

ALBUM AMICORUM of Friedrich Brauer
In German and French, illustrated manuscript on paper
Germany, Allstedt, Beyernaumburg, Halle, Sangerhausen a.o., 1803-1816

96 leaves, contemporary pagination in ink: [i], 127, [128-129], 130-131, 133-140, 145-158, 161-166, [167-168], 169-190, 193-196, 199-200, [201-202], 203-212, 215-248, [249-250], 251-260, 263-276, 279-282, [283-284], 285-298, "399" = 299, 300-304, 307-316, [317-318], 319-329, "60" = 330, "59" = 331, "330" = 332, [333-336]; ten leaves cancelled: two between pp. 140-145, one between pp. 158-161, one between pp. 190-193, one between pp. 196-199, one between pp. 212-215, one between pp. 260-263, one between 276-279, one between pp. 304-307, and one between pp. 332-333; pages 172 and 173 glued together; one leaf with smaller dimensions—106 x 175 mm.—loosely inserted; six illustrations (four full-page) in watercolor [see below], a cartouche in gouache (p. 164), an embroidery with forget-me-nots (p. 166), and calligraphy (p. 265). Contemporary binding of brown morocco over pasteboard, goldstamped with fillets and small ornaments on both covers and on the spine, on the spine also a ticket with gilt lettering: "Pour / L'amour / et / L'amitie", pastedowns of marbled paper, edges gilt; in good overall condition, with wormhole in upper cover. Dimensions 112 x 180 mm. (oblong).

The Album Amicorum of Friedrich Brauer shows the influence of German Romanticism on the life of a university student in Saxony. Contributions quote writers of the day, such as Goethe and Schiller, among many others still to be identified, and the full-page watercolor landscapes evoke the pictorial themes of Romanticism—especially the powerful forces of untamed nature and its aesthetic experience. (sold with 341a, b, and d).

PROVENANCE

1. A title page (p. 128) reveals the name of the original owner: "Pour la mémoire de J.C. Frédéric Brauer né à Allstedt". Apparently this Friedrich Brauer, born in Allstedt (Sachsen-Anhalt), went to Halle in 1805, in order to study at the university. Friedrich Brauer is not an uncommon name; further research might identify him with one of the notable Germans of that name in the early nineteenth century.
2. On 3-5 December 1959 the album was auctioned at Gerd Rosen's, Berlin, as lot 2349.

TEXT

The album contains 100 contributions, mostly with place and date. They have been inscribed in Allstedt in 1804-1805, Sangerhausen 1803-1807, Beyernaumburg in 1804, Eisleben in 1804, Weimar in 1804, Halle in 1805-1809 and 1816, Naumburg in 1810-1811, and Querfurt in 1813. All places just mentioned are in Sachsen-Anhalt, except for Weimar, which lies in Thüringen. The

inscriptions are of friends and fellow-students, some of them quoting literary favorites of their time, like the Romantic writers Goethe and Schiller. Some of the names included are Georg Wilhelm Busch (p. 199), Christian Conradi (p. 236), Carl August Eckstein (p. 253), Friedrich Wilhelm Franke (p. 182), Gotthard Friedrich Christian Sendek (p. 135), Johann Friedrich Strahlenberg (p. 167), Carl Taubert, "Music Director" in Halle (p. 206), Carl Eduard Theune (p. 155), Carl Wehrmann (p. 250), and Wilhelm Wirth (p. 283).

The loosely inserted leaf contains an inscription from 1804 by Calmayer (no first name), from Badbergen near Osnabrück, who quotes Klopstock.

The Album amicorum (Latin for "book of friendship") began to appear in the middle of the sixteenth century, perhaps originating in Wittenberg and associated with university life as students travelled around Europe to different universities. Students collected autographs of professors and fellow-students whom they met at universities far from home. Such contributions include biblical, classical and literary quotations, proverbs and personal tokens of affection, and could be embellished with coats of arms, emblematic or allegorical representations, and scenes from daily life. At first, inscriptions by friends, acquaintances, teachers, and family members were made on the spare pages of printed books, then on copies of emblem books, and finally on books printed sometimes with borders for album use. By the seventeenth century, the oblong format was preferred, and blank copy books, often with lavish gold tooling, could be bought for this purpose.

The cult flourished in Germany and Switzerland, and then particularly in Leiden, which had a strong university community, and The Netherlands became after Germany the most important area of circulation for the album. Albums were soon compiled by people other than students, mainly members of the bourgeoisie, including women. Members of the nobility used them as heraldic notebooks containing watercolors of shields and mottos (hence the German word "Stammbuch"). Frequently they contain drawings and watercolors, sometimes by famous artists (there are albums with drawings by Rembrandt, for example). Sometimes they include sheets of music. In German- and Dutch-speaking lands, the album remained in fashion through the early nineteenth century. As a genre, many such manuscripts survive. They offer an unparalleled source for cultural and historical research, including biography, prosopography, the history of universities, social networks, literary and artistic taste, popular and highbrow imagery, among many other subjects.

The German professor and theologian Philipp Melancthon (1497-1560), who was closely associated with the Reformation, early on recognized the utility of the Album Amicorum (quoted in Nickson, pp. 9-10): "These little books certainly have their uses: above all they remind the owners of people, and at the same time bring to mind the wise teaching which has been inscribed in them, and they serve as a reminder to the younger students to be industrious in order that the professor may inscribe some kind and commendatory words on parting so that they may always prove themselves brave and virtuous during the remainder of their lives, inspired, even if only through the names of good men, to follow their example. At the same time the inscription itself teaches knowledge of the character of the contributor, and quite often significant passages from otherwise and unknown and little-read authors are found in albums. Finally, they record biographical details which would otherwise be forgotten."

Public collections with important holdings of German *Alba Amicorum* are the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, the Staatsbibliothek in Bamberg, the Sächsische Landesbibliothek -- Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek in Dresden, the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, and the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel. The Royal Library in The Hague is the major repository of Dutch examples. The British Library in London has a huge collection of albums, purchased en bloc in 1850 from the estate of Erhard Christoph Bezzel, a scholar of Nuremberg history (especially Egerton MSS 1178-1498; later supplemented as Egerton MSS 1536-1607). Princeton University Library has an autograph collection of more than 200 examples dating from the mid-nineteenth century (see below).

ILLUSTRATION

p. 128, Dilapidated monument (watercolor, full-page);

p. 145, Landscape with lake and fisherman (watercolor, full-page);

p. 170, Girl standing in a chariot pulled by four horses (watercolor, full-page), illustrating the inscription "Ich wünsche dir den Himmel / Eine Schaese [=Chaise] und vier Schimmel / Ein Mädchen von 18 Jahren / So kannst du reiten und fahren" (I wish you heaven, / a gig with four horses / And an eighteen-year-old girl, / So you can drive and ride);

p. 176, "LA SOIRÉE", landscape with sunset, signed by C.F. Baer (watercolor, full-page);

p. 221, "Der Morgen", river landscape with sunrise, signed by G.C. Agthe (watercolor, full-page);

p. 308, Harbor, signed by Gustav Rudolph (watercolor).

Illustrated predominantly with full-page watercolor landscapes this album typifies in its pictorial as well as its textual content the movement of Romanticism that originated in the late eighteenth century in Europe. Reacting against scientific rationalism, Romanticism emphasized the sublimity of nature and its picturesque qualities that inspired trepidation, horror, and awe. Here the depiction of nature in the evening (p. 176), the morning (p. 221), and the harbor scene (p. 308) show the dominating forces of natural phenomenon as part of the aesthetic experience. Traveling, nature, and ancient myths were central motifs in German Romanticism as exemplified also in the literature of Goethe and Schiller, both of whom are quoted in the present *Album Amicorum*. Further research might identify the artists who signed the various contributions.

The magnificent Hainhofer Album achieved a record price of \$2,368,000 for an *Album Amicorum* at auction in the Cornelis J. Hauck sale in New York at Christies on June 27-28, 2006. More modest examples like the present one are easily within the reach of most bibliophiles, as well as libraries, and remain a largely untapped resource for study and exhibition especially suited to colleges and universities. An international electronic resource records examples, both complete and fragmentary, that are in the public and private spheres, and offers much additional information, although for the moment it is only available in German (*Repertorium Alborvm Amicorum*; see below).

LITERATURE

Fechner, Jörg-Ulrich (ed.). *Stammbücher als kulturhistorische Quellen*, Munich, 1981 (*Wolfenbütteler Forschungen*, 11).

Keil, Robert and Richard. *Die deutschen Stammbücher des sechzehnten bis neunzehnten Jahrhunderts. Ernst und Scherz, Weisheit und Schwank in Original-Mittheilungen zur deutschen Kultur-Geschichte*, Berlin, 1893 (reprint Hildesheim, 1975).

Klose, W. "Stammbücher—eine kulturhistorische Betrachtung," *Bibliothek und Wissenschaft* 16 (1982), pp. 41-67.

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Lilienthal, M. *Schediasma critico-literarium de philothecis varioque earundum usu et abusu, vulgo von Stammbüchern*, Königsberg, 1712; rev. Wittenberg, 1740 (repr. in Fechner, 1981, pp. 237-298). [the first study of *Alba Amicorum*].

Nickson, M.A.E. *Early Autograph Albums in the British Museum*, London, Trustees of the British Museum, 1970.

Rosenheim, Max. *The album amicorum*, Oxford, 1910.

Schünemann, Hugo. "Stammbücher," *Schriftumsberichte zur Genealogie und zu ihren Nachbargebieten* 2 (1965), pp. 67-108.

Taegert, Werner. *Edler Schatzholden Erinnerns. Bilder in Stammbüchern der Staatsbibliothek Bamberg aus vier Jahrhunderten*, Bamberg, 1995.

Thomassen, Kees (ed.). *Alba amicorum. Vijf eeuwen vriendschap op papier gezet. Het album amicorum en het poëzialbum in de Nederlanden*, Maarssen/The Hague, 1990.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Repertorium Album Amicorum. Internationales Verzeichnis von Stammbüchern und Stammbuchfragmenten in öffentlichen und privaten Sammlungen:
www.raa.phil.uni-erlangen.de

Alciato's Emblems and the Album Amicorum by William Barker
<http://www.mun.ca/alciato/album.html>

Netherlandish Alba Amicorum
<http://www.kb.nl/bc/hand/amicorum-en.html>

Autograph Manuscript Collection, Princeton University
<http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/1z40ks81r>

Grove Art Online: Album amicorum

<http://www.oxfordartonline.com/public/;jsessionid=01A607B5626D1EE53415818E0157459F>

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