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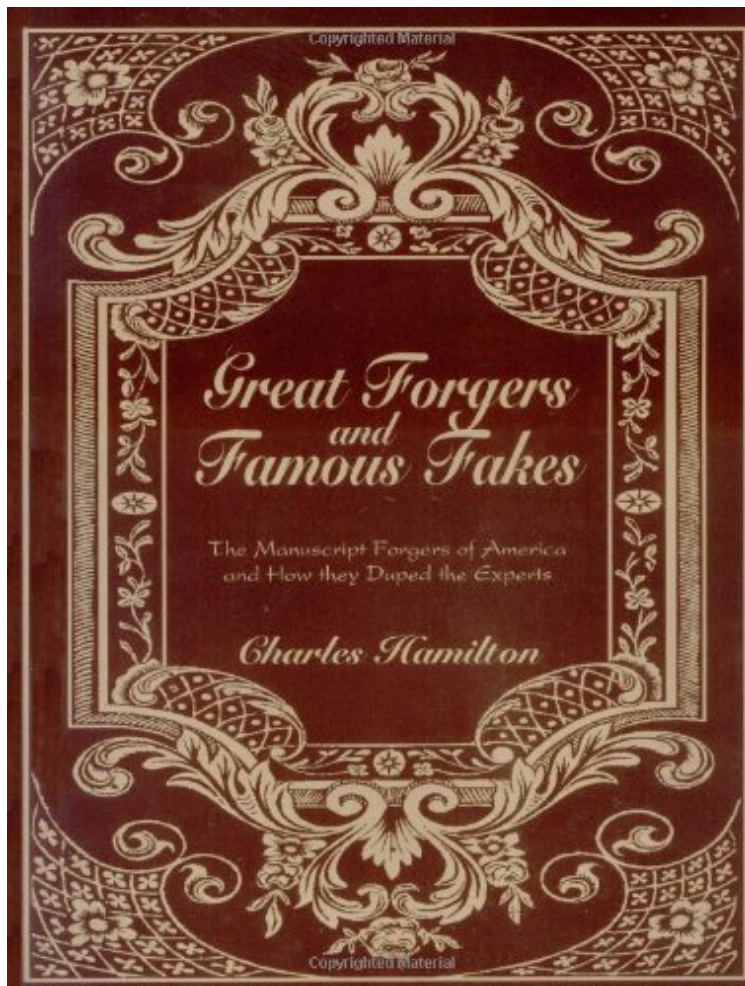
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## Great Forgers and Famous Fakes: The Manuscript Forgers of America and How They Duped the Experts

**Charles Hamilton : Great Forgers and Famous Fakes: The Manuscript Forgers of America and How They Duped the Experts** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Great Forgers and Famous Fakes: The Manuscript Forgers of America and How They Duped the Experts:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. FUN BOOKBy Eric RachutThis is a fun book and you actually learn something from it - useful if you collect any autographs. (There are many who are interested only in sports signatures, of which the majority - I'm told 70% - are fakes). One particularly fascinating story told how distinctive Lincoln's autograph was - he rarely used his full first name - usually just "A. Lincoln"- and the last name was written on three rising levels. Once this is pointed out to you, as it is in this book, it is possible to tell the real from the forgeries with ease (at least the forgeries from persons who have not read this book!). If you yourself obtain an autograph, make sure

you can prove it's real, for example by having a photograph taken of yourself with the signer - and autographs which are not personalized are more valuable. 1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The Enforcer Of Signatures By Barton J. Chandler With lots of righteous, anger Charles Hamilton, an earlier incarnation of America's Most Wanted Bill Walsh, tears through an ever-growing list of forgers who dare dump their wares on an unsuspecting, greedy public and stupid scholars. Hamilton's list of rogue forgers is really just small time criminals, some of who are pretty good at copying someone's handwriting and style. Some of the forgers are incredibly lazy, and mostly depend on "the art of the con" to see them through. Since his case is load is pre-1980, there is no discussion of modern forgeries, with obvious advanced sophistication. The almost certain downfall of all the forgers is that they work alone, and suffer "pride of authorship," so they cannot look at their work with a critical eye, and avoid short-comings and missteps. Hamilton died in 1996, and I understand that he was more flamboyant in reality, than he appears in this scholarly/technical work. A good read, but, I'm sorry, Charlie, but I found myself rooting for the forgers. 9 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating, but discouraging at the same time... By William E. Adams I've always been interested in old documents and autographs, real or faked, so I probably would have gotten around to reading Charles Hamilton's book anyway. I'm surprised that I missed it back in 1980 when it first was published. However, I made a point of getting a copy last week because this work was mentioned in another book about literary forgery I was reading. That one, "The Poet and the Murderer" by Simon Worrall, is also worth reading. In his chapter on the history of forgery, Worrall mentions Hamilton's book and one of the many forgers described in it, Thomas McNamara, a New England poet and college teacher who was nabbed in 1977 for selling fake Robert Frost manuscripts. Well, I got a bad feeling in my stomach when I read that brief reference. Back in 1962-63, my college freshman English teacher was Thomas Edward Francis McNamara, who was brilliant in the classroom, and became my friend outside of it until he was let go by Rider College (now University) in New Jersey. MY Tom McNamara was a poet with a special interest in Robert Frost. He went back to New England in 1964 and I lost track of him, but I always wondered what became of him. I had to get the Hamilton book to find out if the felonious McNamara was my long-lost friend. Sadly, he is, or was, and is covered in Chapter 14 of Hamilton's book. His own poetry was published under his first three names, and I have a vanity press volume from 1961 he inscribed to me. According to Hamilton, my friend Tom was a fraud, who claimed a phony master's degree from Wayne State University to get college jobs, and who was indeed popular with students but seldom kept a job for long. He ended up entering a guilty plea in federal court in 1978 and was sentenced to a year in the federal pen, (which sounds like a pun when describing a forger.) How sad. I wonder what became of him after? I would like to know if he was an undiagnosed bi-polar or schizophrenic, or just plain evil? He made Frost and other American poets come alive for me. Why wasn't he content just to be a good instructor? Hamilton's book does not answer any of these questions, since the McNamara case was fresh when it was published. The rest of the book details forgers going back nearly two centuries. While Hamilton is not the most skilled writer, he obviously knows his autographs, and the book is full of tips on how to spot faked Lincoln, Washington, Ben Franklin and other letters. It is fascinating that forgery has such a long history and that there have been so many brilliant practitioners. The discouraging aspect is that it makes the hobby of collecting autographs and letters a risky one, indeed. Clearly, there are more fake items on the market than real ones, for the more famous historical figures. I have a modest collection myself, mostly obtained by my sister in the '50's and myself in the '60's and '70's, of actors, race car drivers, and baseball players. I can vouch for all but the ballplayers, which I purchased from strangers via the mail. If there was a person of Charles Hamilton's talents in my area, I'd pay him to take a look at the signatures for which I can't vouch personally. I hope my Ted Williams, for instance, is the real thing, but I'll bet there are fakes out there now. Since mine was purchased 40 years ago, I think it is likely authentic. Hamilton's book, however, will definitely make a skeptic out of the casual collector. For that reason alone, it is a book worth owning.

Charles Hamilton recognizes a faked signature and believes it to be easily identified, and so will the reader of this book-once he knows what to look for. This is information of immense value to the collector and historian. Well-executed forgeries and fakes have fooled dealers and collectors for more than a century. This thoroughly documented book, containing hundreds of examples that show how to identify the best that the most skillful forgers have produced, will provide the expert and the amateur with tools for self-protection. Great Forgers and Famous Fakes is also a chronicle of the careers of America's most adroit and colorful manuscript forgers, telling who they were and how they swindled their victims. The fascinating stories of forgers and their works include: -the poet who forged hundreds of Robert Frost manuscripts -the multimillionaire industrialist and founder of RCA who got his start as a forger-and years later got fooled by his own fake -the A! merican Nazi who forged John Howard Payne's "Home, Sweet Home" -a round-dozen forgers of Abe Lincoln's handwriting

From the Author There is a darkling romance in the crime of literary or historical forgery. To fabricate the handwriting and thoughts of another person requires much more than adroit penmanship. No European forgers ever put quill to foolscap who could equal the ingenious fabricators of America. About the Author Charles Hamilton, world's foremost handwriting expert, forensic document examiner, and literary historian made full use of his more than half a century in

the manuscript field to detail the secrets of forgers and famous fakes using over 400 illustrations. Hamilton, the author of eighteen books, passed away in 1996. His recent books are William Shakespeare John Fletcher, Cardenio or The Second Maiden's Tragedy, The Hitler Diaries; and In Search of Shakespeare.