

INTRODUCTION

The format and most of the procedures followed in this bibliography are conventional and will be obvious to the user upon examination of the citations themselves, but a few comments may prove helpful. In general, we used as a model the second edition of the outstanding *W.H. Auden: A Bibliography 1924-1969*, by B.C. Bloomfield and Edward Mendelson (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1972). Each section and appendix of this book is preceded by a separate introduction.

We have based almost all our citations and descriptions on examinations of the items themselves. Any item which was not examined by one of the compilers is annotated, before the description, by the statement "Not Seen" in square brackets. Anonymously published items included here have been confirmed by James Merrill as having been written by him. A distinction is made and so indicated among signed, initialed, and unsigned items. Notes that add details or explanations are liberally used throughout the book and are inserted at whatever point they are deemed most appropriate. Information included in notes is from a wide variety of sources, but more commonly from examination of the item itself. No attempt is made to trace systematically the printing history of an individual poem or prose piece, but this is easily done by consulting the index. No attempt is made to identify revisions of poems or prose except when individual poems have been either retitled or rewritten in such a way as to result in one or more derivative poems.

Square brackets surrounding a date or a page number indicate that the date or page number do not appear as such. Square brackets are also used in the transcriptions of the title pages and in descriptions of the dust wrappers and covers to describe publishers' logos, devices, etc., that cannot be adequately transcribed per se. Descriptions of the A.A. Knopf borzoi dog device are based on graphic depictions of the various variations of the device in: Hagstrom, Jack W.C. "From James Merrill's Dogs to the Alfred A. Knopf Borzoi Devices". Online at <http://www.bibsocamer.org/bibsite/Hagstrom/Hagstrom.pdf> and <http://www.bibsocamer.org/bibsite/Hagstrom/Hagstromillus.pdf>.

Accepted practice is observed when transcribing upper and lower-case letters; italic is used for any sloping typefaces. Unless otherwise indicated, the type is roman, and no attempt is made to indicate the size of upper and lower-case letters or the amount of space between individual words or letters. This too applies to descriptions of watermarks, when present, where there is great variability in the design of the watermark itself. (Only overall watermark dimensions are given, height preceding width.) In descriptions of title pages and quasi-facsimile material, all printing is in black; colored printing is indicated in square brackets before the relevant word or letters. A vertical rule marks the end of each line.

Designation of colors, although in our experience is fraught with difficulties and inexactitude, is based on Prof. G.T. Tanselle's article "A System of Color Identification for Bibliographic Descriptions" (*Studies in Bibliography* (Charlottesville, Va.), 20 (1967) 203-34). The color number for all colors (with a very few exceptions when a color could not be matched reasonably) except

black, white, gold, and silver refer to the ISCC-NBS Centroid Color charts ([Washington]: National Bureau of Standards, Standard Sample No. 2106). Similarly, when necessary to describe a pattern in paper we made reference to Prof. G.T. Tanselle's article "The Bibliographic Description of Paper" (Studies in Bibliography, XXIV [1971], 27-67). No systematic attempt is made to distinguish among types of cloth or paper used for bindings and wrappers. Wove paper is distinguished from laid paper and, when identifiable, special papers are named. For paper wrappers and dust jackets, the indicated color of the paper is that of the base (i.e. unprinted paper stock). The word "shiny" has been used to describe the whole group of coated papers and glossy (versus dull) printing. In the description of binding cloth we have paid attention to Tanselle's treatise on patterns (Tanselle, G.T. "The Bibliographic Description of Patterns" (Studies in Bibliography, XXIII [1970], 71-102).

We have found that in his classification of patterns for bookcloth only one, i.e. #120 (criss-cross) was consistently useful. This one illustrates the actual weave that we found to be present in the majority of our examples. We have, instead of using "crisscross 120" as a description, decided to revert to the older term linen weave and modify it not only by the color but by the degree of coarseness of the weave, i.e. fine or medium or coarse. If there is a special coating it is indicated.

The collation is given by signatures and by leaves and pages for sewn books. Standard notation is used for signatures; since in no case is a book actually signed on the sheets, all signature marks are enclosed in square brackets and are supplied by the compilers. For books that are described as "perfect bindings" (those in which all pages are cut and roughed up at the back or binding edge and held together by an adhesive), since there are no identifiable signatures in the finished book, no signature marks are supplied and only the total number of leaves is indicated. The size of an individual leaf is given in millimeters, height preceding width. This also applies to size descriptions of broadsides, labels, etc. The bulk measurements were made in the top middle of the gathered leaves (excluding end papers) using a spring-loaded micrometer.

In all sections and appendices all items are listed chronologically. In section C, q.v. items within a given year are listed preferentially by year, season, month, and specific date. Prices of each item at the time of publication are given only for the country in which the book was published. Price changes are indicated when they are known to the compilers.

Publication data are based on information supplied by publishers and supplemented, when necessary, by other sources. The phrase "data unavailable from publisher" means that the publisher could not locate the necessary data. In some instances, it is the policy of an individual publisher, for whatever reason, not to make figures available on the number of copies that were printed. This is indicated by the phrase "publisher prefers not to disclose the number of copies published".

Throughout the titles of poems appear in all upper case letters where as prose pieces are in upper and lower case letters. Entries in this bibliography include material published through December 31, 2008.

Unquestionably there are errors and omissions, and incorrect data in this book. Our aim has been to be as thorough and accurate as is possible. Any additions and emendations would be welcome and should be sent to the publisher.

A.

Books, Pamphlets, and Broadsides

In this section all books, pamphlets, broadsides, and printed single leaves wholly or primarily by or translated by James Merrill are listed chronologically. The titles of poems are in all uppercase letters, prose pieces are in upper and lower case letters.

Also, reflecting A.A. Knopf's profound interest in the design of his books, most of the Merrill hard cover editions have a colophon that describes the typeface used and the production of the book. These statements have been transcribed into the description of the book in this section.

It should be noted that during J.M.'s lifetime all the books published by A.A. Knopf, Atheneum, and again by Knopf were designed by Harry Ford who, over 44 years became a close friend. In addition to Ford, other persons designed the dust jacket and wrappers of the books. Ford died suddenly in 1999.

A1

JIM'S BOOK

1942

First edition

[outline letters] JIM'S BOOK | *A Collection of Poems and | Short Stories* | BY | JAMES INGRAM MERRILL | [ornament] | NEW YORK | PRIVATELY PRINTED | 1942

Collation: [1-5]⁸; pp. [i-vi] 1-72 [73-74]; 238 x 154 mm.

Casing: Material: quarter bound in fine linen weave, dark red (16) with light gray (264), wove paper. Front: '[gold] [outline letters] JIM'S BOOK | *A Collection of Poems and | Short Stories* | [13 mm. rule] | JAMES INGRAM MERRILL'. Edges: top trimmed and stained dark red (16). Endpapers: white, wove.

Dust Jacket: Material: glassine.

Paper: White, wove, with watermark reading 'FLEMISH BOOK | MADE IN U.S.A.', 38 x 102 mm.

Pagination: [i]: half title page. [ii]: blank. [iii]: title page. [iv]: copyright page. [v]: contents page. [vi]: blank. 1-72: text. [73-74]: blank.

Bulk: 6.5 mm.

Contents: Miss Georgina Tinker — "Ambition's Debt Is Paid" — RESIGNATION — NOCTURNE — Person to Person — THE LAUGHING BUDDHA — It Just Goes to Show — MOZART — CHRISTMAS, 1500 — Madonna — The Fairy Tale — The Shattered Dream — THE GIRL WITH THE EYES OF GLASS — DESDEMONA — THE SEA-NYMPH — TITANIA — The Witch in Paradise — Angel or Earthly Creature — LE SERPENT QUI DANSE (from the French of Charles Baudelaire) — THE HERMIT IN THE FOREST — MASQUERADE — MUTABILITY —

SONNET — L'EGYPTIENNE — TRAILS THROUGH THE NIGHT — SPLEEN (from the French of Charles Baudelaire)

Publication date: December 15, 1942.

Price: None were for sale.

Number of copies: J.M. recalled a print run of *ca.* 200.

Note: In various presentation copies of the book J.M. made the following corrections: page 63, first line read pool for pond; page 66, final line read skies for sky; page 68, line 5 read varnished for vanished; page 69, line 10 read ours for us; and page 70, line 5 read your for her.

Note: This edition was printed as a gift for J.M. by his father. The following is an excerpt from a letter from Hellen Merrill to Charles E. Merrill dated December 1942.

Now is the time for you to retire from all gift giving – you reached the apex when you had *Jim's Book* published – I've never seen such rapture – Jimmy is in a complete daze and because it may please you I want to give you an intimate and confidential report of our conversation regarding the wonderful Christmas you have given him.

After the first hour's excitement of deciding whether to use "Jim Merrill" or the full author's signature, he came in my room still clutching an arm full of his brain children and here are some of the comments – "You know mama, I decided to sign my full name because autographed editions are more valuable. For instance Robinson's privately printed poems brought \$650.00 a volume!" This with a perfectly straight face – After a long pause I asked quite innocently if he thought *Jim's Book* might be worth a lot some day – He must have suspected me because he too paused, then replied "Well sometimes I have my doubts!" Next he said he was not going to send Fred [Buechner] a copy during the holidays for fear it might spoil his vacation, explaining that writing was his ambition too and that seeing his friends "works" in print might make Fred feel badly –

"Just think of my things filling so many pages. It all looks so much more important in book form instead of Lit's [*Lawrenceville Literary Magazine*] narrow columns" – "I've dreamed for years of publishing my first book. How could Daddy have known?" Well this went on and on – later I said – "Jim, you seem to be much happier over your book than over the enormous check Daddy gave you" – (He hadn't mentioned that except to show it to me and say he was overwhelmed). His reply to my remark was "My book is far more important than anything else could be. In fact I can't grasp such a large sum of money and intend to keep only \$250.00 to buy an extra suit and help with Christmas bills. The rest I'll invest in a war Bond and put in my savings account." I was quite impressed with this reaction and hope you will be.

Because I share in Jimmy's joy, I want to thank you also – The book is bound in exquisite taste and I know will be cherished not only by members of Jim's family but by the friends to whom he gives copies.

A2

THE BLACK SWAN

1946

First edition

THE | BLACK SWAN | AND OTHER POEMS | BY | JAMES MERRILL | [design of a stylized swan swimming in a pool flanked by plants reflecting himself, all ringed by a border of twenty-six circles] | ICAROS | ATHENS 1946

Collation: [1-4]⁴; pp. [1-4] 5 [6] 7-30 [31-32]; 214 x 167 mm.

Colophon: "THIS BOOK HAS BEEN PRINTED BY M. MYRTIDIS IN OCTOBER 1946 FOR THE «ICAROS» PUBLISHING COMPANY ATHENS IN A LIMITFD [*sic*: see note] EDITION OF ONE HUNDRED COPIES NOT FOR SALE NO [a 15 mm. row of dots on which each number has been hand-stamped in black]".

Note: In the colophon the word "LIMITED" was misprinted as "LIMITFD". In at least one copy examined by the compilers, someone has meticulously corrected this spelling by hand, appearing almost as if it were printed correctly. Two other copies examined make no attempt to correct the error, so it isn't clear whether the correction was made by the publisher at the time of printing, or at a later date by an unrelated hand.

Casing: Material: bound into light greenish gray (154), wove paper wrapper. Front: 'THE | BLACK SWAN | [deep red (13)] AND OTHER POEMS | BY | JAMES MERRILL | [design of a stylized swan swimming in a pool flanked by plants reflecting himself, all ringed by a border of twenty-six circles, highlights in deep red have been made on the beak, feet and breast of the swan] | ICAROS | ATHENS 1946'. Back: '[device: circle containing a depiction of Icarus, with Greek lettering] ΙΚΑΡΟΣ'. Edges: trimmed.

Dust Jacket: Material: glassine, pasted to the inside front and back wrapper.

Paper: White, wove.

Pagination: [1]: blank. [2]: 'DESIGN BY GHIKA'. [3]: title page. [4]: blank. [5]: dedication page with untitled poem. [6]: epigraph in Greek from Euripides, translated by J.M. as "Of all my friends I have found you most a friend". [7-30]: text. [31]: colophon page. [32]: blank.

Bulk: 2.2 mm.

Contents: [untitled poem] Keats on board ship for what we shall call Rome [*f.l.*] — THE BLACK SWAN — THE BROKEN BOWL — FROM MORNING INTO MORNING — ACCUMULATIONS OF THE SEA — THE GREEN EYE — THE COSMOLOGICAL EYE — PERSPECTIVES OF A LONESOME EYE — PHENOMENAL LOVE SONG — THE FORMAL LOVERS — MEDUSA — SUSPENSE OF LOVE — EMBARKATION SONNETS

Publication date: October 1946.

Price: None were for sale.

Number of copies: 100.

Note: In two copies of the book, on page 29, line 14, J.M. has changed the word make to choose.

Note: This edition was published privately by Kimon Friar, one of J.M.'s teachers at Amherst College. Of the book's publication, Friar wrote: "I took with me the manuscripts he [J.M.] had written under my tutelage, and published them at the Icarus Publishing Company in Athens (the publishers of Cavafis, Seferis, Elytis, *etc.*) under the title of *The Black Swan and Other Poems*, with a cover drawing by the eminent Greek painter Ghika, who was later to draw thirty-five

illustrations for my translation of *The Odyssey*. Since I was positive that Merrill would one day be acknowledged as one of America's foremost poets, I deliberately published the book privately (for \$100) in a 'limited edition of one hundred copies not for sale,' knowing that one day it would be a rare item. I gave Merrill Copy No 1 and kept Copy No 2; most of the other copies we gave away to friends." (excerpt from *For James Merrill, A Birthday Tribute*, compiled by J.D. McClatchy and printed in 1986 by Jordan Davies)

Note: The illustrator Ghika (Gika [Chatzikyriakos-Ghikas], Niko [Nicos]) a Greek painter, printmaker, illustrator, stage designer, and theorist was born in Athens in 1906 and died in Athens in 1994. As a printmaker he contributed illustrations to many literary texts. He and Kimon Friar were friends.

Note: On the dedication page is an acrostic poem in two five line stanzas that spells Kimon Friar's name when read vertically.

A3 **THE BIRTHDAY** **1947**

First edition

THE BIRTHDAY | A play in verse | [54 lines]

Collation: Thirteen single leaves, printed on rectos only; ll. [1] 2-13; 355 x 216 mm.

Casing: Self covered, staple in upper left corner. Edges: trimmed.

Paper: White, wove.

Pagination: [1]: title page and beginning of text. 2-13: text.

Bulk: 1.4 mm.

Contents: The Birthday

Publication date: May 22-23, 1947.

Price: None were for sale.

Number of copies: J.M. remembers "about 30 copies were produced."

Note: J.M.'s play was performed at Kirby Theatre, Amherst College, May 22 and 23, 1947, when J.M. was a senior. The production was part of a one-act play competition. The scripts were produced for use in the theater and do not identify J.M. as the author.

Note: No reviews of the performance have been identified.

A4 **FIRST POEMS** **1951**

First edition

First POEMS | by James Merrill | New York, | Alfred A. Knopf | 1951 [device: borzoi 112]

Collation: [1-3]⁸ [4]⁴ [5-6]⁸; pp. [1-2, i-vii] viii-ix [x, 1] 2-72 [73-76]; 213 x 143 mm.

Colophon, page [2]: "OF *First Poems*, NINE HUNDRED AND NINETY COPIES HAVE BEEN PRINTED. THIS IS NUMBER [numbered by hand in various inks]".

Colophon, page [74]: "A NOTE ON THE TYPE: *This book was composed on the Linotype in Bodoni Book, so called after Giambattista Bodoni (1740-1813), son of a printer of Piedmont. After gaining experience and fame as superintendent of the Press of the Propaganda in Rome, Bodoni became in 1768 the*