

THE PORTAL

News from the Armstrong Browning Library

"A wondrous
portal opened
wide..."

Number 56 • Spring 2010

Browning Day Evolves Into a Festival of Arts

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*One who never turned
his back but marched
breast forward,
Never doubted clouds
would break,
Never dreamed, though
right were worsted,
wrong would triumph.*

Epilogue to *Asolando*—
RB

The annual celebration of the collective birthdays of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the Armstrong Browning Library's founder, Dr. A.J. Armstrong, has always been a special day for patrons to reconnect with one another and to hear about what has been happening at the ABL and its future projects. However, this year's Browning Festival 2010 will fill the Library with three days of poetry, song, and bonhomie.

The Waco Children's Choir will open the Festival on Thursday evening, May 6, at 7:00 p.m. in the McLean Foyer of Meditation. Directed by Julie Bolin, the youngsters will perform Carlos Colón's new setting of Browning's poem "The Pied Piper of Hamelin." Colón, a resident composer, has arranged and directed special Browning pieces for the Library since 2008.

Friday, May 7, at 2:30 p.m., the China Spring High School Choir will preface the regular Browning Day activities with a performance in the Foyer of Meditation. Under the direction of Susan Thrift, they will sing a composition based on a Browning text. The composition was the winner of a contest sponsored by the ABL at the Baylor School of Music. Afterwards, Dr. Scott Lewis, editor of *The Brownings' Correspondence*, will deliver the traditional lecture.

Lewis, who is writing a biography of A.J. Armstrong to be published in 2012, will talk about Armstrong as "impresario." He intends to "recall some of the great names Dr. Armstrong brought to Baylor and Waco and remember some of the unique events he staged." Lewis, a native Wacoan, shares a long-standing history with the ABL and with Baylor (B.A., '83). He began his Browning career as a student worker at the ABL, assisting in the director's office. After receiving his M.A. from Southern Illinois University, he taught at the King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals in Saudi Arabia. Following

that, he had the rewarding experience of serving as resident curator at Casa Guidi, the Brownings' home in Florence, Italy. This appointment led to an association with Wedgstone Press, his doctorate at University College London, and his authorship of a number of Browning publications, including *The Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning to Her Sister Arabella* (2002). Lewis, who lives in London, is a Senior Research Fellow at De Montfort University in Leicester, England, and is currently President of the Browning Society (London).

The Browning Festival 2010 will wrap up on Saturday, May 8, at 7:00 p.m. with acoustic guitarist Richard Smith, cellist Julie Adams, and a strings ensemble. The couple will present a program of light instrumental selections featuring music by the Beatles, Chet Atkins, oldies, and originals for an evening that promises to delight music lovers of all ages.

The festivities promise a diversity of styles and moods with something for everyone. Attendees will take home memories guaranteed to draw them back again and again to a place some call "the most beautiful building on campus."

Scott Lewis, editor of *The Brownings' Correspondence* and current President of the Browning Society (London), will discuss Dr. A.J. Armstrong, founder of the Armstrong Browning Library.



Fulfilling a Dream



The year 2012 will provide great opportunities to recognize Robert Browning during the bi-centennial year of his birth (1812) and to honor A.J. Armstrong during the centennial year of his arrival at Baylor University (1912). Each of these men “marched ... forward” in his own significant way, and the entire year of 2012 will be filled with celebrations honoring the two.

Future newsletters will include a schedule of events and further details of the celebration year. Look forward to special lectures, musical events, and exhibitions; a scholarly conference; the new biography of Dr. Armstrong; radio spots of ABL history and poetry readings on KWBU; and a fund-raising campaign to fulfill a project conceived by Dr. Armstrong.

Stored away in a closet for many years but now hanging on the wall of the third floor hallway is a rendering prepared by Lambert's Landscape Company of Dallas of a proposed garden area for the Waco Hall side of the ABL. It was designed just over 50 years ago as A.J. Armstrong gathered ideas to landscape the grounds around the Library. Plans are under way to develop this idea and bring it to fruition. I hope that many of you—our “Guardian Angels”—will be able to join in the festivities and help us fulfill Dr. Armstrong's dream.

The next two years will march hurriedly along. We look forward to the 2012 Browning and Armstrong celebrations and thank you in advance for your support.

Rita S. Patteson
Director

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Five-Volume EBB Edition Now Available

The first modern scholarly edition of the works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861) is now available. *The Works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning* (Pickering & Chatto, 2010) is a five-volume set that presents accurate and accessible texts of all her published literary works as well as previously unpublished material and recently attributed works and will be essential for scholars of nineteenth-century literature, women's writing, and Victorian Studies.

The editorial team, led by Professor Sandra Donaldson from the University of North Dakota, is comprised of Volume Editors Marjorie Stone, Beverly Taylor, and Rita Patteson; Associate Editors Simon Avery, Cynthia Burgess, Clara Drummond, and Barbara Neri; Contributing Editor Melissa Brotton; Editorial Associate Jane Stewart Laux; and associate Elizabeth Woodworth. The work was funded in part by the Division of Research Programs of the National Endowment for the Humanities, an independent United States federal agency.

Several members of the editorial team will be present at the ABL's Browning Festival 2010 in May to launch this essential edition and celebrate its completion.

Update of *Research Guide*

Baylor's online database, *The Brownings: A Research Guide* (www.browningguide.org), has been updated to contain the latest information about newly discovered letters, manuscripts, memorabilia, and other pertinent information about the Brownings' correspondence and works.

New Saturday Hours!

In order to serve the visiting public more effectively, Saturday visiting hours will become 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. starting on April 10. When planning a visit, always check the ABL Web site at www.browninglibrary.org in case the Library is open later during special campus events.

ABL Gift Gallery Treasures

Armstrong Browning Library *Gift Magnets*

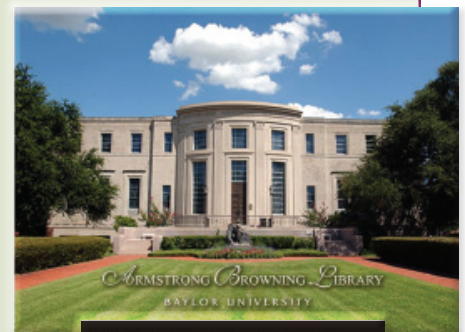
Dimensions: 3.5" x 2.5"

Cost: \$4.00 each

Plus Shipping & Handling

(Texas residents add 8.25% tax)

To order magnets, please call
Kathryn Brogdon at (254) 710-4960
or email Kathryn_Brogdon@baylor.edu.
You can also visit the ABL Gift Gallery
Weekdays, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



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ACQUISITIONS SPOTLIGHT

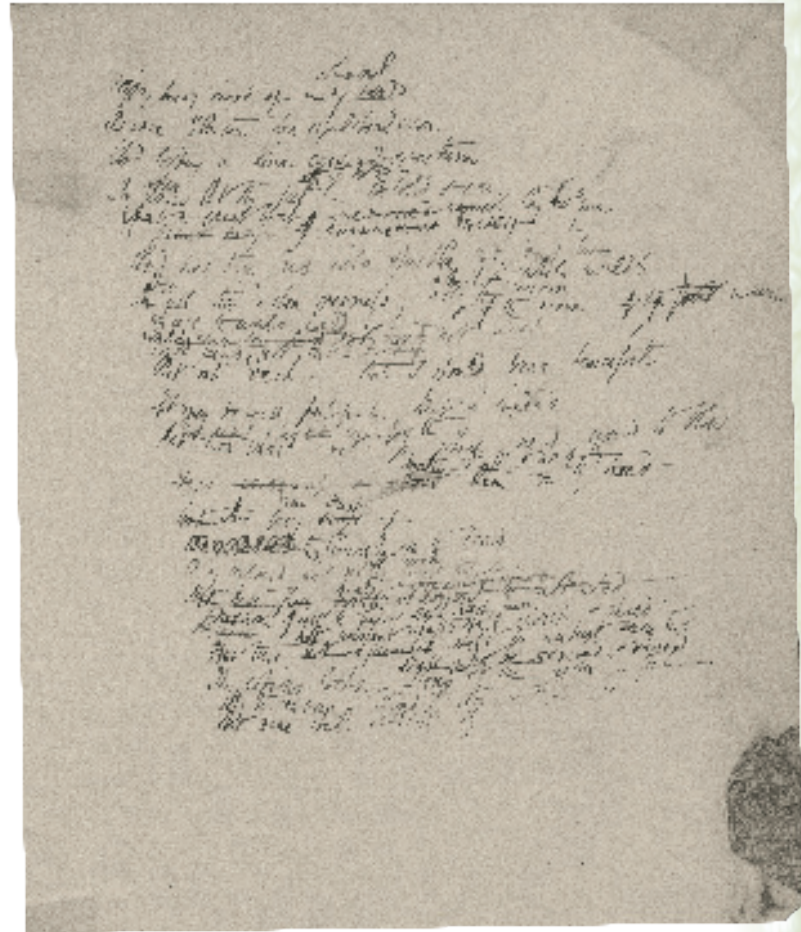
Knowing that a notebook, compiled by Elizabeth Barrett Browning between ca. 1839 – 1846 and recently acquired by the ABL, contained three previously unpublished pieces of her poetry, Sandra Donaldson, general editor of the newly published *The Works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, and Rita Patteson, one of the volume editors of volume 5 (that contains EBB's unpublished works), set out to transcribe the new material.

What they soon discovered was that stanzas thought to be the conclusion of "An Ode to America" were substantially different from the early stanzas. This meant that not only were there three unpublished pieces, "The Gorse," "The Repose," and "An Ode to America," but here was an entirely unique document—an early draft manuscript of "Sonnet Five" from the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*.

The key to the discovery was the appearance of the phrase "Stand off farther then! Go." and the opening line, "I lift my heavy heart up solemnly." A comparison of the draft lines written inside the back cover of the notebook and the printed version of the sonnet confirms that this newly acquired manuscript notebook contains the earliest known working draft of any of the poems in the famous sonnet sequence. No others are known to exist.

Sonnets from the Portuguese was composed by Elizabeth Barrett Browning during her courtship with Robert Browning, which began with a letter from him in January 1845 and culminated with their marriage in September 1846. Forty-three sonnets in the sequence were first published in her *Poems* (1850). *Sonnets from the Portuguese* appeared in its final form when a forty-fourth sonnet was added in her fourth edition of *Poems* in 1856.

The draft of the sonnet and the three unpublished pieces now appear in *The Works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning* (Pickering & Chatto, 2010).



This EBB handwritten early draft manuscript of "Sonnet Five" from the *Sonnets from the Portuguese* is one of the ABL's newest acquisitions.

Save the Dates

May 1 & 2: The Baylor Chamber Singers Spring Concerts, 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 4:30 p.m. Sunday. Dr. Alan Raines, Associate Professor of Ensembles – Music will direct. For ticket information on these concerts, call the Baylor University School of Music box office at (254) 710-3571.

June 12: Summer Quartet Festival Concert, 1:00 p.m., Dr. Gary Hardie, Professor of Instrumental Studies – Music will showcase prospective students from high schools. Free and open to the public.

Browning Festival 2010, May 6-8, 2010

May 6: The Waco Children's Choir, 7:00 p.m., under the direction of Mrs. Julie Bolin, will perform Carlos Colón's new setting of Browning's poem "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" for narrator, piano, flute, cello, and children's choir. This event is free and open to the public.

May 7: Browning Day, 2:30 p.m. Dr. Scott Lewis, editor of *The Brownings' Correspondence*, will be the guest lecturer with reception to follow. The China Spring High School Choir will perform a pre-lecture recital featuring a new choral composition using a Browning text, the result of a composition contest sponsored by the ABL at the School of Music. Free and open to the public.

May 7: Fano Club Dinner, 7:00 p.m. For more information, members of the Fano Club may contact Christi Klemptner at (254) 710-4968.

May 8: A Crossover Concert, 7:00 p.m. Acoustic guitarist Richard Smith, his wife Julie Adams (cello), and a strings ensemble will present a program of light instrumental selections. This program will feature music by The Beatles, Chet Atkins, oldies, and originals. Free and open to the public.

For more information and updates, please visit www.browninglibrary.org or contact Christi Klemptner at (254) 710-4968.



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UNIVERSITY

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Phone: (254) 710-3566 Fax: (254) 710-3552
Web site: www.browninglibrary.org



Please Recycle

Support the Armstrong Browning Library

Home to the world's largest Browning collection, the Armstrong Browning Library of Baylor University is a world-class center for scholarship, learning, culture, and public programs. In order to maintain and extend these initiatives, we rely upon the support of Baylor University and the generosity of individuals, families, corporations, and foundations. Today, approximately 75 percent of our annual acquisitions budget is funded by revenue from designated endowments provided by friends of the Library.

You can choose to support one of these areas:

- Armstrong Browning Library Fund
- Armstrong Browning Library Guardian Angel Fund
- Jack and Daphne Herring Endowment Fund
- Armstrong Browning Endowed Lectureship Fund

Donations may be made on our Web site at www.browninglibrary.org by clicking on "Support ABL" in the menu at the left and following the instructions. If you prefer, you may also mail a check payable to Baylor University to: Armstrong Browning Library, One Bear Place #97152, Waco, TX 76798-7152.

If you would like more information about these funds or to learn more about establishing your own endowment, please contact Rita S. Patteson, Director of the Armstrong Browning Library, at (254) 710-4967.

