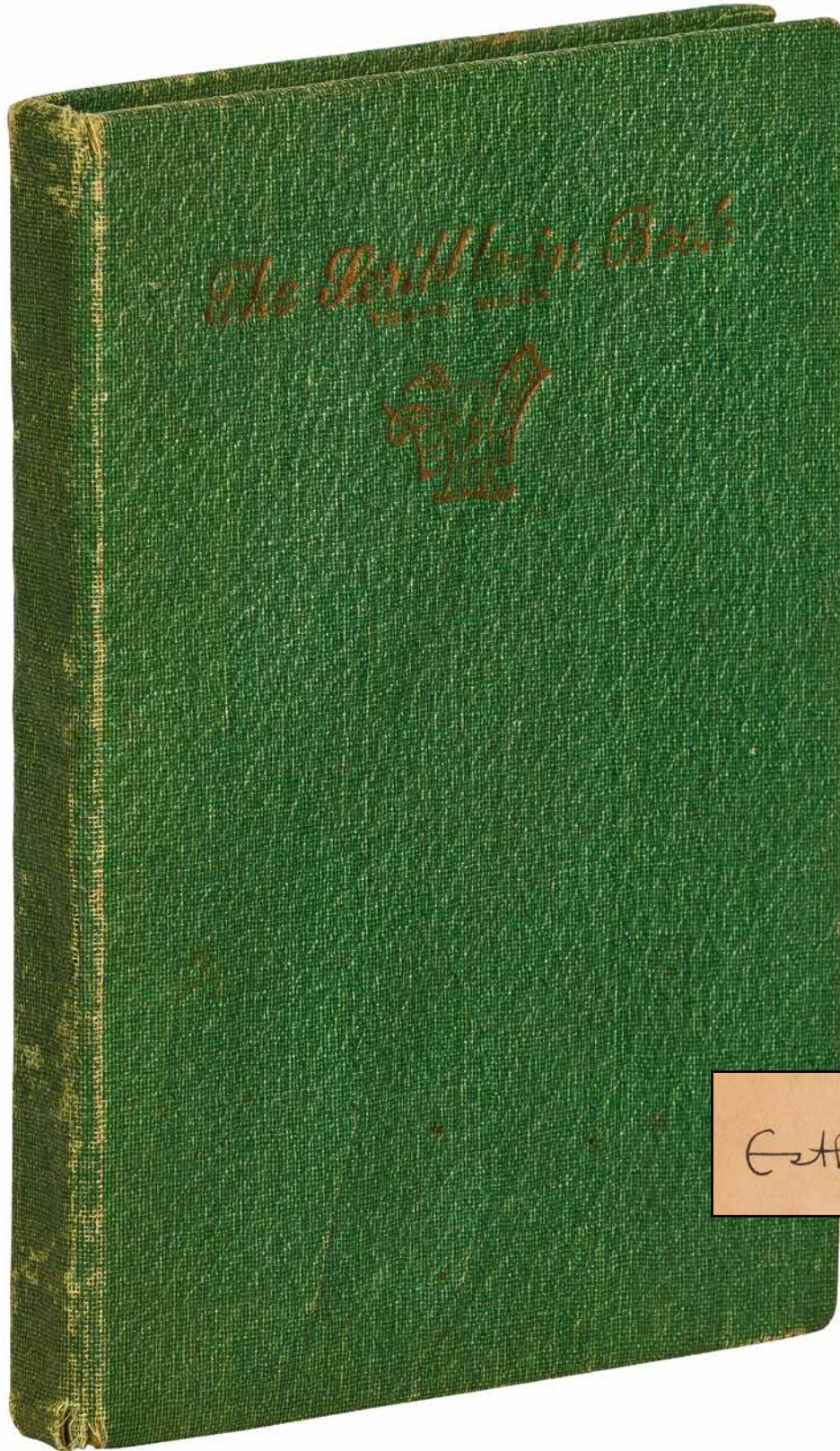


Esther May Power

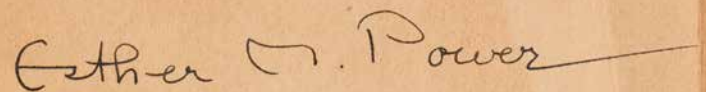
[Manuscript Journal]: A Gossipy Journal of an Instructor at Southern Illinois Teacher's College at Carbondale 1933-34

[Circa 1933]

\$2500



Small octavo blank book. Green cloth with “The Scribbler’s Book” in gilt. 62 pages have been used, the rest are blank, except for several that have obviously been removed, leaving remnants of the page. Ownership signature of Esther M. Power. Moderate wear, very good. A gossipy journal largely concerned with faculty activities at Southern Illinois Teacher’s College at Carbondale. Power was an instructor in the English Department at Carbondale after she received her undergraduate degree from Colby College, an M.A. from Columbia, and another M.A. from Oxford University, reportedly (according to contemporary Carbondale sources) one of only eight or 10 women in America to hold that degree from Oxford.

A close-up photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Esther M. Power'.

The journal starts on the dawn of the overthrow of Prohibition in 1933, the first words of the journal: "Beer arrives in C-Dale, greeted with genial smiles by some and disapproving frowns by others," and discusses in detail and quite amusingly the pressing issue of whether faculty members will drink in public or not, and gives the differing viewpoints of the various local notables: "Two old-timers on the faculty noisily protest the selling of beer. The One, an over energetic spinster with a highly developed community spirit, vows she'll never enter a place that sells beer. She's given up hope for her two nephews, who will now of course go to the dogs. We wonder if she's innocent of the reputation of the two boys." Power expounds further on the matter of beer at college dances and reports that the college: "... pres. is reported to have said - 'beer is served at The White House - we can't do anything about it.'" When the niece of a faculty member turns up drunk at one of the dances, her aunt: "... a certain faculty woman of doubtful reputation but of great tongue power ..." goes into a profane tirade accusing other faculty members of trying to ruin her niece's reputation, and threatens to spread gossip about the other faculty members: "Thus endeth the tale of how a faculty woman shows herself a true fish wife."

Beer arrives in C-dale, greeted with
genial smiles by some and ~~disap~~
~~proving~~ frowns by others. Thus to the
younger bloods of the faculty is the
problem: to drink in public or not
meaning, by "public" meaning the cafes
right in the town that have decided to
brave public opinion by serving the
new beverage. The solution seems
to be ~~decidedly~~ not, with discreet
reservations. Anyway there's Tom's
& other outlying glorified barbecue
stands, and one can always
buy the bottles & take them home or to
other people's homes.

Beer however is quickly forgotten when the future employment of faculty becomes tenuous because of the Depression, and the fact that the state sales tax has been declared illegal which may result in a dramatic rise in tuition from \$70 to \$100 per year, forcing many students out. Power discusses events: "1st - trouble over colored schools. 2 - letting out 2 or 3 older ossified teachers... 3. - Failing to re-employ all women of high school - several men - all seemingly competent."

Power is active in the union (A.A.U.P. - American Association of University Professors), and a special meeting is held to "protest against the action of the local H.S. board in firing ten teachers (including all the women) without explanation or notice. The Business & Professional Woman's Club has already drawn up a protest against discrimination against women." Eventually all faculty members have to accept a 20% pay cut.

Power goes on to write a survey of "The Married Couples of C-Dale" in particular of a young man named Red whom she finds: "earnest, naive, liberal - most impartial - hates war - injustice but not emotional ... Too romantic." Pages are removed after this. Whether Power said too much about the married Red, or perhaps dallied, is not clear.

She follows this with "The Battle of the Sexes: 'How do the young men in Eng. Dept. feel with 8 or 9 women? Apparently always on the defense. We men-must-stick-together idea'" and proceeds to profile one of the male faculty members. Her next essay is on "Martha and the Protégées" about a female faculty member who had the misfortune of having a previous college president tell her she was a good influence of people, wherein she proceeds to take over student's lives, taking studious students and makes them outgoing, and eventually ruins them.

Power writes another observation: "More Gossip!" about a faculty member who "has had relations with Mrs. Scott - divorcee - at whose house he has stayed." They announce their upcoming marriage and all Hell breaks loose. This leads to a discussion of: "C-Dale's most sensational quirk originates in Sunday School Classes. No wonder people go to Church! One class talked about rumor that couples go down to tourist cabins down road... One S.S. teacher reported story of shocked automobile salesman who sold College teacher [a] car - & had to get bath towel for her to sit on because she hadn't enough clothes on."

She writes further of the A.A.U.P., of which she is elected secretary, about the college president canceling a speaking engagement by Oswald Garrison Villard because Villard is too liberal, and finally concludes with the report of a new president being chosen for the college.

A lively and very interesting journal with insightful, informed, and mildly indiscreet observations.

[BTC#389985]

The Married Couple in C. Dale

Most ideal — ~~is~~ the most entertaining
arguing. "Red" — earnest, naive,
liberal — most impartial —
hates war — injustice — but not
ambitious. Prem + want children
afraid he'll spoil them — hates
show-off children. "Red" —
dislikes dancing — but she —
minister's home. Too romantic,
heraps, air of uneasiness — young
couple artificial — argues
warmly but retreats — when he
sees what their ground he is
on. Modifies statement. The
had been to sorority dance —
sent out. of course cons.
artificial.