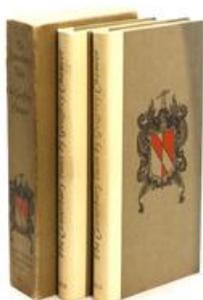
[Lord Jim](#)
by Joseph Conrad &
illustrated by Lynd Ward



[The Golden Cockerel](#)
by Alexander Pushkin
& illustrated by Edmund Dulac

Limited Editions Club Books

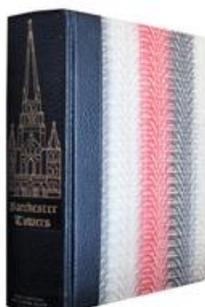
(Click [here](#) to go to links for book selections)



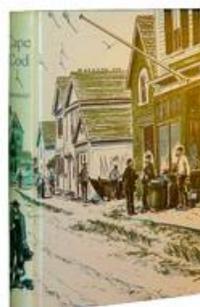
The Canterbury Tales
by Chaucer (various
LEC editions)



Northanger Abbey
by Jane Austen &
illustrated by Clarke
Hutton



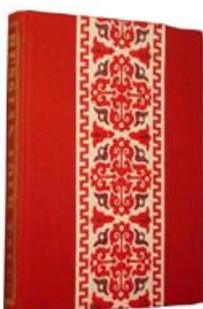
Barchester Towers
by Anthony Trollope &
illustrated by Fritz
Kredel



Cape Cod
by Henry David
Thoreau & illustrated
by R.J. Holden



The Three-Cornered Hat
by Pedro Antonio De
Alarcon & illustrated
by Roger Duvoisin



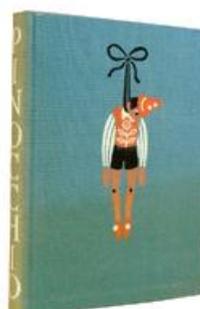
Russian Folk Tales
illustrated Teje
Etchemendy



Candide or Optimism
by Voltaire &
illustrated by May
Neama



The Sea Wolf
by Jack London &
illustrated by Fletcher
Martin



Pinocchio
by Carlo Collodi &
illustrated Richard
Floethe

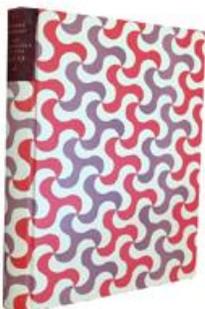


**Exile's Return: A
Literary Odyssey of
the 1920's**
by Malcolm Cowley
with photos by
Berenice Abbott

** See more below

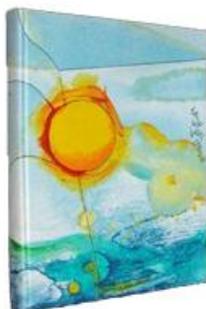
Limited Editions Club Books

(Click [here](#) to go to links for book selections)



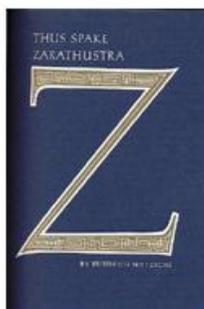
The Chronicle of the Cid

translated by Robert Southey & illustrated by Rene Ben Sussan



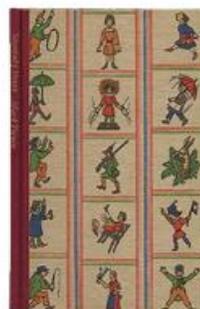
Poems of the Caribbean

by Derek Walcott & illustrated by Romare Bearden



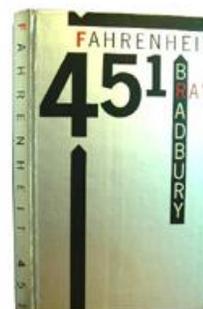
Thus Spake Zarathustra

by Friedrich Nietzsche & illustrated by Arnold Bank



Slovenly Peter

by Mark Twain



Fahrenheit 451

by Ray Bradbury & illustrated by Joseph Mugnaini



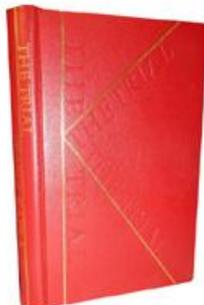
Omoo

by Herman Melville & illustrated by Reynolds Stone



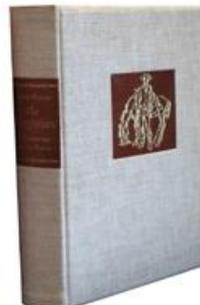
A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy

by Lawrence Sterne & illustrated by Denis Tegetmeier



The Trial

by Franz Kafka & illustrated by Alan E. Cober



The Virginian by A Horseman of the Plains

by Owen Wister & illustrated by William Moyers



The Beach of Falesa

by Robert Louis Stevenson & illustrated by Millard Sheets