



## Mineralogical Bookplates

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# mineralogical BOOKPLATES

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All bookplates in the collection of Joachim Esche

sils, and mining symbols and later added bookplates from well-known collectors and scientists.

Today, my collection has grown to more than five hundred bookplates from more than thirty countries (see Esche 2016). Most of the plates are from Central and Eastern Europe, fewer from the rest of the world. Several printing techniques are employed for bookplates: linocut, wood-block prints, multicolored lithographs and etchings, as well as hand-colored copper engravings. The most recent trend is computer-generated designs; these, however, are not the bookplate collectors' favorites.

In choosing bookplates to illustrate this article, my aim was to show different printing techniques from different artists. Other considerations included how well they would reproduce, their size, and if they were interesting—perhaps even tell a little story. My selection was certainly subjective, but I hope it appeals to readers.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my fellow bookplate collectors Dr. Tillfried Cernajsek from Perchtoldsdorf, Austria, and Hans-Peter Schröder from Frankenthal, Germany. They allowed access to their personal archives to compile essential information. Further thanks go to the many unnamed bookplate friends who keep their eyes open to locate mineralogical and mining bookplates for me. I also thank Woodrow Thompson for reviewing the article, and a special thanks goes to Dr. Günther Neumeier, who not only initiated the article but also translated and edited the text in an excellent manner.

## REFERENCE

Esche, J. 2016. *Vom Hard Rock zum Heavy Metal—Mineralogische und bergbauliche Exlibris aus der Sammlung Joachim Esche*. Altena Germany: Deutsche Exlibris-Gesellschaft (DEG). □

*Joachim Esche is a retired process engineer with a focus on nuclear and biomedical engineering. He started mineral collecting during a several-months' stay in Namibia in 1978. The affinity to Namibia's minerals continues to this day. In recent years the collection of bookplates and the photography of microminerals have been added.*

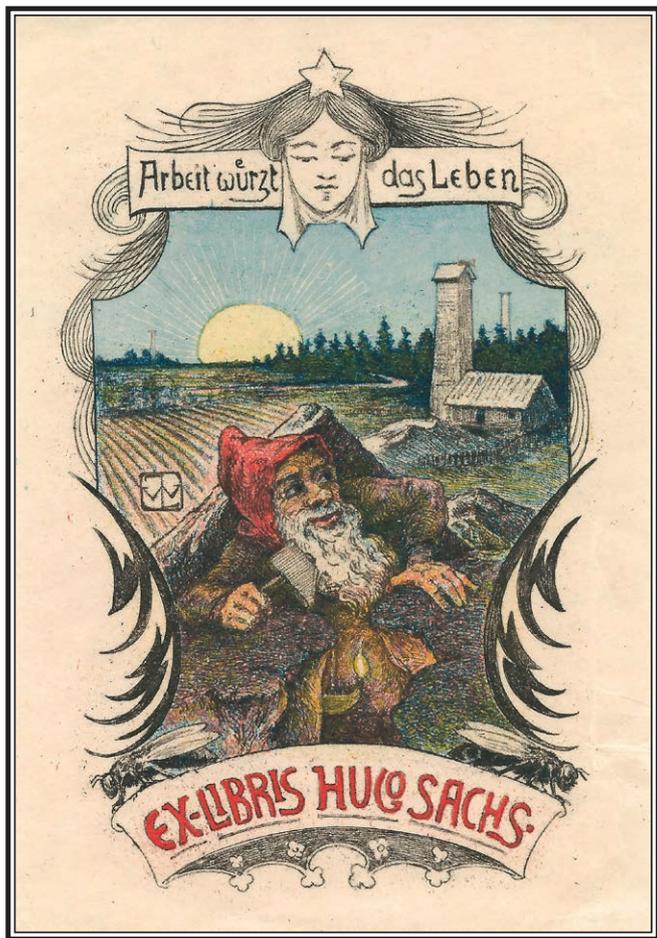


Figure 1. Hugo Sachs, an industrial magnate from Munich and consul of Norway in Munich, Germany, had a multicolored lithograph designed by Walter Ziegler and framed by the motto *Arbeit würzt das Leben* (Work spices up life). The sun rises over a rural landscape with a headframe and chimneys. A hooded miner emerges from the ground with hammer in hand. German artist Walter Ziegler (1859–1932) designed this colorful bookplate and signed with his initials WZ on the left center. Hugo Sachs got into mining when he purchased the lignite mining operations in Schmidgaden in the Upper Palatinate region of Bavaria in 1917.

**A** MINERAL SPECIMEN IN A COLLECTION IS INCOMPLETE AND ALMOST WORTHLESS WITHOUT PROPER DOCUMENTATION. A corresponding label including the mineral's locality is the most important piece of information. However, books also have such a companion, where the mention of the owner's name represents the crucial information. This can be a handwritten reference, a simple stamp, or more or less elaborately designed graphics, which can also tell a lot about the personality of the owner and his or her esteem for books.

Bookplates, *Exlibris* (sometimes spelled *Ex-libris* or *Ex libris*), with illustrations depicting mineralogical, geological, paleontological, or mining scenes, are of particular interest to readers and/or collectors who are enthusiastic about the earth sciences.

There are bookplate collectors just as there are collectors of mineral labels. I first encountered bookplates in the summer of 2005 but did not start collecting them until a few years later. I began with bookplates depicting minerals, fos-

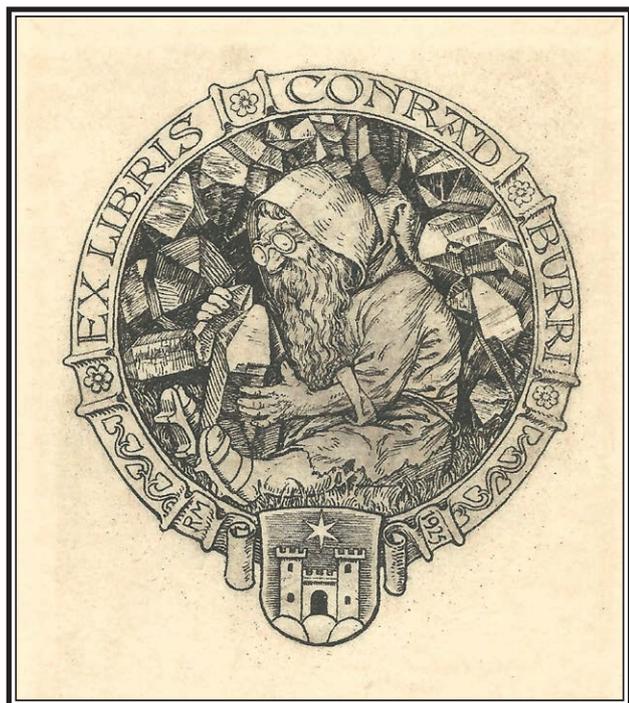


Figure 2. A bookplate of Conrad Burri (1900–1987), a professor of mineralogy in Zürich, Switzerland. The finely engraved graphic appears to show a high-ranking miner, recognizable by his glasses and his medieval miner's robe; he lovingly holds a rock crystal in his hands and is surrounded by crystals. The designer of this bookplate was Swiss Rudolf Münger (1862–1929). The coat of arms of the Burri family is displayed on the bottom with the artist's initials RM to the left of it and the date 1925 on the right.

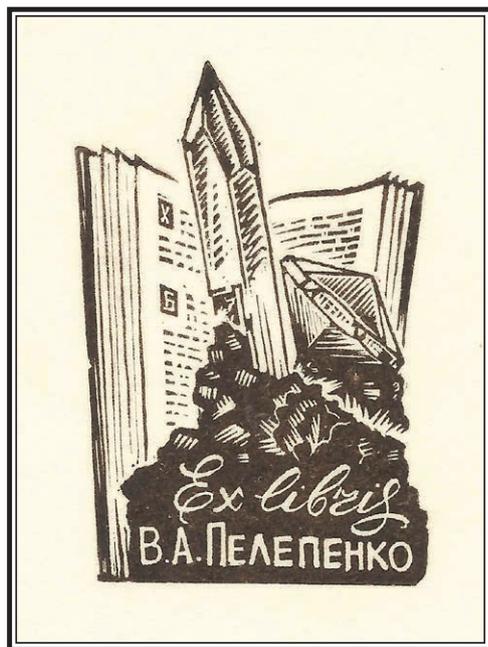


Figure 3. Not only professionals involved with geosciences had bookplates, but amateurs likewise had suitable bookplates made for their books. Russian collector Vladimir Andreevich Pelepenko (born 1935) became known in the West at the end of the 1980s, after the fall of the Iron Curtain, when he presented parts of his important collection at several major mineral shows. Created by an unknown artist, Pelepenko's undated woodblock print bookplate shows an open book towered by a large crystal and a cut gemstone.

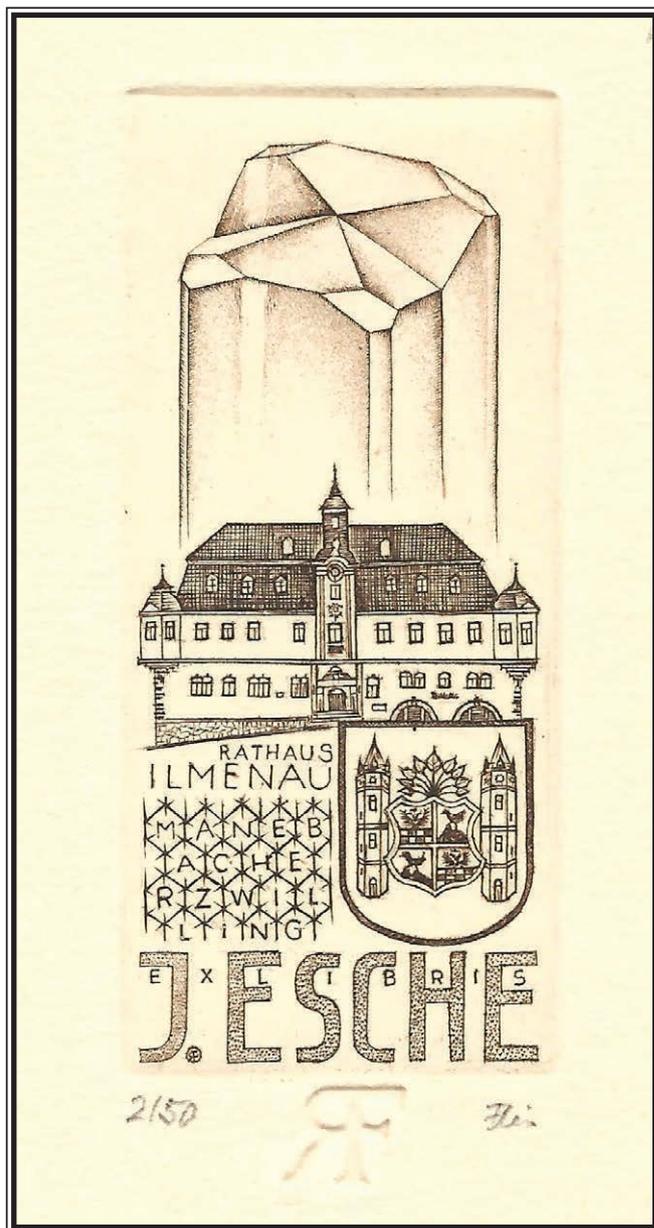
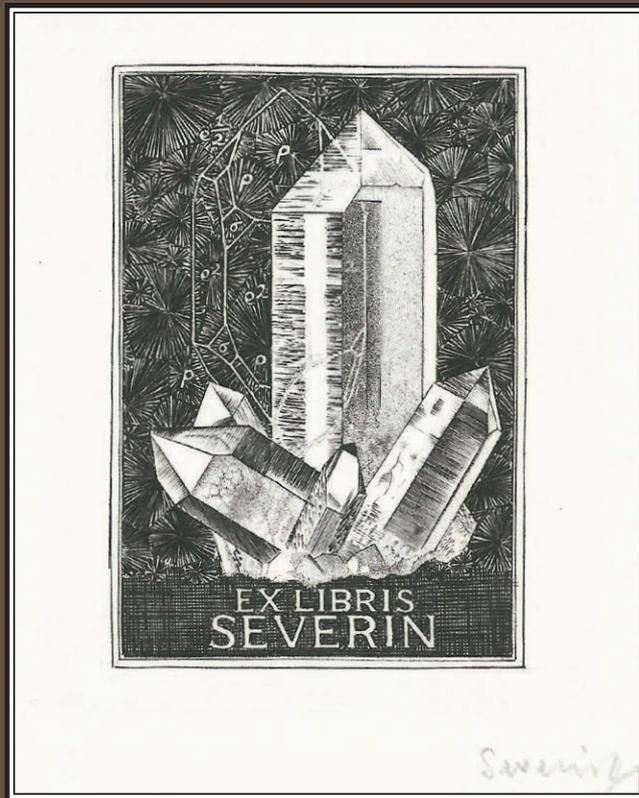
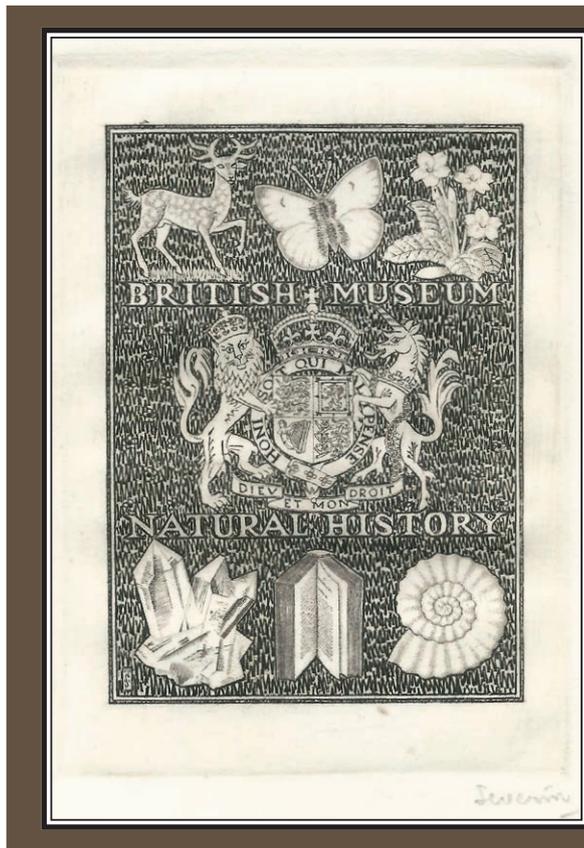


Figure 4. One of the author's many bookplates. In 2010, he tasked German artist Rolf Fleischmann (born 1939) with the engraving of a bookplate. It shows a feldspar Manebach twin towering over the town hall (*Rathaus*) of the city of Ilmenau. Today Manebach is a district of the town of Ilmenau in the Thuringia Forest. Above author J. Esche's name is a rendering of the crystal structure of the crystal inscribed with *Manebacher Zwilling* (Mannebach twin) and the crest of Ilfeld. The bookplate pictured is number 2 of a limited edition of fifty copies (lower left). It is signed by the artist in pencil on the lower right and embossed with his initials RF in the lower center.



Figures 5 and 6 (above). Many institutions such as the British Museum of Natural History in London (BMNH) used bookplates to identify their books. Belgian artist Mark Severin (1906–1987) not only designed a bookplate for his personal collection (fig. 6) but also for the BMNH (since 1992 the Natural History Museum, London). The BMNH bookplate (fig. 5) shows a deer, butterfly, mineral specimen, book, and fossil, as well as flowers, representing the many collections in the museum, centered by the Royal Coat of Arms of the United Kingdom with the motto of the knights of the Order of the Garter, *Honi soit qui mal y pense* (Shame on him who thinks evil of it) and *Dieu et mon droit* (God and my right). The artist's own bookplate depicts a quartz cluster with the drawing of a quartz crystal, probably based on illustration 157 in volume 7, table 64, of Goldschmidt's *Atlas der Krystallformen*) against the backdrop of radial wavelite. The artist's signature in pencil is on the lower right of both bookplates.

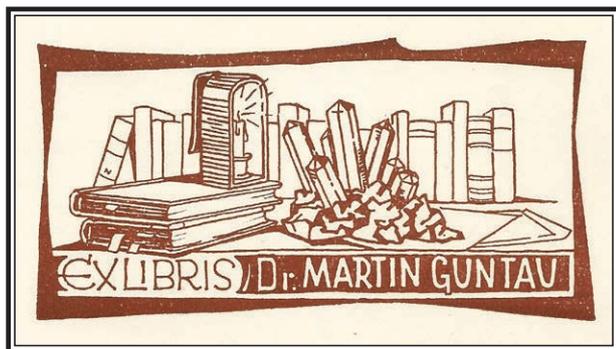
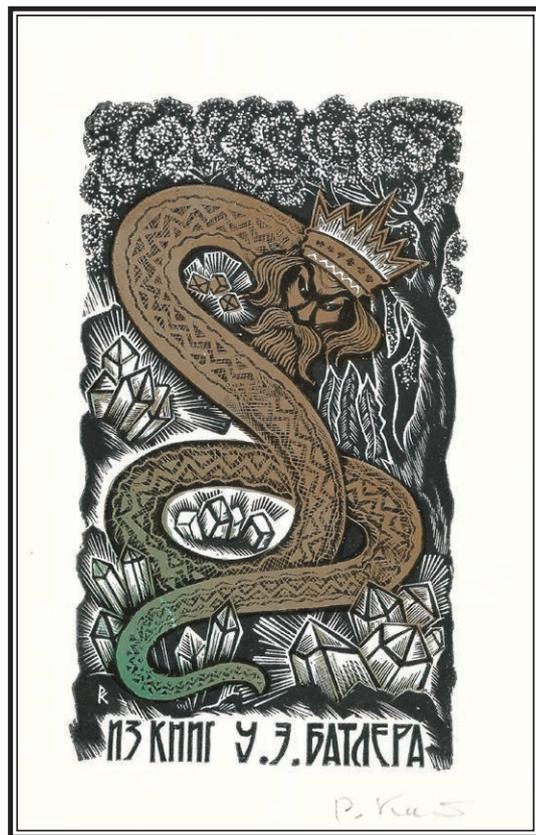


Figure 7. From 1965 to 1970 Martin Guntau (born 1933) was administrator of the *Mineralienniederlage* (mineral dealership) of the Mining Academy in Freiberg, Saxony. His bookplate shows books and minerals as well as a historic miner's lamp, a so-called *Freiberger Blende*, a connection to his place of work. The undated bookplate for Martin Guntau was designed by German artist Rudolf Nehmer (1912–1983).

Figure 8 (right). Bookplates with mineralogical or mining illustrations can also have an entirely different spin. This print of the American law professor William Butler (born 1939) shows a scene from an old Russian fairy tale with the serpent king guarding his crystal treasures. Butler is a specialist in Russian law, hence it is not surprising that he chose Russian artist Rudolf Kopylov (born 1926) to design his bookplate.



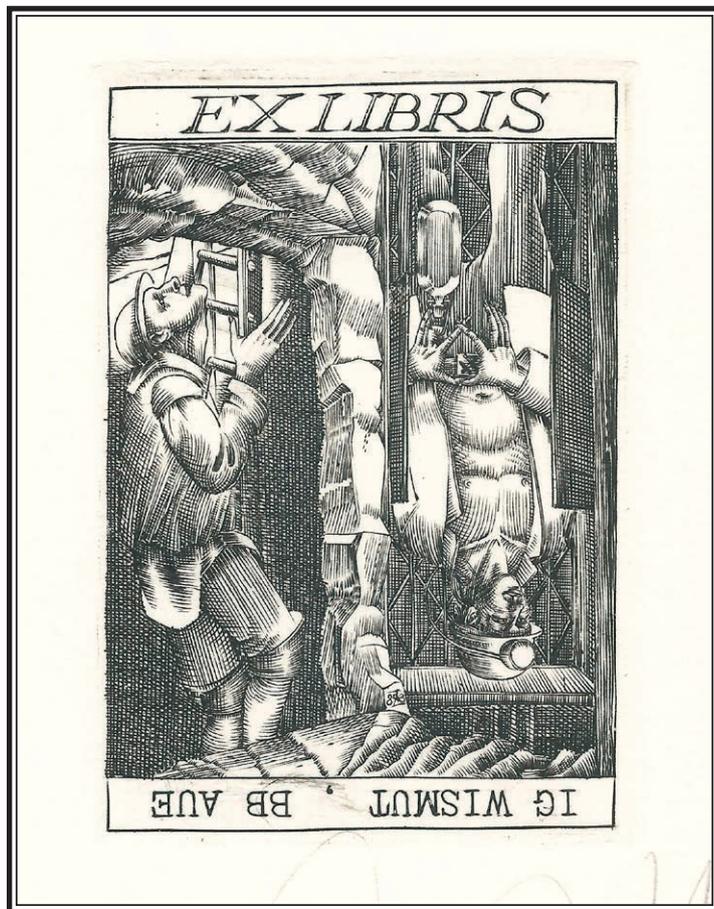


Figure 9. A bookplate for the I[ndustrie] G[ewerkschaft] Wismut B[etriebs] B[ergbau] Aue (Industrial Union Wismut Mining Operations Aue), the joint entity of the Russian-operated Wismut and the government of the German Democratic Republic. The company Wismut AG (1947–1953), SDAG Wismut (1954–1991), Wismut GmbH (since 1991) was a de-facto Soviet mining company, founded after World War II, for the sole purpose of mining the uranium deposits of the Erzgebirge to supply the former Soviet Union with much needed uranium. The engraved bookplate, designed by German Baldwin Zettl, is a commemoration of the mining tradition. It shows an old-time miner climbing a ladder up to the surface, and turned 180 degrees depicts a modern miner riding an elevator. The bookplate is dated [19]83 and signed with the initials BZ in the lower center as well as with pencil on the lower right.

Figure 10. Bookplates were also very common with mining companies. The Swedish mining company *Stora Kopparberg Bergslag Aktiebolag* (Great Copper Mountain Mining Company Limited), known as Stora Enso since 1998, has a history spanning several centuries. It was first documented 16 June 1288 and is headquartered in the Swedish copper mining town of Falun. It is by far the oldest still-active mining company.

The company bookplate, created by an unknown artist, reads *Tillhörig Stora Kopparberg Bergslag Aktiebolag* (Belongs to Stora Copper Mountain Bergslag Limited) and shows three mining gnomes working underground. Symbols for elements used in medieval alchemy are arranged in a circle in the center, and the symbols for iron, mercury, silver, and gold, connected by a chain, adorn the edges of the bookplate.

