

The APHA

THE
AMERICAN
PRINTING
HISTORY
ASSOCIATION

Letter

No. 8

November-December 1975

This Newsletter -- a bi-monthly publication of The American Printing History Association, Inc. -- is sent without charge to all members. Editor: Prof. Catherint T. Brody. Please refer to last page for mailing address information.



APHA'S TWO-THIRDS COMMON PRESS DEMONSTRATED. The prototype press was given the severest test possible, puttint it for a day in the hands of some 30 fifth-graders in Staten Island's P.S. 4 (New York). The students, all new to the printing process, enthusiastically helped set type, ink forms, and pull copies of a class demonstration which they had written. They were guided by Peter Babcox (shown in the photo) an instructor in education studies at nearby Richmond College, who heads APHA's committee working on the press project.

APHA'S BICENTENNIAL PROJECT: A "TWO-THIRDS COMMON PRINTING PRESS".

APHA's Bicentennial Program will focus on the recreation of the English Common Press, the kind used by American colonial printers prior to and during the Revolutionary War period. The recreation will be fully operable, of rugged construction, but built to a two-thirds scale, as faithful to historical details as possible. APHA will undertake volume manufacture of the press early in 1976 and hopes to have joint sponsors and other interested parties ceremoniously distribute copies of the press to schools, libraries, children's museums, and other educational institutions throughout the United States during

Copyright 1976 by The American Printing History Association, Inc.

2. The APHA Letter No. 8, November-December, 1975

the Bicentennial year and thereafter. In cooperation with sponsors, APHA plans to supervise the manufacture of the press, assembling the accompanying accessories package, writing of operational instruction manuals, and development of teaching guides.

Joint sponsors are being sought among, and first preference will be given to, those individuals, organizations, associations, and industries which are related to publishing, printing, the graphic arts, and allied businesses because of the obvious close relationship of the APHA program with these activities.

A prototype of the press was constructed during the summer of 1975 under the direction of Peter Babcox, chairman of APHA's Bicentennial Program Committee. The prototype was built from plans based on still existing models of the original English Common Press used in the Pre-Revolutionary era and now on display in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. It is this kind of press that was used to print the broadsides and gazettes that helped unite the colonies and inform their citizenry in the battle for freedom and independence; it is this press from which the American tradition of freedom of the press evolved.

The press has a chase size of 8" x 12", permitting the full form to be printed in two "takes", as with the original. It weights about 160 pounds and has been designed to be shipped in disassembled form with major components intact so that assembly is a simple and quick operation. Assembled dimensions are: 57½"; width, 22"; length, 46". Wooden components are of laminated construction for maximum strength and durability. Preliminary estimates indicate that the APHA Two-Thirds Common Press can be manufactured in quantity, equipped with an initial accessories package, and shipped to its destination for approximately \$600. The prototype has passed all performance tests (see the illustration).

Contributions to the APHA Two-Thirds Common Press project are tax deductible. Potential joint sponsors or individual purchasers are invited to write to: APHA Bicentennial Program Committee, Post Office Box 4922, Grand Central Station, New York, New York 10017.

THE ANNUAL MEETING. The Annual Meeting will be held, as previously announced in this Letter, on January 28, 1976, at 7:00 p.m. in room 207 of the CUNY Graduate Center, 33 West 42nd Street, New York City.

AWARD TO BE GIVEN AT ANNUAL MEETING. APHA has created an annual Award for Distinguished Contributions to the History of American Printing, and the APHA Board has, by unanimous vote, conferred the first Award on Dr. Robert L. Leslie. The announcement was made by APHA's president, Dr. J. Ben Lieberman as a surprise for Dr. Leslie at his 90th birthday celebration by the Typophiles in New York in December. While taking note of the many, many contributions of Dr. Leslie to the graphic arts, including many projects contributing to the body of history, the APHA Board voted the honor specifically for the Heritage of the Graphic Arts lecture series which Dr. Leslie has conducted for over 10 years. The Award will be presented at APHA's annual meeting on January 28, 1976, in New York City.

NEW YORK CHAPTER. The New York Chapter held its second program meeting of the season on Monday, November 10, at the CUNY Graduate Center in Manhattan. Madeline B. Stern, author, scholar, historian, and rare book dealer, spoke on a fascinating episode in American book publishing history, the "unknown thrillers" written by Louisa May Alcott. AMS Press, incidentally, recently reprinted Ms. Stern's Imprints on History: Book Publishing and American Frontiers. She has also written a number of other studies on American printing and publishing. Her edition of the Alcott thrillers is entitled Behind a Mask, published by Morrow. Ms Stern and Dr Leona Rostenberg, her partner, have told the story of their rare book business in Old and Rare: Thirty Years in the Book Business (Abner Schram, \$12).

PLASTIC BOOK BINDINGS. Two companies have recently announced that they have successfully produced all-plastic cases for hardcover books to replace the traditional pasteboard hardcover "cases" we're accustomed to. R.R. Donnelly & Sons, the large, Chicago-based printing company, has made its plastic "bindings" from extruded polyethylene. Bookwrights, Inc., a new, small company, is making its version from a variety of vinyls. The first all-plastic book is a novel called Billyboy by William Wood, published by Morrow last July. Although most book designers would no doubt consider this an ugly book, it should be a collector's item some day. If the plastic turns out to be clearer (which is not certain at present), this may be the book of the future.

PUBLISHING COURSE. Hofstra University (Hempstead, Long Island, New York) is offering a course on the Theory and Practice of Publishing. It is being conducted by Arthur Gregor, formerly a senior editor at Macmillan. It is the only such course in the country, the University believes, that is given as a daytime course for credit.

FINE PRINT. This excellent quarterly rounded out its first year with the recent publication of its fourth number. The lead article offers Wilder Bentley's memories of Porter Garnett and his famous Laboratory Press. Editor Sandra Kirshenbaum writes that with the beginning of its second year, further expansion to 16 pages is in the offing for the newsletter. Some time ago we offered a sample copy of Fine Print, and we would now like to repeat this offer, courtesy of Fine Print's editor, for the sake of new members or those who did not previously take advantage of it. Write directly to Fine Print at Postal Box 7741, San Francisco, California 94120.

COLLEGE ART ASSOCIATION. The annual conference of the College Art Association is scheduled for February 1-4, 1976 in Chicago at the Conrad Hilton Hotel. A number of sessions focus on subjects connected with the history of books and printing. An entire morning session on February 2, for example, will be offered on "The Illuminated Book in England," with eight papers on various special aspects and studies of particular manuscripts. Papers to be presented at other sessions are devoted to a wide variety of subjects, from "The Effect of the Copyright Law on Visual Resources" to "Rubens' Title Pages for the Plantin Press." Further information may be obtained from the College Art Association, 6 East 52nd Street, New York, New York 10022.

4. The APHA Letter No. 8, November-December, 1975

ST. BRIDE'S PRINTING LIBRARY From London comes news of activities scheduled for this Mecca for lovers of printing history. The Cambridge University Press Christmas books will be the subject of a special exhibit through 30 January (Mon.-Fri., 10-5:30). The show was opened on December 9, with a talk by Brooke Crutchley, University Printer from 1946 to 1974. The production of these keepsake books each Christmas from 1930 to 1973 reflects a distinguished typographic tradition. Their subject was usually connected with Cambridge or with printing; often with both at once. A few of these books (such as Morison's Tally of Types (1953)) later appeared in trade editions, but most have remained eagerly-collected typographic rarities. The University Printing House has reprinted Brooke Crutchley's A Printer's Christmas Books, which gives a full listing of all the titles together with his own commentary on them, and was previously available only in the privately issued edition. It is now available for 1 pound from the St. Bride Printing Library (1.25 pounds post free). If making out a check in dollars, please add 50 pence to cover bank conversion costs.

VALENTI ANGELO HONORED. The Friends of the San Francisco Public Library paid tribute to artist-designer Valenti Angelo on September 7 with a reception held in the Special Collections Department. Dr. James D. Hart spoke about Mr. Angelo's many accomplishments and related some anecdotes about his early years with the Grabhorn Press. The Book Club of California, it was announced, will publish a Valenti Angelo bibliography as its 1976 Christmas book. Those of us who knew Mr. Angelo while he was living in the East (until recently) can only add that our loss is the West Coast's gain.

COLONIAL PRINTER' HISTORICAL FIRST. The earliest authenticated strike of workers in the United States in a single trade occurred in 1786 when Philadelphia printers gained a minimum wage of \$6.00 a week, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

BEN FRANKLIN'S NEWSWEEKLY. Benjamin Franklin's Gazette, a four-page tabloid, is being reissued (reproduced from surviving originals) and will be mailed to subscribers in the same weeks of the year as it originally appeared. Subscriptions to 50 weekly issues are \$12.50 from American History Authentics, 10 S. Broadway, Nyack, New York 10960.

ENGLISH PRINTING LIBRARY. The Stationers and Newspaper Makers Company of London (the trade guild) is forming a small, specialized library on the history of the printing industry in the United Kingdom. In a letter announcing the formation, the Master, Leonard Kenyon, and the honorary librarian, James Moran, list among the subjects to be covered histories, biographies, and bibliographies relating to individuals and companies engaged in the printing, publishing, paper, and allied trades in the U.K. in all periods to the present. The Worshipful Company of Stationers is making an appeal for all material, published or unpublished, that might be useful for this collection.

FRENCH NEWSPAPER STRIKE. Hundreds of printers from a Paris daily (Parisien Libre) invaded the Cathedral of Notre Dame recently, occupying the famous church for five hours to dramatize their support for union colleagues striking against layoffs. The printers climbed the cathedral towers, tolled the bells, hung huge banners, and showered leaflets on street crowds to explain their grievances. After five hours, police entered and the demonstrators left peacefully. The dispute over job cuts has been going on for six months.

CALLIGRAPHY CATALOG. The recent exhibition of calligraphy and illumination presented at the Bergen County Museum (Paramus, New Jersey) by the Society of Scribes has been documented by a catalog published by the Pentalic Corp. (132 West 22 Street, New York, New York 10011). 52 of the 108 pieces in the show are reproduced in black-and-white. Also included are a short history of the Society and a full index of the exhibition pieces, with detailed information on the paper, pens, other tools, and media used. The Price for the Society of Scribes & Friends catalog is \$5 (members, \$4).

FRENCH BIBLIOGRAPHY OFFER. Paul Jammes of Librairie Paul Jammes (3 rue Gozlin, Paris 75006 France) writes to extend an offer to APHA members. Two volumes of his Documents Typographiques Francais series are being made available to APHA members at a special price. L'Inventoire de la fonderie Le Be describes the matrices and punches which had been preserved from the 16th century to the Revolution in the famous Le Be-Fournier foundry. The preface (in English) by Stanley Morison is an important contribution to the study of French 16th century typography. The other volume available is Sixteenth Century French Typefounders: The Le Be Memorandum. The original French texts are accomplished by an English translation. The volume was edited by Harry Carter with a foreword by Stanley Morison. The price of the two volumes is \$20 ordinarily, but APHA members may have them for \$15 (check with order), including postal and bank charges. Jammes also publishes special bibliographies. Le Bucher Bibliographique is an extensive bibliographical account of censored works (with an index). Bibliographers, Bibliographies 1494-1802 brings to light the value of bibliographers before Brunet. Either will be sent to APHA members for \$5 or both for \$8 (check with order).

COLLECTORS' INSTITUTE. On November 22 the Collectors' Institute held its eighth annual meeting at the University of Texas (Austin). The theme of the meeting was Western Americana. Speakers included J. Evetts Haley, J. C. Martin, and John H. Jenkins, Jr. (speaking on his famous purchase of the Eberstadt Collection). The Texana portion of the collection purchased by the University of Texas contains about 11,000 items, including 1200 manuscripts and 668 items listed in the famous Streeter catalogs. An additional group of Texas imprints includes more than 400 items unknown to Streeter when that bibliography was compiled. For further information about the Collectors' Institute, write to Box 8059, University Station, Austin, Texas.

SAFEGUARDING ARCHIVES. Thefts from archives and historical libraries have reached crisis proportions, warns Timothy Walch of the Society of American Archivists, adding that the S.A.A. has developed a security program with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The project will study the situation and explore solutions, compiling a registry of missing manuscripts, publicizing security measures, and making a consultant service available to advise on security systems. For more information, write: Associate Director, Archival Security Program, S.A.A., Box 8198, University of Illinois, Chicago Circle, Chicago, Illinois 60680.

NEWS FROM THE JANUS PRESS. Claire Van Vliet writes that the exhibit of the work of her Janus Press 1955-1975 has been on exhibit at Northwestern University (into January). It will be at Swarthmore's McCabe Library during February-March and in April will move to the Nicholson Gallery in Washington, D.C. Claire recently gave a talk on "Books Without Words" to the Vermont Bibliophiles at the Bailey Library at the University of Vermont. While there she met Mrs. Helen H. Cahill who operates the Horace Greeley Museum at East Poultney, Vermont. The museum should be of interest to all APHA members.

The house where Greeley lived in the 1820s held presses and type of the Northern Spectator newspaper on the second floor. This room now contains a large replica press along with Greeley's literary works and manuscripts and files from the New York Tribune. After serving his apprenticeship in East Poultney, Greeley went on to fame and fortune in New York as a renowned editor and founder of the New York Tribune.

WOMEN AS PRINTERS. Claire also passes on the good news that Boston's Society of Printers has decided to recognize that "girls can print" and, after several years of debate, will admit women as members.

SLIDES ON GERMAN PRINTING. Wible Language Institute, Inc. (24 South Eighth Street, Allentown, Pennsylvania 18105) is offering materials on the development of printing in Germany. A set of 20 slides (or a filmstrip) is \$13.95. An English language tape (or cassette) to accompany is \$6.95. (The commentary is also available in German).

APHA WELCOMES ... One of APHA's recent new members is Warren W. Dexter of Rutland, Vermont. The reason why it seems appropriate to extend to Mr. Dexter a special welcome is that he is a direct descendent of Gregory Dexter of London and New England. According to George Parker Winship's History of the Cambridge Press, 1638-1692, Gregory Dexter, rather than Stephen Daye, was the first professional printer in British America. Dexter was active as a printer in London during the early years of the English Revolution and later turned up in Rhode Island as an associate of Roger Williams. Dexter was called in as "consultant" to show the inexperienced Massachusetts amateur printers how to print an almanac. He lived in Providence until 1700. Bradford Swan's biography of Dexter is one of the notable volumes in Horace Hart's Printers' Valhalla series, now alas out of print.

CHECK-LOG OF PRIVATE PRESS NAMES. Private press proprietors - and perhaps as importantly APHA members thinking of starting their own personal presses and trying to decide on names for them - will be interested in knowing that The Check-Log of Private Press Names is now in preparation for early 1976 publication after a hiatus of several years. The Check-Log is based on unofficial listings of the International Register of Private Press Names (the "IR"), conducted by Elizabeth K. Lieberman at 7 Stony Run, New Rochelle, New York 10804. The IR serves as a clearinghouse, so that no one will take someone else's name. The Check-Log shows the press name and the year of founding, but does not carry the name or address of the proprietor. The new 1976 edition will contain approximately 2500 names. Orders for the 1976 edition are being accepted at \$2 postpaid (plus sales tax for New York State residents). Make checks payable to the Myriade Press at the IR address (above). Standing orders are also accepted, and some back issues are available.

GODINE PRESS EXHIBIT. At the Yale University Library (New Haven, Connecticut) through December 31 was an exhibit honoring the Press of David R. Godine of Boston in the Arts of the Book Room of Sterling Memorial Library. Books, pamphlets, and ephemera, including Early Children's Books and Their Illustration, were on view. The exhibit covered works of poetry, the graphic arts, typography, and photography issued by Godine since the founding of his publishing firm in 1969. This Boston firm has repeatedly received awards from the American Book Industry for its very high production and design standards. During 1975 Godine was honored by a Carey Thomas Award special citation for creative publishing, four out of the Fifty Books of the Year awards from the American Institute of Graphic Arts, and two prizes from the New England Book Show. The show, which also includes work of Lance Hidy graphic designer along side of Godine's (Hidy was a staff member of Godine's before turning to free-lance work now), will travel beginning in January, 1976. For further information: David R. Godine, Publisher, 306 Dartmouth Street, Boston, Mass. 02116.

PUBLICATIONS. Bittersweet: Ambrose Bierce and Women has been published by the Rather Press. The book provides a new look at the remarkable short story writer and cynical author of The Devil's Dictionary by presenting the story of some of his romantic attachments, along with his love letters. The book has been researched, written, designed, hand-set (in Centaur and Arrighi), hand-fed to the C&P press, hand-sewn, and hand-cased at the Rather Press (pew!). 150 copies are available at \$20 each (plus sales tax for California residents) from the Rather Press, 3200 Guido Street, Oakland, California 94602.

Bibliography of the Golden Cockrel Press, 1921-1949. Available from Alan Wofsy, 150 Green Street, San Francisco, California 94111. \$40. This volume brings together for the first time Chanticleer (1921-1936), Pertelote (1936-1943), and Cockalorum (1943-1948), each of which was printed originally in limited editions. Ranking with Nonesuch as the most important of the English private presses between the Wars, the Golden Cockrel Press achieved an unexcelled harmony between its typography and the arts of book illustration. Practically all the books were illustrated with wood engravings or

woodcuts. By reproducing a large number of these, this bibliography reminds us of the remarkably high quality of these illustrations - certainly one of the most valuable contributions to the illustrated book during this century. Among the artists represented are Robert Gibbings, Eric Gill, John Farleigh, John Nash, and Blair Hughes-Stanton. The three bibliographies, with their valuable prefaces and personalized annotations, carry the story of the Press from its beginnings through the War years, when it continued printing fine editions despite the actual bombing of its premises, and into the post-war years when they continued to produce excellent work. Despite changes in administration and policy, throughout its history the Golden Cockerel Press was always more interested in producing a good book than in turning a good profit.

COLONIAL NEW JERSEY EDITOR. To celebrate the Bicentennial, the Chatham Historical Society is publishing Shepard Kollock, Editor for Freedom by Dr. John Robert Anderson. Kollock's paper, "The New Jersey Journal," was an important voice for the Colonial cause from 1779 until 1783, and continues today as Elizabeth's "Daily Journal." The book (\$6.95) may be obtained from the Chatham Historical Society (c/o Arthur B. Jaquith, Treasurer), 11 Clark Street, Chatham, NJ 07928.

EXHIBIT OFFER. The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation is offering ten travelling exhibitions of botanical art and illustration for public view at museums, schools, and other institutions. Material for the shows includes drawings, watercolors, and prints of various types - many of them hand-colored botanical publications. Further information is available from John V. Brindle, Curator of Art, Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213.

PRINTING HISTORY COURSE. It's cheering to note that more colleges are offering courses on printing history this academic year. Southern Oregon State College (Ashland, Oregon) has distributed an attractive folder announcing a course in "The Design and Printing of Fine Books: A History and an Appreciation." Instructor Lewis Osborne gives students an opportunity to handle rare books and manuscripts, and actually participate in setting type and doing some letterpress printing.

MAILING ADDRESSES FOR APHA

NEWSLETTER ONLY: Send news items, announcements, and comments for APHA Letter directly to the Editor, Prof. Catherine T. Brody, Livingston Library, NYCCC, 250 Livingston St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.

DUES AND CONTRIBUTIONS: Send these (along with membership applications if available) directly to the Treasurer, Stuart C. Dobson, 215 Harriman Road, Irvington, N.Y. 10533. Make checks to APHA, either abbreviated or written out.

ALL OTHER CORRESPONDENCE: To APHA, Post Office Box 4922, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10017, unless you are requested to do otherwise.