



BUSTED RIBS AND BROKEN ENGLISH

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Squires by the Numbers

Looking through some old boxes I'd never bothered to unpack from my teen years, I came across something that may be of interest to fellow rabid bibliographers.

During those years, I was spending just about every dime I could scrape together on books. I was on the mailing list of just about every fantasy & SF bookseller you could name. Some of these I did keep, such as the beautiful Don Grant flyers (printed full color on quality gloss paper). Most, however, bit the dust a long time ago. How I wish I'd kept all those old Weinberg catalogs! They were treasure troves of bibliographic data (release dates, delays, special offers, etc. were generally described in excellent detail).

The lost gem I recently discovered was a Roy Squires catalog from 1978. The most interesting thing about this is that he gives detailed listings of the exact publication date and OOP date for each of his REH booklets. The only exception is that there is no OOP date for *Up, John Kane! & Other Poems* which was not yet OOP at the time.

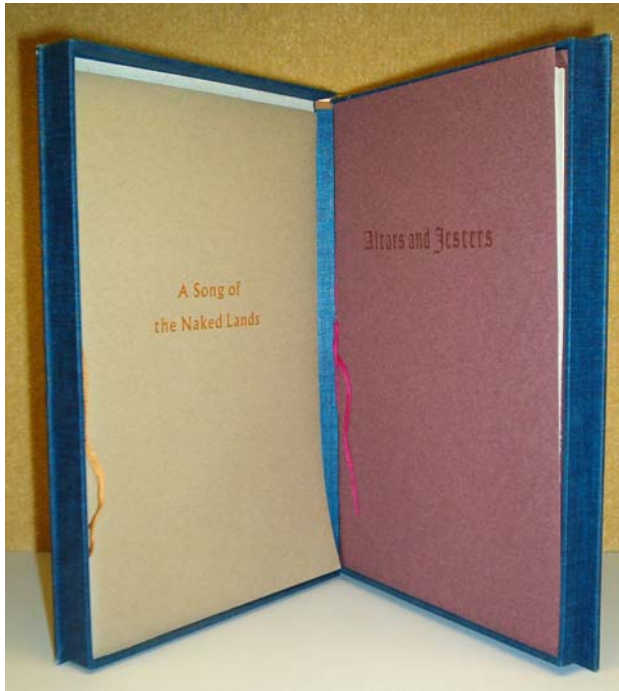
So here you go. I realize this may be as exciting as moldy bread to many of you, but I just love this stuff!

Another interesting note on the Squires publications that is not so widely known is that a tray case was produced to house the final four of his Howard volumes. *Black Dawn* and *The Road to Rome* are both slightly larger and do not fit the case.

Title	#	Published	OOP
<i>Black Dawn</i>	234	3/3/72	12/31/73
<i>The Road to Rome</i>	217	3/3/72	9/21/73
<i>A Song of the Naked Lands</i>	230	8/28/73	4/23/74
<i>The Gold and the Grey</i>	218	6/3/74	8/5/74
<i>Altars and Jesters</i>	218	10/25/74	3/7/75
<i>Up, John Kane! & Other Poems</i>	353	4/7/77	

I do not know how many of these were produced.





The printing on the spine reads:

R. E.
HOWARD

—
POEMS

SQUIRES
1974-1975

The dates on the spine make it clear that this was produced before *Up, John Kane! & Other Poems* was planned. I have always found the 2½ year delay after *Altars and Jesters* an oddity. This would imply that the series was originally intended to stop at six volumes.

Ironically, it's likely because of the spine printing that I was able to obtain this case. An online bookseller had listed this with the author "R. E. Howard" and the title as simply "Poems". I have no idea how long this was listed before I happened to spot it and looked more closely to see what it really was (as I knew there had never been an REH book entitled simply *Poems*). Sometimes you just get lucky...

The Cases of Conan

Don Grant had some tray cases as well, though the history here is again a bit muddy.

Grant did not produce themselves, but rather the noted bookbinder Gray Parrot. I only purchased one of these as issued and I still have the address label which shows that it shipped directly from Gray Parrot. Did Parrot also produce the Squires case? Don't know.

These are truly beautiful examples of the bookbinder's art. In some ways it's sad that they eclipse the volumes which they hold, with their bowdlerized texts and sometimes wretched art (Marcus Boas anyone?).

