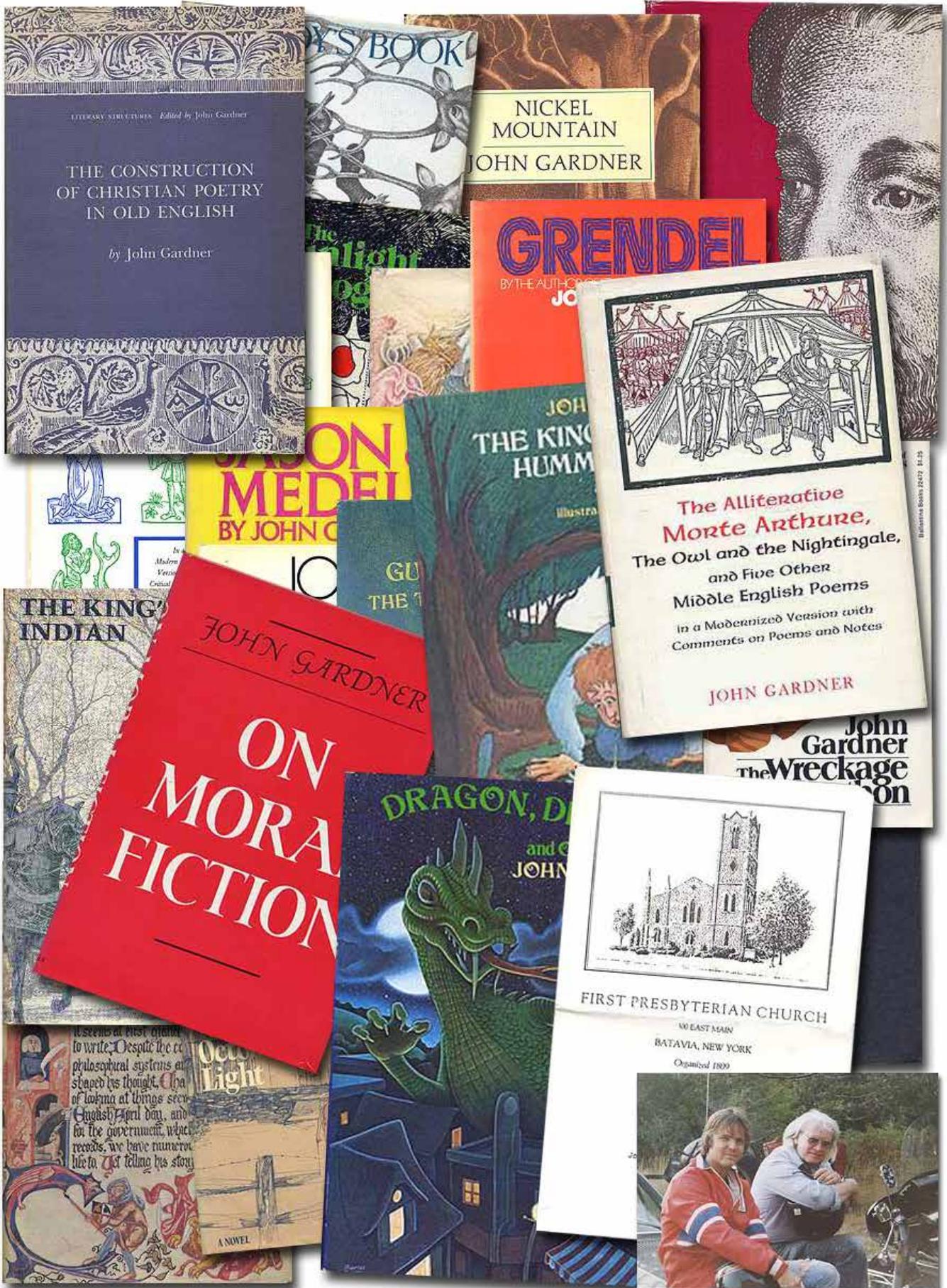




# BETWEEN THE COVERS RARE BOOKS

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## John Gardner

*The Works of John Gardner from the Personal Collection of Nicholas Delbanco*

\$25,000



A group of 23 works by John Gardner and associated items from the collection of his friend and literary executor, the author Nicholas Delbanco.

Gardner and acclaimed novelist and critic Delbanco first forged a friendship when Delbanco hosted Gardner during a reading tour at Bennington College in 1974. Delbanco ended up hiring Gardner for the English Department at the College. They and their families began a close professional and personal relationship in which each of the authors strove to critique the other's works in private and promote them in public, Gardner touting Delbanco as "one of the country's best novelists." Each acknowledged the contribution of the other in developing both their theories of literature and for specific elements of their respective works, whether it be Delbanco using Gardner's title *Stillness* for one of his novels or Gardner using Delbanco's writing to help clarify the husband-wife relationship in one of his own works. Delbanco's home and family became a refuge for both Gardner and his first wife during their messy divorce. Following Gardner's death in a 1982 motorcycle accident, Delbanco became Gardner's literary executor; editing and contributing an introduction to Gardner's posthumously published *Stillness and Shadows*. Delbanco's daughter Francesca, herself the writer of two well-received novels (*Ask Me Anything* and *Midnight in Manhattan*), is mentioned in several of the inscription in this collection, most notably the Dedication Copy of *The King of Hummingbirds* which is inscribed to her, an occasional babysitter of the Gardner children. A wonderful collection of interesting association copies that help detail an important literary friendship. The collection includes:

GARDNER, John and DUNLAP, Lennis. *The Forms of Fiction*. New York: Random House (1965). Later printing. Spine rubbed, very good, lacking the very scarce dustwrapper. Nicholas Delbanco's copy, with his address sticker applied to the front pastedown.

GARDNER, John. *Papers on the Art and Age of Geoffrey Chaucer: Papers on language & literature, Volume III, Supplement, Summer 1967*. Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois 1967. First edition. Light soiling and a couple of ink marks, else fine, issued without dustwrapper. **Inscribed** by Gardner to Nicholas Delbanco and his wife. This volume contains a collection of essays on Chaucer edited by Gardner and Nicholas Joost, including an introduction and essay by Gardner.

GARDNER, John. *The Complete Works of the Gawain-Poet*. Chicago: University of Chicago (1967). Second printing. Fine in fine dustwrapper with edgewear to the corners. **Inscribed** by the author to Nicholas Delbanco and his wife. This translation of the Gawain-Poet into modern English, with a critical introduction, has always been among the most difficult of Gardner's books to find, inscribed even more so.

GARDNER, John. *The Wreckage of Agathon*. New York: Harper (1970). First paperback edition, second printing. Slight fading to spine else fine. Warmly **Inscribed** to Nicholas Delbanco and his wife. The author's second novel.

GARDNER, John. *Grendel*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1971. First edition. Fine in a spine-faded dustwrapper that is otherwise fine. **Signed** by Gardner on the front free endpaper, and dated by him on the day after Delbanco met Gardner, as recounted in his introduction to *Stillness and Shadows*. Gardner's best known novel, a retelling of the Beowulf story from the point of view of the monster.

GARDNER, John. *The Alliterative Morte Arthure: The Owl and the Nightingale and Five Other Middle English Poems*. Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press (1971). First edition. Fine in a very good plus dustwrapper with light wear to top edge. **Inscribed** by Gardner to novelist Nicholas Delbanco and his wife, noting: "Listen, These are not poems!"

GARDNER, John. *Jason and Medeia*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1973. First edition. Fine in a very good plus, spine-faded dustwrapper. **Inscribed** by Gardner with a hand-drawn illustration. In Nicolas Delbanco's introduction to Gardner's posthumous book, *Stillness and Shadows*, Delbanco recounts their first meeting: "The last thing he handed me was a drawing of himself as a gnome, peeping out from the bushes with the block-letter legend, 'Should Nicholas require John Gardner, he can be reached at...' His number and address in Illinois. I did require him, and he could be reached." This copy bears this same inscription, is dated the day after Delbanco met Gardner, and contains a drawing by Gardner, although of three flowers rather than a gnome, raising the possibility that this is the actual note from Gardner being referred to, with some of the details changed in the retelling. A fascinating souvenir of one of the more important friendships in contemporary American literature.

GARDNER, John. *The Sunlight Dialogues*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1973. Later printing. Fine in a very good dustwrapper. **Signed** by Gardner.

GARDNER, John. *Der Ruhe Störer [The Sunlight Dialogues]*. Hamburg: Rowolt (1977). First German edition. Fine in faded, but otherwise fine, dustwrapper. **Inscribed** by Gardner to Nicholas Delbanco and

his wife. A very uncommon edition, exceedingly so signed.

GARDNER, John. *Nickel Mountain*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1973. First edition. Fine in near fine dustwrapper with the usual fading to the spine. **Signed** and dated by the author.

GARDNER, John. *The King's Indian: Stories and Tales*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1974. First edition. Fine in near fine dustwrapper with tanning to the spine. **Inscribed** to Nicholas Delbanco, with a full page of drawings by Gardner on the dedication page.

(Children). GARDNER, John. *Dragon, Dragon and Other Tales*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf (1975). First edition. Light sunning to the top edge, otherwise fine in a very near fine dustwrapper. **Inscribed** by Gardner. The scarcest of Gardner's regularly published children's books.

GARDNER, John. *The Construction of Christian Poetry in Old English*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press (1975). First edition. Fine except for a small bump to the gutter of the front board, in a near fine, faded dustwrapper. **Inscribed** to Nicholas Delblanco and his wife.

(Children). GARDNER, John. *Gudgekin the Thistle Girl and Other Tales*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf (1976). First edition. Illustrated by Michael Sporn. Fine in fine dustwrapper. **Signed** by Gardner. A children's book.

GARDNER, John. *The Life and Times of Chaucer*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1977. First edition. Fine in a sunned, very good dustwrapper. **Inscribed** by Gardner.

GARDNER, John. *October Light*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1977. First edition. Illustrated by Elaine Raphael and Don Bolognese. Fine in very good, sunned dustwrapper. **Inscribed** to novelist Nicholas Delbanco ("To Nick. A good man to steal characters from"). Gardner notes in the acknowledgements, "I have also borrowed some fictitious people from other people's novels, notably Judah Sherbrooke and his barenaked wife, who were originally invented by Nicholas Delbanco in a novel called, in the manuscript I've seen, *Possession*."

GARDNER, John. *In the Suicide Mountains*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1977. First edition. Fine in fine dustwrapper. **Inscribed** by Gardner. A children's book.

(Children). GARDNER, John. *The King of the Hummingbirds and Other Tales*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf (1977). First edition. Illustrated by Michael Sporn. Fine in fine dustwrapper with two spots on the front panel. The Dedication Copy, **Inscribed** to novelist Francesca Delbanco.

(Children). GARDNER, John. *A Child's Bestiary*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf (1977). First edition. Additional poems by Lucy Gardner and Eugene Rudzewicz. Drawings by Lucy, Joel, Joan and John Gardner. Fine in fine dustwrapper. **Inscribed** by Gardner to the Delbanco family.

GARDNER, John. *The Poetry of Chaucer*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press (1977). First edition. Fine in near fine dustwrapper with some rubbing and crinkling to spine. Warmly **Inscribed** by the author. Scarce title.

GARDNER, John. *On Moral Fiction*. New York: Basic Books (1978). First edition. Fine in near fine dustwrapper with minor fading to spine. Warmly **Inscribed** by Gardner to Nicholas Delbanco, "for conversations which helped shape this book."

GARDNER, John. *Freddy's Book*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1980. First edition. Fine in near fine dustwrapper with some sunning. **Inscribed** to Nicholas Delbanco and his wife.

GARDNER, John. *The Old Men*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI 1982. Facsimile edition of John Gardner's doctoral thesis published in 1958, an original novel not subsequently published. Near fine. Set in the same terrain as *Nickel Mountain*, and displaying many of the themes and elements Gardner developed in his later works.

(GARDNER, John). *Program for Memorial Service for John Gardner*. Batavia, NY: [no publisher] 1982. Three sheets folded to make 12 pages. Light soiling and horizontally creased, otherwise fine. Program for the memorial service held for novelist John Gardner on September 19, 1982 at the First Presbyterian Church in Batavia New York, five days after his death in a motorcycle accident.

GARDNER, John. *Photograph of John Gardner and Nicholas Delbanco*. [Circa 1982]. Measuring 5" by 7". Fine. Image of John Gardner and Nicholas Delbanco sitting on the hood of a car next to Gardner's motorcycle. The time the photograph was taken is unknown, although the processing date on the recto is December, 1982, three months after Gardner's death in a motorcycle accident. [BTC#274382]