

## INTERESTING FACTS

Arthur A. Houghton's collection of 1,000 miniature books sold in London in 1979 for over \$500,000. The highest price paid for a single item was 38,000 pounds (\$84,360) for a miniature 16<sup>th</sup> century illuminated manuscript on vellum.

*Price List to The Collection of Miniature Books formed by Arthur A. Houghton, Jr. (Christie's, 1979)*

Miniature book publishing flourishes today in Germany, Japan, Hungary, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Mexico, Russia, and, in particular, in the United States.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

The 2-point type used by the Salmin Brothers in 1878 for *La Divina Commedina* was so small that it took a month to print 30 pages – cutting the type reportedly caused serious injury to the eyesight of both the compositor and corrector.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

Miniature books are a perfect vehicle for artistic bindings. Leather is the most common material used but bookbinders have also used exotic metals, precious jewels, silks, satins, ivory, elaborate needlework, cork, mother of pearl, tortoiseshell and snakeskin.

*The History of Miniature Books (Fort Orange Press, 1987)*

The oldest known miniature book is a Sumerian cuneiform clay tablet that dates back to 2000 BC – it measures 1-5/16" x 1-5/8".

*Miniature Books (Sheppard Press, 1981)*

The first miniature book printed in America was *A Wedding Ring, Fit for the Finger*, published by Samuel Green in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1690. It was a book of marriage advice and there is only one known copy.

*Antique United States Miniature Books 1690-1900 (The Microbibliophile, 2001)*

Charles Lummis printed his poems on real birch bark in the 1880's and sold them to tourists. Teddy Roosevelt bought one as a gift for his little sister.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

Anne Boleyn carried a miniature prayer book to the scaffold in 1536, an illuminated manuscript with a painted portrait of Henry VIII, her executioner.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

Empress Eugenie, wife of Napoleon III, owned a collection of miniature books, reported to have contained 1,800-2,000 volumes.

*The History of Miniature Books (Fort Orange Press, 1987)*

Napoleon carried a miniature library with him on his military campaigns.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

Miniature books have been produced for reasons of practicality, curiosity, and aesthetics, and are limited in design only by the scribe's and printer's skill and the binder's imagination.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

Former slaves in America learned of their emancipation through Lincoln's great proclamation from a miniature book published in 1863. A million copies were distributed.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

A miniature book was flown to the moon on Apollo 11.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

Franklin Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor were collectors of miniature books.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

An edition of the works of Horace published by William Pickering in 1820 is the first English book of any size bound in cloth.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

The smallest known French designer binding, *NuAge*, is a tour de force, measuring just 3/8 by 3/4 of an inch.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

A miniature book actually caused a decline in the English birthrate – it was the first American handbook on the subject of contraception. Published in 1832, it led to the author's imprisonment and a sensational court trial.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

The smallest music book was published by David Bryce in Glasgow, about 1900. *Old English, Scotch, and Irish Songs* measures just over an inch in height and 3/4 of an inch in width.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

*Comic Bijou Album* spoofs English society of the 1840's and is a satire on human foibles. It is the world's smallest comic album, slightly over one inch in height, and has thirty-two finely engraved caricatures.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*

The smallest atlas in existence was reproduced from the original for Queen Mary's Doll House Library in 1928. *Atlas of the British Empire* has 12 double-page colored maps and measures just 2 inches tall.

*Miniature Books: 4,000 Years of Tiny Treasures (Abrams, 2007)*