

The Correspondence Between Samuel Bancroft Jr. and Charles Fairfax Murray, ed. Rowland Elzea. Delaware Art Museum Occasional Paper, No. 2, February 1980. 236 pp. \$5.00.

The correspondence surveyed briefly in this review between the collector Samuel Bancroft, of Wilmington, Delaware, and Fairfax Murray, dealer and collector, is made doubly enjoyable by the concise though comprehensive notes by its editor, Mr. Rowland Elzea, Associate Director of the Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington. This is a volume of quite exceptional interest for the serious student of Rossetti's work. Other artists, notably Madox Brown, Sandys, Burne-Jones, also take their place, but Bancroft's particular passion was for Rossetti and everything appertaining to him: his wife, Elizabeth Siddal, Fanny, his mistress, his paintings, his studies, drawings, manuscripts and models. The editor follows up the clues in the correspondence and unravels with skill the tortuous history of many of the pictures. Here also the Index plays an important part. Placed at the beginning of the book -- a most successful innovation -- it emphasizes that the pictures recorded rather than the correspondence are of primary importance. A simple foreword introduces the correspondents, and the reader will not fail to observe how at the outset Fairfax Murray's letters show him to be helpful, eager to be of use and willing to undertake whatever Bancroft suggests. By degrees the tone changes; he becomes overweening, impatient and downright uncivil. Samuel Bancroft remains good-humoured and tolerant throughout and is happily equipped with the gift of humour, a quality sadly lacking in the other. For the reader familiar with the Pre-Raphaelite collection at Wilmington this book will be of additional interest, and for anyone engaged in the task of elucidating forgeries or Fairfax Murray's straightforward copies from Rossetti's own work, this book with its wealth of information will be a valuable asset.

Virginia Surtees

Burne-Jones Talking: Studio Conversations, 1894-1898, Preserved by Thomas M. Rooke. Selected and edited by Mary Lago. 240 pp., 15 black-and-white plates + line drawings. University of Missouri Press, Columbia, 1981. \$19.00.

The personal charm of the Pre-Raphaelites is difficult to resist and, consequently perhaps, difficult to believe. Every time a new piece of "evidence" comes to light -- most notably in the recent years, the Rossetti-Jane Morris letters -- we expect the dazzledust