

# What the Dickens? Library users beware!

by Adam Mayers

HAMILTON (CUP) -- Rare books valued at more than \$6000 have been recovered by McMaster University after an investigation which spanned two months and finally ended earlier this month in a Detroit auction gallery.

A McMaster undergraduate who was also a part-time librarian has been charged with theft in connection with the case. The books are believed to have been stolen over a period of several weeks.

The volumes, a set of 24 works by Charles Dickens were retrieved at the Du Mouchelle Art Galleries in Detroit, along with another 26 volumes which had previously not been missed. The volumes were awaiting sale by auction.

A spokesman for the Gallery expressed "surprise" that the volumes were stolen, but added they had contacted the Library upon learning the true ownership. Archives and Special Collections Director Graham Hill, denied this claim.

According to Hill, the thefts were first noticed late in January, when the volumes "simply disappeared from the stacks."

Following the disappearance of the books, Hill mailed letters to rare

book dealers across North America, and in Great Britain, describing them in detail, "hoping something would turn up."

Late last month, a New York City dealer called the University and claimed a Hamilton resident had inquired about selling some rare Dickens novels. The man was asking \$1,000 for the set.

"The co-operation from within the trade was very good," Hill said, "it's always good."

From the information provided by the dealer, McMaster Security was able to identify the suspect as a 29 year old student.

When confronted by Sergeant Allan and Security Director Garrett, the student admitted to the thefts, but stated the books had been taken to Detroit. He agreed to accompany the two officers there, where the volumes were later identified in the Du Mouchelle Gallery.

The Dickens' novels and the 36 additional works were retrieved, as well as five more found in the suspects Hamilton home.

"He admitted taking the books out two at a time," Garrett said, "since they weren't magnetized, no alarm would sound."

In keeping with library policy, the novels were not stamped or electronically marked, in order to avoid

damage. As a result, books in this category are not allowed out of the archives section at any time.

According to Hill, the Dickens works were printed in England during the 1930's, and the first 23 books in the set contain all the novels that he ever wrote. The 24th contains a wooden plate for one of the illustrations in the set. There are exactly 877 different wooden plates. These features combine to create a market value of more than \$4,000 for a set of the 24 volumes.

Hill noted that reproduction of

the illustrations would be impossible, unless all 877 sets were available along with the individual wooden engravings.

Currently all rare books in Mills are in the process of being catalogued, and since this can only be done at a certain speed, "there are bound to be instances where the system falls short," Hill said.

According to Security Chief Garrett, news of the thefts was not released earlier, for fear the suspect might panic and destroy the books in his possession.

## CUP bureau in Halifax

by Valerie Mansour

A Canadian University Press news bureau will be located in Halifax this fall. At a national CUP conference held over the weekend in Ottawa, delegates approved of the bureau as part of an expansion plan for improved news transmission throughout the country.

As well as the Halifax bureau, there will be one set up in the Prairie Provinces and a continuation of the bureaus which were run experimentally last year in Vancouver and Montreal. Each bureau will employ a bureau chief responsible for operating a telex, coordinating better communication between the region's papers, writing stories and improving news transmission between the regions and Ottawa. There was great support for the motion requesting approval of the Atlantic, Quebec, and

British Columbia bureaus resulting in a wide margin of votes. Delegates approved of the Prairie bureau by a vote of 21-20.

Approval was also given to the position of business manager for the National office in Ottawa.

Delegates from Quebec requested a Special Affairs reporter for next year but in a tie vote the plenary defeated that motion. Delegates did approve of giving the National Affairs reporter, posted in Ottawa, the responsibility of travelling to Quebec on special assignments.

The three day conference had been called as a continuation of the December National Conference held in Vancouver where member papers came to few conclusions regarding the organization's future. Budgetary concerns were the main problem.

## Anti-communism: U.S. legacy

WINNIPEG (CUP) -- Negative "gut feelings" about communism are a legacy of the American political leaders who based their careers on negative images, according to a California State University lecturer.

Les Adler, in a discussion of the images of communism in the McCarthy era, explained his theory that American society, not just McCarthy and his followers, was acting in an aberrant manner during the "red scare" period.

That period of the cold war affected Vietnam, he said, because it gave America the stop-communism-at-any-cost ideology that lasted over a decade.

The normal historical treatment of the McCarthy era is that it was the product of an "incipient fascist right wing movement," and completely irrational, having little to do with political parties, he said.

But a 1960's interpretation by Michael Rogan claims McCarthy was a product of the political structure; that the Republicans planned to use McCarthy against the Democrats and that it was a ploy by the Republicans to gain power.

Adler says he doesn't completely endorse either interpretation, but

typified McCarthy as "a Republican opportunist" who was "never too scrupulous about saying exaggerations or complete untruths" and who served as the "articulate spokesman for the day, saying things the right way."

But he said the McCarthy movement was greater than the man because of the "distorted vision the US had of the USSR"; and cited examples such as the 94 times the New York Times predicted the imminent collapse of the Russian Revolution between 1920-21.

"The energy developed towards fascism" during WW II was easily transferred to the communist USSR, said Adler, and the "Soviets became Nazis" in the eyes of the American people when the anti-communist feelings of the twenties and thirties emerged.

"Personalized hate images — Mao, Castro and Stalin", were invented to increase the rift, with later steps being the "witchhunts" in which Hollywood was soon the prime suspect.

Hollywood reacted by churning out anti-communist films totaling 44 where the "FBI always wins, and the communists have heavy Slavic accents."

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