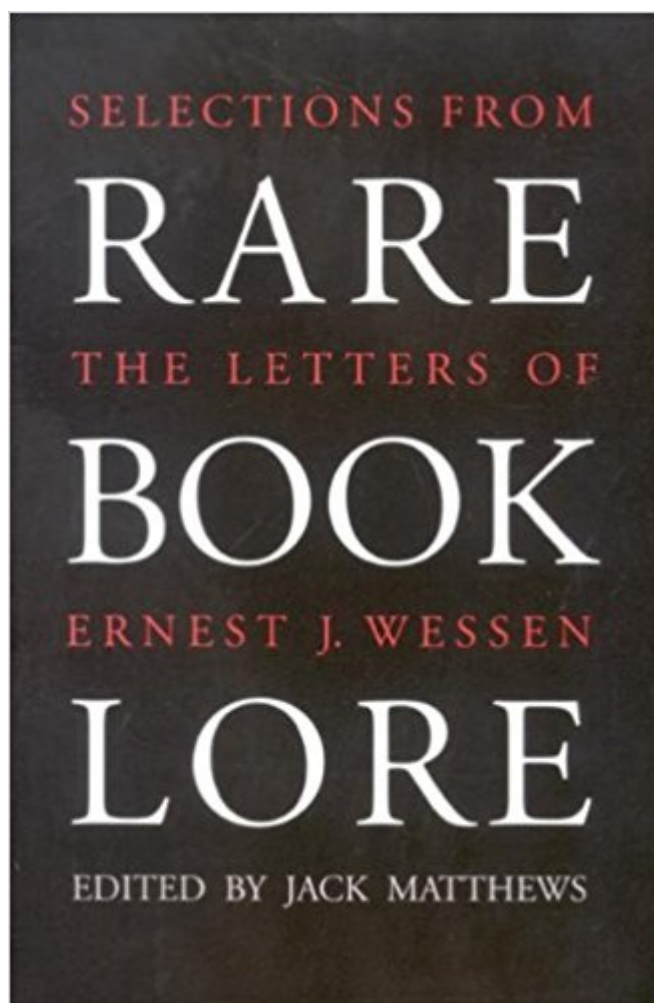


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Rare Book Lore: Selections From The Letters Of Ernest J. Wessen



Synopsis

Ernest J. Wessen was one of the legendary rare bookmen of the mid-twentieth century, and his letters, like his famous catalogs, *Midland Notes*, are a treasure of Americana. Wessen's anecdotes of the chase, his wry comments upon collectors and fellow dealers (and, indeed, the world at large), his alternating moods of genial tolerance and peppery impatience with the scouts who brought him books and pamphlets — all combine to give a wonderfully informative, useful, and fascinating compendium of rare book lore — just as the title promises. Wessen's important role in building the famous Streeter collection is richly documented in the scores of his letters to Streeter that occupy a central place in this fascinating anthology of a man who was not only a great and inspired bookman, but an extraordinary human being. As Yeatman Anderson III, Archivist for the Cincinnati Public Library in Wessen's day, wrote: "A study of Wessen's letters would provide the best course in Americana anyone could ask for." Matthews has edited the text, written the introduction, and supplied footnotes for this bountiful compilation of letters that are historically and bibliographically informative, wonderfully insightful, and filled with lively tales of bookish adventure.

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Customer Reviews

"Anyone with even a remote interest in buying, selling or collecting books should enjoy reading and owning this book. After all, one of Wessen's letters could be great therapy after a long day

at the office or shop. In fact, if the book trade had a required reading list, Rare Book Lore should be right at the top.â€” Sam Melfi, Book Source Monthly

Jack Matthews is Distinguished Professor of English at Ohio University and recipient of numerous writing awards. In addition to his novels, poems, and short story collections, he has published *Memoirs of a Bookman* (Ohio University Press, 1989), *Collecting Rare Books for Fun and Profit* (Ohio University Press, 1977, 1981), and *Rare Book Lore: Selections from the Letters of Ernest J. Wessen* (Ohio University Press, 1992).

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