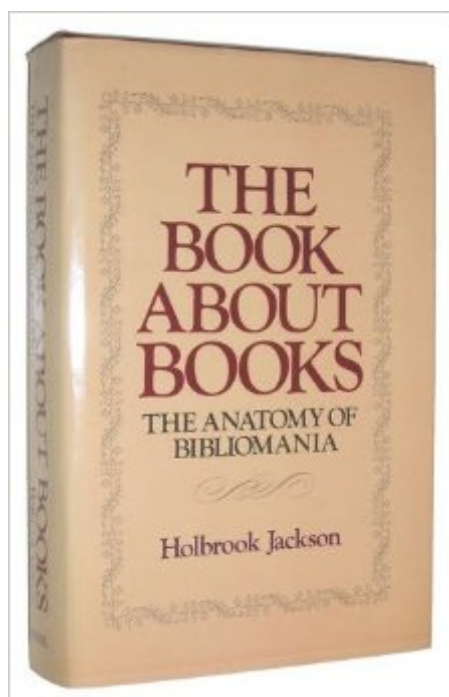


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# The Book About Books: The Anatomy Of Bibliomania



## Synopsis

It has been said that when man needs company, a book is his best friend; when in doubt, a book is his adviser; when in damp spirits, a book is his comforter; and when bored, a book is his best recreation. Books are the lifeblood of humankind. With this in mind some 85 years ago, Holbrook Jackson, a highly respected man of letters, published in a limited edition a book called *The Anatomy of Bibliomania*. The current edition, now titled *The Book About Books*, was welcomed by book collectors and book lovers everywhere because the original was long out of print. *The Book About Books* is written in the style of the seventeenth-century prose master, Robert Burton, whose prototype *The Anatomy of Melancholy* served as the spark for this project. This monumental work shows an erudition in its field comparable to Burton, as well as the same racy and witty style of the earlier work. However, Jackson, in his love for and knowledge of books, emerges a distinct personality as he writes of every conceivable topic in the world of bibliomania, from the most learned to the most frivolous. This is the most ambitious and important work of Holbrook Jackson's many books - a sterling reference and literature book.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I found the place by accident; I always do. It isn't as though I set out looking for them but they call out to me. I don't even have to see them. Sometimes I can simply sense their presence. The closer I draw, the greater their insistence, the more persuasive their arguments, and the stronger the attraction. A good bookstore is irresistible. Some time ago, I was with some friends and we stopped in a café briefly. My bookstore indicator went through the roof and after very little looking, I discovered the Acorn bookstore in Grandview. I'll save the complete story for another time. Inside, I

found a book of particular interest: one that might describe how I am able to discover such bookstores so easily and why I am so enamored of books. The volume was Holbrook Jackson's *The Anatomy of Bibliomania*, this 1981 edition being subtitled, *The Book About Books*. "Bibliomania" sounded like a strong word to me—its meaning obviously being "book-madness." Nevertheless, consideration of the possibility seemed wise, and likely a pleasurable task, as it would include an addition to my library and some hours spent in reading and introspection. After looking over the extensive table of contents, I turned to the opening and read, "The Author to the Reader." Therein, it said: "Gentle Reader, I presume thou wilt be very inquisitive to know what antic or personate actor it is that so insolently intrudes upon this common theatre to the world's view, arrogating as you will soon find, another man's style and method: whence he is, why he does it, and what he has to say.

If you are an aficionado of "books about Books", you'll love this classic. The author, Holbrook Jackson, who died in 1948 at the age of 73 was one of England's foremost men of letters. He was primarily a "bookman" who loved books and everything about them, and what they were to him, he wanted them to be for others. It has been said, that when it came to books he was a conductor, not a composer—and what a brilliant conductor he was. This book was first published in 1930 when Jackson was 55. It came out in 2 volumes comprising 435 pages and a small printing of only 1,000 copies. It has been reprinted in several editions and still available in a soft cover. It is one of those books that people hold onto and is readily available in various editions. I bought my copy in "The Sleepy Hollow Bookshop" in Midland, Michigan, in 1997. It is the Hardcover edition, published in 1950, consisting of 668 pages, excellent condition, including the dj, and very reasonable priced at \$20. As I have always been attracted to books about books, I was captivated by it immediately. Since that time, I have glanced at it many times, but finally got around to reading it through. Since the time I bought it, I've read several other books about books and written reviews on them. I've enjoyed them all, but this is without doubt a classic. You must keep in mind that this book was written 60 years ago. It also concentrates mainly on British and European books, collectors, authors, classics, etc. However, what the author writes about applies to any books anywhere. He covers everything imaginable about readers, collectors, booksellers, collections and not much about authors, other than their love of books, versus writing them. Also, don't think that, with so many pages, the book is too detailed and gets bogged down.

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