

Printing History News

The Newsletter of the National Printing Heritage Trust,
Printing Historical Society and Friends of St Bride Library

Number 50 ☆ Spring 2016

From the editor

As we put this, the fiftieth edition of *Printing History News*, to press, it is worth glancing back to the first edition of the Newsletter in March 2003. In an item headed 'New Moves at St Bride's', readers were told that 'St Bride Printing Library is heading in a new and exciting direction. . . . Governors are in negotiations with the Corporation of London, which owns the library, to take over its administration.' The Director of the Foundation stated: 'It is all very positive: we are committed to this vision and we see a bright future for St Bride's.' Where now lies that vision?

In that same issue of *PHN*, Derek Nuttall, former editor of the *NPHT Newsletter*, wrote: ' . . . after all our years of activity, there is still no national museum devoted to printing and its related crafts and professions. But I have not given up hope for the future.' Although not having yet been fulfilled, that vision has remained alive right through to the present day, and hopefully will remain so in the future.

Finally, it is good to be able to reaffirm the words of the newly appointed editor of *Printing History News* in 2003, Anita Phillips, who wrote in that issue: 'People who care about printing are likely to regard the history of printing and typography as essential roots, a source of reference and a fund of cultural and intellectual creativity. The idea is not to sink into pleasant nostalgic dreams, but to keep these fields fresh and sparkling with new ideas, new research and experimentation, and new ways of working.'

Those are good words to keep in mind as we enter a period of change, both in the structure of the National Printing Heritage Trust, and with the future of St Bride's uncertain. Challenging times indeed for those of us who care about our printing history and heritage.

AGM of the Printing Historical Society

Notice is hereby given that the 2016 Annual General Meeting of the Printing Historical Society will be held on Wednesday 4 May at 5.30 pm at the St Bride Institute, Bride Lane, Fleet Street, London EC4Y 8EE. Any members wishing to raise items of formal business are asked to inform the Honorary Secretary in writing no later than 4 April. The formal business will be followed by refreshments and a round-table discussion of some exciting new ideas for enabling the Society to increase its charitable activities. Please let the Secretary know if you plan to attend (see page 4).

PHS Journal

The 2016 numbers of the *Printing Historical Society Journal* are now in preparation. The Spring number (24) is a general one, for which essays in hand include Steven Saxe on the Bruce pivotal caster, Alan May on an updated census of British common presses, Nicolas Barker on Johannes Borne (a revised version of the paper given at the 2014 conference) and Michael Kassler on early descriptions of lithography in the correspondence of the Earl of Buchan. Number 25 for Autumn 2016 is being guest-edited by Claire Bolton, and is due to contain papers by Patrick Goossens on the survival of common presses in Belgium, Paul Nash on the use of scaleboard in printing, Martyn Ould on line-spacing at the OUP in the long eighteenth century (these two forming a pair on the history of inter-linear spacing), David Bolton on the development of type-case lays, and Stan Nelson on the question 'Were the earliest types cast or cut to type height?'. It is hoped too to include a recently-received report on the appearance of the names of printers and others in the booktrade in the late-medieval plea rolls of the Court of Common Pleas. The Spring number is due to appear in May and the Autumn number in October.



PHS Anniversary Keepsake

It is hoped to publish on the PHS website a short account of the making of the anniversary Keepsake, issued to PHS members in 2015 to mark the Society's fiftieth anniversary in the previous year. The account will record the different processes used, and not used, in the production, the difficulties encountered, the triumphs and disasters, and the many hands which helped in its making. A very few copies of the Keepsake remain, intended to cover the disaster of loss in the postal system. Therefore, if you were an individual member of the PHS in its anniversary year, and did not receive a copy, please contact the Journal editor, Paul W. Nash (contact details on page 4).

Hans Schmoller

2016 marks the centenary year of the birth of Hans Schmoller, and this edition of *PHN* has been set in Ehrhardt, a face that was often used by Schmoller. A short account of his life and work will appear in the summer issue.

Events at the Centre for Printing History & Culture

‘Arabic and Persian Printing History and Culture’: a symposium on Monday 6 June at the University of Birmingham

Historians generally credit Napoleon with introducing the printing press to the Arab world when he invaded Egypt in 1798. Although Napoleon did bring printing presses – and Arabic type – to Egypt, the story of Arabic and Persian printing is much older and the contribution of both to the art of printing is still very much under investigation. This one-day symposium looks at the history of printing across the Arabic and Persian worlds, from block printing in the fourteenth century to twenty-first-century digital type design, and includes talks on calligraphy, type and typography, printing history, newspapers, books and printed ephemera and the cultural impact of the printed word.

Speakers include:

Professor Ali Ansari, Dr Arezou Azad, Emanuela Conidi, Professor Nile Green, Borna Izadpanah, Dr Mohsen Keiany, Professor Ulrich Marzolph, Thomas Milo, Dr Geoffrey Roper, and Dr Lucy Ryzova.

This is a free event. More information at www.cphc.org.uk

‘Orlando Furioso at 500’: an exhibition from 3 May to 10 June in the Main Library, University of Birmingham

2016 marks the 500th anniversary of the publication of Ludovico Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso*. This 50,000-line epic poem of love, war and chivalry is one of the most significant texts of the European Renaissance whose influence can be seen in literature, music and the visual arts, from Milton to modern interpretations. To celebrate this centenary, the Centre for Printing History and Culture, in conjunction with the Cadbury Research Library, is organising an exhibition of some of the finest printed editions of *Orlando Furioso*. One of the highlights of the show is a beautiful eighteenth-century, four-volume set of Ariosto’s poems printed by John Baskerville for the Molini brothers of Paris, which is illustrated with 47 engravings designed by some of the most celebrated artists of the time.

This is a free exhibition. More information at www.cphc.org.



Printers’ wood panels at St Bride’s

Emerging from the Library collection recently was a set of four wood (probably oak) panels depicting workers in the print trades, carved in deep, crisp high relief. Each is about 40 × 30 cm in size.

We have a compositor, a lithographer, a bookbinder and a printer using a star-wheel etching press. Each man’s portrait is framed by a Romanesque arch with paired columns of a different design; each arch is individually decorated and the abutments are adorned with unique pairs of dragons or acanthus sprays. Why we have them, who created them, what they were for and where they come from is, however, a mystery.

The Times of 1821

Readers of *The Times* may have been surprised, when they opened their paper for 5 December 2015, to find that it contained an interesting typographical experiment. This was an advertisement for the film (released on Boxing Day) *In the Heart of the Sea*, based on the story of Moby Dick, in the form of a full-page ‘facsimile’ of the front page of *The Times* of 8 August 1821 (No. 11,319).

However, this was not quite a true facsimile. The method by which it was produced is outlined on the verso of the page and says that it was printed by letterpress from type cast on a Monotype by Stanley Lane, of Gloucester Type-

There are no catalogue notes accompanying them, though their arts and craft style, the gentlemen’s fashions and whiskers, and exquisite if sober details would suggest a very late Victorian/Edwardian era of origin. Intriguingly, behind the lithographer’s head can be seen a print of a large factory featuring a highly ornate gothic gateway and tall chimney in the forested background, indicating that these were probably portraits of actual individuals connected to a specific place rather than generic ‘types’.

If anyone has any more information about them, please contact the Library (www.sbf.org.uk). Until then they remain a mystery, carved from oak and wrapped in cardboard.

setting Services. The resultant forme of metal type was taken to the Type Archive, at Stockwell, London, where it was printed on a ‘vintage’ cylinder press (a Heidelberg!). The repro proof was then scanned to enable it to be printed on the present-day presses. Also, the page, as printed, included a large wood-engraving of a whale – this does not appear on the original front page in 1821, when such illustrations had not been introduced in newspapers.

To find out more, go to thetimes.co.uk/1821 and click on ‘Watch: What inspired us to create this front page’. This contains a short film of the various stages in its production.

DEREK NUTTALL

The Bodleian Bibliography Room

In September the Bodleian's Bibliography Room reopened in the Old Bodleian Library, after a move from temporary quarters in the Story Museum, Oxford (see *PHN* 33). The workshop is now housed in a ground-floor room, the Schola Musicae. Inside are five free-standing iron presses (four Albions and a Columbian), a number of tabletop presses, and several composing frames, including three seventeenth-century frames, with a quantity of wooden and metal type. The room hosts classes in hand-printing for students from Oxford and other universities, and regular workshops for families, adults, and primary school groups.

PHN readers will remember that Paul W. Nash expertly shepherded the room through its previous incarnations in the New Library (now refurbished as the Weston Library) and in the Story Museum. His successor as superintendent of the press is Richard Lawrence, who teaches printing to university students and visiting groups and also supervises open sessions, when experienced printers are welcome to use the workshop, on Thursday evenings during term-times. Several projects initiated by students are under way, including the setting of Luther's 95 theses, catalyst for the Reformation, in time for the 500th anniversary in 2017. Courses in printing history, practical printing, and letterpress printing, open to the public, are offered beginning in June 2016. For details and booking of open sessions, courses and workshops throughout the year, please consult the webpage, <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/csb/bibpress>.

Presses in the Bodleian's care also support academic teaching and printing as a public outreach activity in the Weston Library for Special Collections on Broad Street in Oxford. An eighteenth-century wooden common press, used for demonstrations only, is housed in the Centre for the Study of the Book, on Level 2. In the public foyer on the ground floor of the Weston Library is a replica common press made in 1951, on which the public are invited to print keepsakes on the first Saturday of every month and most Saturdays in the summer – thanks to enthusiastic volunteers – as well as on special occasions.

This year the Bibliographical Press hosts an effort to gather copies of all of Shakespeare's sonnets printed in 2016, the 400th anniversary of his death.



A call for contributions of sonnets went out in January and was quickly answered by printers around the world (<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/csb/sonnets2016>). Though all 154 sonnets are now promised for the Bodleian Rare Books collection, anyone wishing to participate in the effort is invited to contact the Centre for the Study of the Book, e-mail bookcentre@bodleian.ox.ac.uk; the CSB will endeavour to announce and display sonnets printed in 2016 by any technique of relief printing.

The Press will be open to visitors on May Day, Sunday 1 May, from 11 am, and on Saturday 10 September (Oxford Open Doors). See library opening times on the Bodleian website.

ALEXANDRA FRANKLIN

Richard Lawrence adds:

While the Press is fortunate to be well provided with hand presses, it lacks an etching (rolling) press. Etching and engraving represent very important methods of printing illustrations before the invention of photography. To be able to demonstrate intaglio printing processes alongside letterpress methods is very desirable, and the Bodleian Library on behalf of its Bibliographical Press is appealing for the donation of an etching press to be housed with its collection of other historic printing equipment in the Old Schools Quadrangle. This is close to the Sheldonian Theatre and the Clarendon Building, both past homes of the Oxford University Press and its printing activities.

If you have an etching press that is underused or no longer needed, or if you can suggest a source for such a machine, please get in touch with me at zrlawrence@aol.com.

Durngate Street Press

The Durngate Street Press (photo above) was started in 2012 and lives in what was part of the old bindery/machine room of Henry Ling Ltd of Dorchester. Henry Ling Ltd goes back to about 1860, and the printing companies that it stemmed from can be traced back to about 1804; it continues to be a successful company printing both by lithography and digital presses together with extensive binding resources.

I started the Durngate Street Press following my retirement after 40 years with Lings having been given a free reign to sort out the type that had been put into store nearly 30 years ago when Henry Ling Ltd moved the main factory out of the centre of Dorchester.

The Press has a good selection of standard typefaces but not a complete range in any one font with the exception of Univers, plus a few display fonts.

For printing there is a 1962 Heidelberg 10 × 15 platen, a Miehle vertical press V50 circa 1955 (British built) which is possibly one of only four in the country that I know of, a Farley show-card proof press together with a 8 × 5 Adana tabletop platen.

Having started out as a letterpress machine apprentice and converting to lithography I worked in production over the past 40 years, so it was really nice to get hands on again and be able to show people how letterpress printing was carried out back in the 1950s/1960s.

The Press is not commercial in any way and is trying to show how type was set and printed together with the equipment that was used to produce printed material at that time.

FRANK HEMMINGS

Printing courses at the Grange, Shropshire

Letterpress Printing: 7–10 April, 7–10 July, 20–23 October.

Bookbinding: 7–10 April, 7–10 July, 20–23 October.

Linocut Printmaking: 7–9 October.

Paper Marbling: 22–24 April, 23–25 September.

Printing & Binding Open Day: 25 June.

Painting courses: 3–5 June, 10–12 June.

We are also considering running practical workshops on how to assemble and dismantle a platen press. Please contact us if you would be interested in attending such an event.

For full details of courses, or if you would just like to visit, please contact the Grange at: www.thegrange.uk.com

Oxford Guild of Printers

Events in 2016

Monday 4 April: '38 Years in Type' by Prof. Phil Cleaver.

Tuesday 3 May: 'Ardizzone among the printers; an illustrator's response to reproductive techniques' by Dr Alan Powers

Monday 6 June: Oliver Clark, proprietor of Collinge and Clark, the doyen of private press booksellers. Subject: to be announced.

Monday 5 September: Phil Abel, The Shenval Press.

Saturday 22 October: OGP Wayzgoose, Dora Cohen Hall, Wheatley Campus of Oxford Brookes University, 10 am to 5 pm. Entry free. Stalls will be held by fine and private press printers (offering their printed books and ephemera, second-hand type, equipment and printing sundries), societies, booksellers (specialising in press books, typography and bibliography), suppliers of paper, type and relief blocks, binding materials etc. Entry is free. There is a regular omnibus (running every ten minutes) from Oxford city centre to the Brookes Wheatley campus. A few tables are still available for those wishing to exhibit. The Guild can be contacted via their website: www.oxfordguildofprinters.com.

Monday 7 November: 'The Gordon House Effect' by Ann Pillar.

Monday 5 December: AGM, followed by Dr Paul Hatcher talking about his Allamanda Press.

The Proclamation of Ireland

There are some excellent activities nationwide around Ireland connected to the 100-year celebrations of printing the Proclamation of Ireland in 1916. James Mosley has a wonderful blog on the subject of the original type and printing press (<http://typefoundry.blogspot.ie/2010/01/image-of-proclamation-of-irish-republic.html>) and the Irish government has recently produced this website: <http://the1916proclamation.ie>.

Plea Rolls

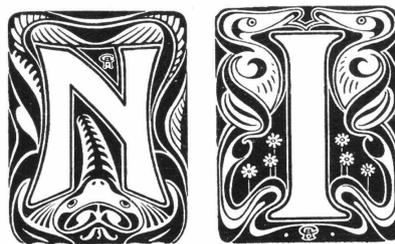
For several years I have been searching and indexing medieval and early modern plea rolls from the Court of Common Pleas. The advantage of these records is that they give information about a wide range of people, not only by name but also by occupation and place of residence.

I have collected the names of 64 stationers, bookbinders and printers for the period 1460 to 1540. Most of them are otherwise unknown, at least when checked against the work of E. Gordon Duff.

Some of the interesting finds are Richard Baugh alias Waters, of St Albans, printer, in 1535; William Notory, of London, printer, in 1509; and William Waren, of St Albans, grammar master and master of the grammar school, in 1486–89. While he is not identified as a printer, he could be the schoolmaster printer of St Albans.

VANCE MEAD

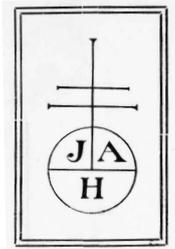
(We hope to print Vance's researches in a the next edition of the *Journal* – ed.)



A fascinating collection

The editor has recently acquired a box of fascinating typographic ephemera apparently collected by someone with the initials and monogram JAH. The core of the collection is a set of prints of thousands of illuminated and decorated initial letters accumulated from many sources, including many of the great – and lesser – printers of the day; but there are also a few keepsakes, prints

and specimen pages from many diverse sources: Bradley Press; Gwasg Gregynog; Golden Cockerel Press; Alcuin Press; Pelican Press; Merrymount Press; Acorn Press, Omaha (with illustrations by Thorsten Lindberg); and greetings cards from the artist Rudolf Hála. The collector was evidently someone deeply immersed in the printing fraternity of the 1930s, both in Britain and in America. I would love to know whose collection this was, and may eventually describe it more fully for publication.



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