

Building and Promoting Unique Collections:

The History of the Study & Practice of
Architecture in the U.S. at the University
of Notre Dame Architecture Library

Jennifer Parker

ARLIS/NA Annual Conference

Boston, MA

April 24, 2010

The School of Architecture



Established 1898, Current Home - Bond Hall, built 1917

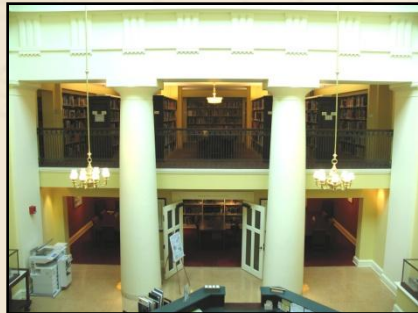
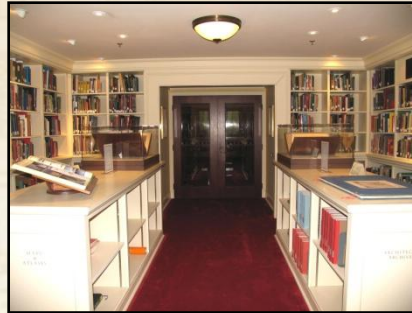
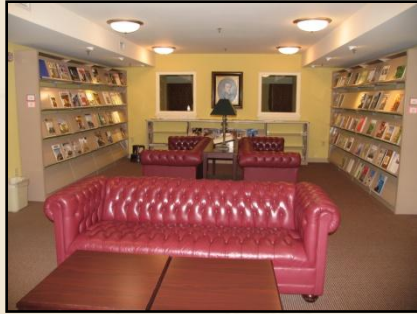
Rome Studies Center



Via Monterone, 76, 00186
Roma, Italy



The Architecture Library



The Rare Book Room



Rare Book Room Collections

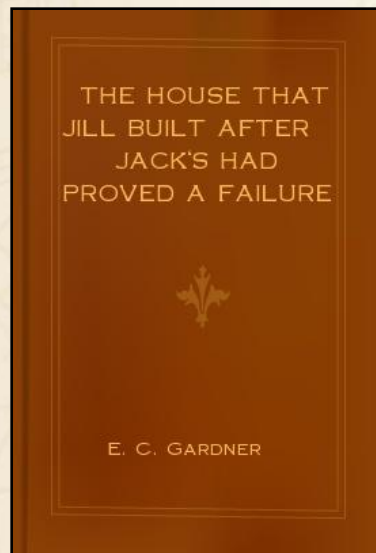
The Helen Park List -
Architecture Books
Available in the US
Prior to the American
Revolution



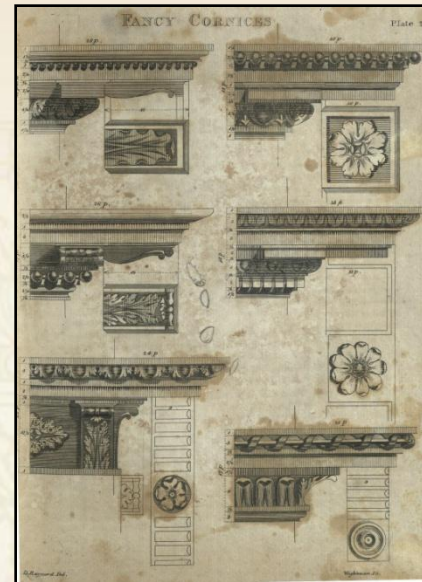
Palladio
I Quattro Libri dell'Architettura...
1570

Rare Book Room Collections

The Hitchcock List - The
First Architecture Books
Published in the US,
1775-1895



Gardner, E.C.
The House that Jill Built...
Springfield, 1886



Benjamin , Asher
Practice of Architecture
Boston, 1833

Rare Book Room Collections

The Classical
Collection –
books related to
the study of
architecture in
the classical
world



Adam, Robert
The Ruins of the Palace of the Emperor Diocletian...
1764

Naming the Collection

The History of the Study and Practice of Architecture in the United States

The Rare Book Room at the University of Notre Dame Architecture Library

The Helen Park List – The First Architecture Books in America, prior to the Revolution

These books include important architectural treatises such as 1st editions of Palladio's *I Quattro Libri...* (1570) and Leoni's *Alberti* (1726), and pattern books by James Gibbs, William Halfpenny, and Batty Langley.



Title Page from Palladio's *I Quattro Libri...*



Illustration from Asher Benjamin's *The American Builder's Companion...*

The Hitchcock List – The First Architecture Books Published in the US, 1775-1895

The Hitchcock List contains the pattern books, price guides, and materials used by America's early builders including Asher Benjamin's *The American Builder's Companion...* (1806) and *The Country Builder's Assistant...* (1797).

The Classical Architecture Collection – Essential Texts for the Study of Classical Architecture

This collection includes all five volumes of Stuart and Revett's *The Antiquities of Athens* (1762-1830) for which Benjamin Franklin was an early subscriber and Thomas Jefferson was known to possess and Robert Adam's *The Ruins of the Palace of the Emperor Diocletian...* (1764) containing stunning 18th century engravings.



Plate from Robert Adam's *The Ruins of the Palace of the Emperor Diocletian...*

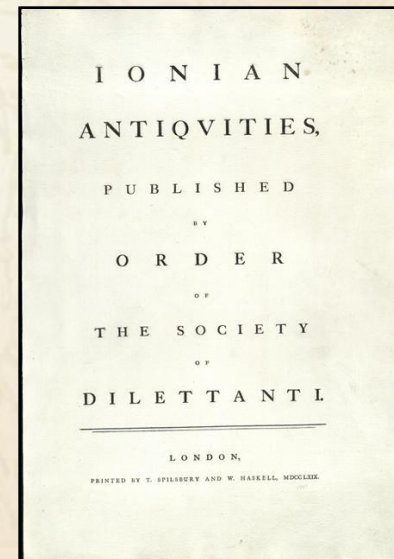
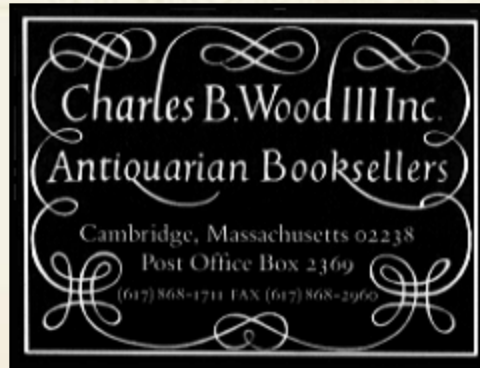
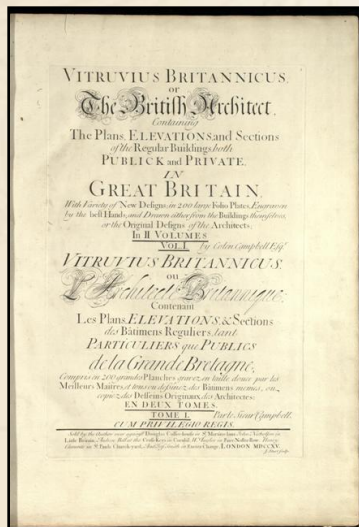


<http://architecture.library.nd.edu>

Building the Collections



sims reed
rare books



Use of the Collections



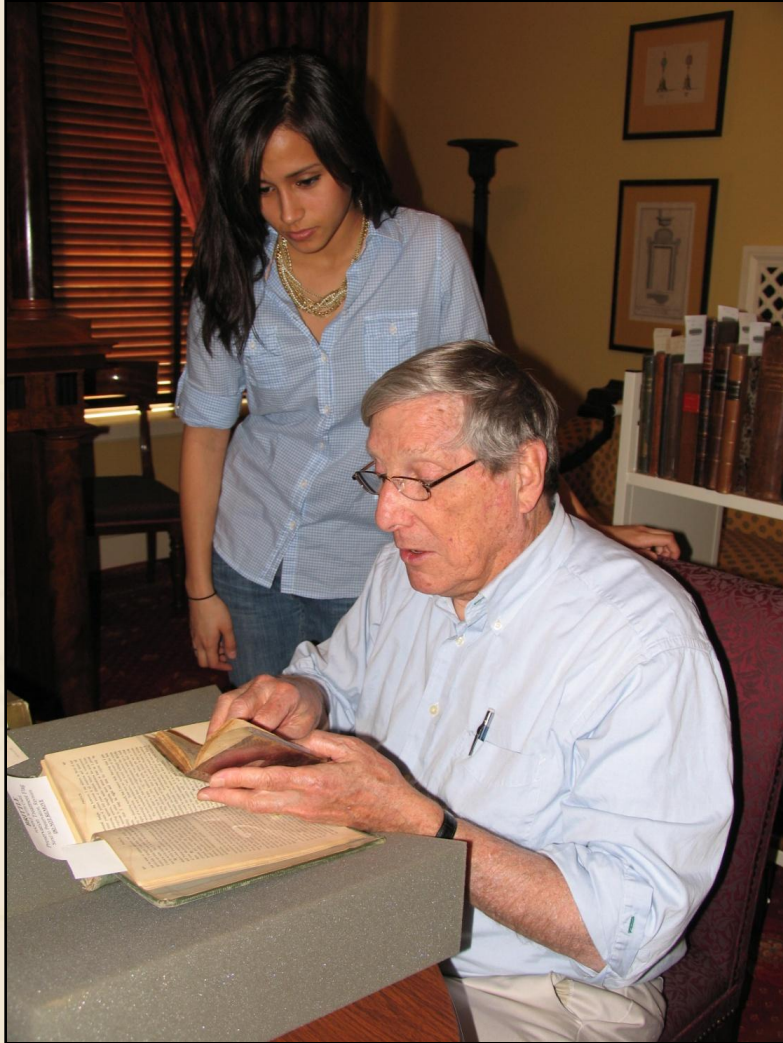
Professor Thomas Gordon Smith working with one of our latest acquisitions.

Use of the Collections



Professor Thomas Gordon Smith leads his Grecian Architecture and Furniture class of in the Rare Book Room

Use of the Collections



Professor Carroll
William Westfall
working with 4th year
Architecture Student
Clarissa Barrientos

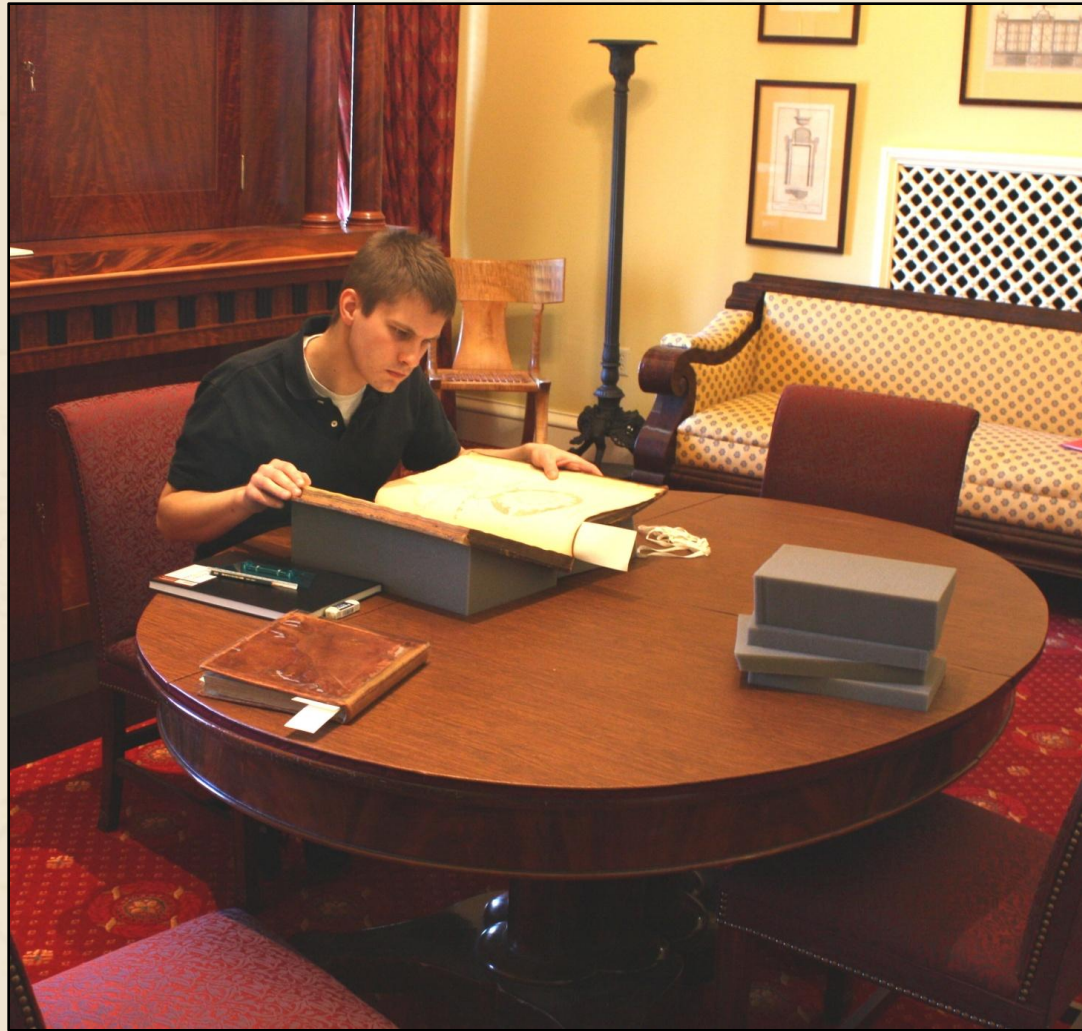
The Sketchbook Assignment

ARCH 73221, Architectural Treatises

The final assignment requires that you play the role of Thomas Blackburn. You are to select two (not one and not three) books you believe will assist your professional development as an architect and use them as sources for your own sketchbook.

The form this exercise is to take should follow that of your predecessors, such as Francesco di Giorgio Martini and Thomas Blackburn, that is, a sketchbook. Their circumstances were different from yours: they had only very limited access to books, and you have them in abundance...

The Sketchbook Assignment



Graduate Student
Michael Meszeros
working with
Desgodets' *Les
Édifices Antiques
de Rome...* (1682)
and Owen Biddle's
*The Young
Carpenters
Assistant...* (1805)

Promoting the Collections

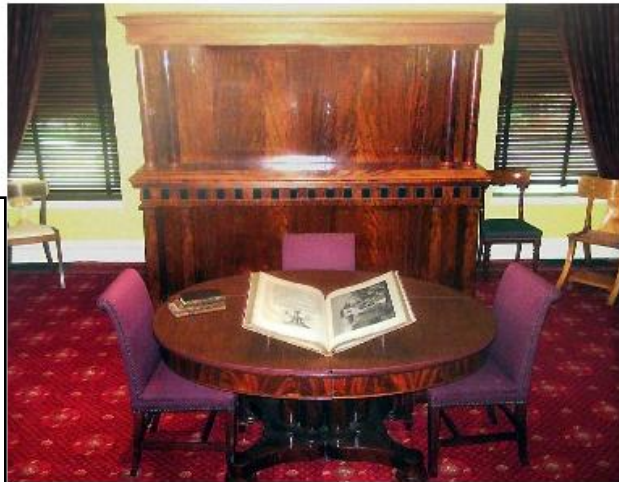
In the
Library...



Current Display - Selections from the Park and Hitchcock Lists

Promoting the Collections

Rare Book Room - The History of the Study and Practice of Architecture in the United States

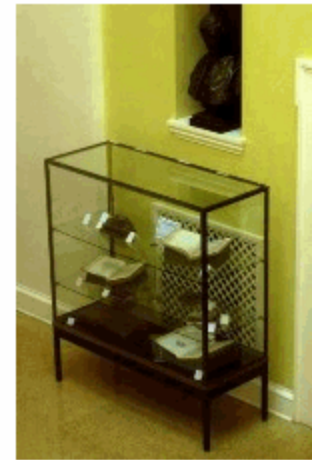


Inside the Architecture Library

- [About the Library](#)
- [Rare Book Room](#)
- [Rome Architecture Reference Library](#)
- [Staff](#)
- [Floorplan](#)
- [Map](#)
- [School of Architecture](#)
- [Architecture Library Policies](#)

On the website...

Now on Display



[The Development of Perspective -](#)

Perspectives on perspective drawing over time.

Promoting the Collections

Resources...

Architects See Book Collection As a Cornerstone of Reputation



Thomas Gordon Smith, professor of architecture, reviews a classic with his students in the Architecture Library's rare book room.

The library at the center of Bond Hall, a critical core of words and renderings for Notre Dame's School of Architecture, is pursuing a goal that goes to the heart of the school's unique character.

"We are aspiring to become a research destination for the history of the study of architecture in the United States," says assistant librarian Jennifer Parker, who has been architecture librarian at Notre Dame for a little more than a year.

The specialized library she oversees, one of nearly a dozen dotting the Notre Dame campus, reflects the architecture school's interest not only in the study of classical architecture, she says, but in "the classical study of architecture"—that is, learning from (and drawing in emulation of) the first editions of great books of architectural instruction.

The Architecture Library nurtures that respect for authoritative sources and basic know-how by hosting classes in its rare book room, cooperating with faculty who assign plenty of library-based research, and adopting goals like this latest "research destination" initiative, Parker says. Her goal is for the library, while of course remaining up-to-date to meet all hard-copy and digital needs of current scholarship, to obtain usable copies of every book on what is called the "Helen Park List." That is a compilation of the architectural titles available in America before the Revolution. The oldest book on that list was published in 1483.

Notre Dame already has a big head start toward this goal from a benefactor's gift that established the Ryan Family Collection of the Park List and yielded 65

of the titles. With the updated Park List's 106 titles representing the ultimate goal, more than a dozen more books have been purchased since Parker took her position last year, and rare book dealers acting on Notre Dame's behalf are on the lookout for high-quality copies of the remaining books comprising the list.

Other architecture libraries have copies of books on the Park List, but "we're the only one promoting these books as a unique collection," says Parker. Of course Notre Dame's architecture reference collections go beyond the Park List and include books about classical and traditional architecture, a separate facility in Rome where all Notre Dame architecture students spend their third year of study, and books written about architecture in the early United States.

You can hear the excitement in Parker's voice when she talks about Notre Dame's recent purchases of classics like first editions of the work of Andrea Palladio's (1508-1580) *I Quattro Libri Dell'Architettura...* Venice, 1570, a core text for the School of Architecture; Robert Adam's *The Ruins of the Palace of the Emperor Diocletian*, London, 1764, purchased this fall with the help of benefactors Matthew and Joyce Walsh; and all five volumes of *The Antiquities of Athens*, a monumental collection of "amazing drawings" of the classical world.

The School of Architecture, Dean Michael Lykoudis, and the entire faculty have been very supportive of the initiatives to pursue library treasures, Parker says. "You couldn't ask for better book people to work with."

Learn more at architecture.library.nd.edu/ssi/rbr.shtml.

To a
broader
audience...

What I have learned...

- Rare Book School is amazing
- Collaboration is crucial
- Donors like buying books
- Deep down, architecture students love books!
- Don't have to be unique to promote in a unique way

What's Next?

- Continued Collecting
- Expanding our scope to include early French publications
- Promotion through articles and presentations
- Further study in Rare Book School

Thank you.
Questions?



Jennifer Parker
jparker9@nd.edu

The other way architecture students
use the library...