

Major Thefts in Cultural Heritage Institutions

Nina Korbu, National Library of Norway

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Book Thefts from Libraries and Archives have existed for Centuries



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The Mission Impossible Theft at a London Warehouse in January 2017

The night between January 29th and January 30th last year 3 professional robbers bored holes into the skylight of a London warehouse, and avoiding the building's security system of motion-sensor alarms, they rappelled down 40 feet or 12 meters of rope into the warehouse and made off with more than 160 rare books.



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Stephen Carrie Blumberg – the Cat Burglar who climbed Elevator Shafts and Crawled through Ventilation Ducts



Stephen Blumberg at his Ottumwa, Iowa, home, just before his sentencing. Behind him are the now-empty shelves in the "California Room," so called because that state provided some of his choicest acquisitions.

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The Playboy and Shakespeare Thief Raymond Scott

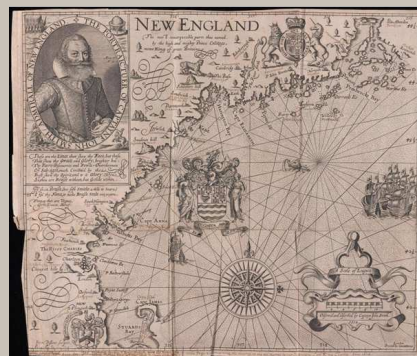
A copy of the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays was stolen from a display case at an exhibition in Durham Cathedral Library in 1998. Ten years later, in 2008, the flamboyant British "antiques dealer" Raymond Scott took the folio to the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington DC and tried to sell it.



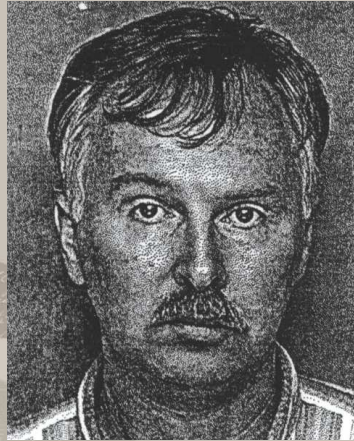
Raymond Scott (Image: PA Wire)

The Gentleman Thief Edward Forbes Smiley III

E. Forbes Smiley III spent years stealing some \$3 million worth of rare maps out of some of the world's most prestigious libraries. And he almost got away with it.



Gilbert Joseph Bland – the Scatterer of Maps and Destroyer of Books



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The Thefts from the Library of Mont Sainte-Odile Convent in France – the Mystery of the locked Room



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Viking Objects stolen from Museum in Bergen, Norway

Some 400 Viking objects were stolen from a Norwegian museum at some time over the weekend of August 11th-13th 2017, the museum's director said Sunday, describing the loss as "immeasurable".

"If the stolen objects are not returned, this is by far the most terrible event in the 200 years of Norwegian museum history," the director of the University Museum of Bergen in southwestern Norway, Henrik von Achen, told AFP.



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Lee Israel, a Writer who turned to Literary Fabrication, Forgeries, and Theft

In the early 1990s, with her career at a standstill, she became a literary forger, composing and selling hundreds of letters that she said had been written by Edna Ferber, Dorothy Parker, Noël Coward, Lillian Hellman and others.



Lee Israel, in 2008, wrote biographies of Tallulah Bankhead, Dorothy Kilgallen and Estée Lauder before turning to crime. Andrew Henderson/The New York Times

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The Thefts from the William R. Oliver Special Collections Room at the Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh by Archivist/Librarian Greg Fiore



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The Lambeth Palace Library Thefts in London – Books returned after 40 Years



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The Swedish National Library Thefts by the «Royal Library Man»



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The Thefts from the Girolamini Library

Marino Massimo De Caro was sentenced to 7 years imprisonment and lifetime exclusion from public office for the embezzlement of hundreds of volumes from the Girolamini Library in Naples



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Thefts and Mutilation at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas, Austin



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The Thefts from the University of Georgia Library by Special Collections Librarian and Exemplary Citizen Robert “Skeet” Willingham



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The Curator at the BnF and the Theft of the Hebrew Bible known as Hebrew 52



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The young Summer Temp who stole from Yale's Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library



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