

The APHA Newsletter

Jan./Feb.

1988



A Publication of the American Printing History Association

Stephen O. Saxe, Editor

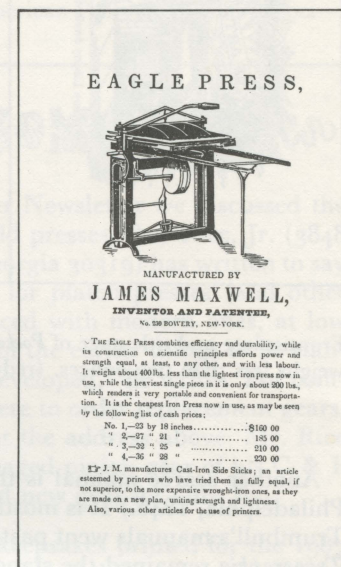
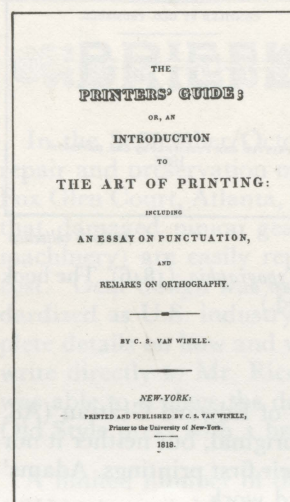
American Printers' Manuals

At the auction a few months ago of the library of the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, one slightly garbled entry in the catalogue was of particular interest to the staff of The Library Company. It was a copy of Joseph Moxon's *Mechanick Exercises*, the first printers' manual in English or in any other language, and a cornerstone of any collection of books about printing. The Library Company people knew something about this particular set of Moxon that they hoped no one else in the room knew. It was almost certain that these two volumes had once belonged to Benjamin Franklin, and had definitely belonged to Adam Ramage, the pioneering Philadelphia press manufacturer.

After some spirited bidding, The Library Company won the two-volume set on a bid of \$10,000. On page 357 of the printing volume is a single short note written in the margin next to the word "solace." Scholars familiar with Franklin's handwriting say that it was written by him. This copy of Moxon is now on the shelves of The Library Company among its other treasures. As long ago as 1884 Bigmore and Wyman wrote that "Although 500 copies were printed, very few complete sets have been preserved, the work being, perhaps, the most difficult to obtain in the whole range of typographical literature."

For many years it was believed that the first American printers' manual was Cornelius Van Winkle's *Printers' Guide*, published in New York in 1818. [A2] About ten years ago, however, Alexander Lawson discovered *The Printer's Manual* (Boston, 1817) [A1]. Three copies are now known: they are in the libraries of RIT, the Graphic Arts Technical Foundation (Pittsburgh) and Yale.

Van Winkle's work seems still to be the most influential early manual. It covers all the information of use to a practicing printer – which Van Winkle was – including punctuation, imposition, typesetting and printing. In addition it describes four presses then in use in this country: the Columbian, the Ruthven, the Ramage, and the Wells. At the end of the volume are sections containing type specimens from the foundries of Elihu White and David and George Bruce of New York. In 1818 the only other foundry in operation was that of Binny and Ronaldson in Philadelphia. Although parts of the manual have been shown by Lawrence Wroth to derive from Stower's *The Printer's Grammar* (London, 1808) Rollo Silver has written (in his *The American Printer*, 1787-1825) "In one sense, American printing may be said to have come of age with the publication of Van Winkle." By the time the second edition of the book was published in 1827 there had been no new American manuals published, al-



Author's collection

Left, the first edition (1818) of Van Winkle's *The Printers' Guide*; right, advertisement page from the third edition (1836). (reduced.)

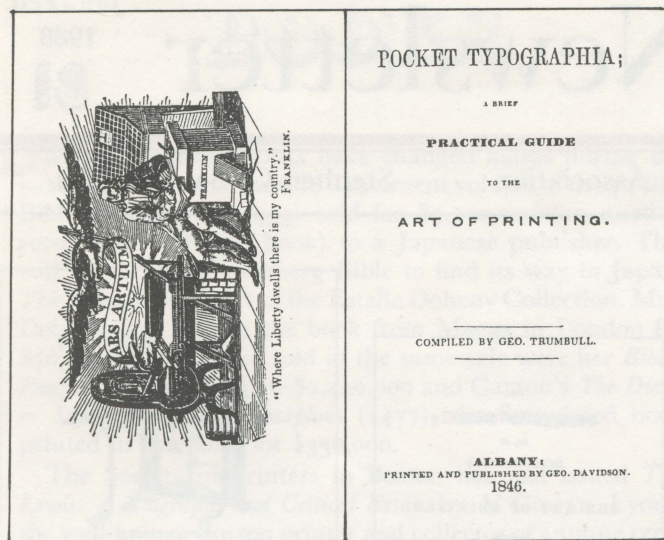
though several important ones had been issued in England. A third edition was published in 1836, and useful information about the development of printing in America can be found by comparing new material in each edition.

In 1828 an anonymous editor (probably T.F. Adams, who later published a manual under his own name) issued *An Abridgment of Johnson's "Typographia"* [A3] in Boston. Apart from its stated purpose, the book throws some light on lost patents of Peter Smith and John I. Wells for early toggle mechanisms of their iron hand presses.

Sherman's *The Printer's Manual* (A4, Boston, 1835) was based on Stower's *The Printers' Grammar*. Dickinson's *A Help to Printers and Publishers* (A5, Boston, 1835) was entirely original, but consists almost entirely of tables showing the amount of paper needed for books and job work of different lengths and sizes.

Thomas F. Adams published his *Typographia* [A6] in Philadelphia in 1837. It was popular, and became the standard manual until the appearance of MacKellar's work in 1866. It went through several editions. Early editions were printed and published by Adams, but by the 1850s editions were published with the imprints of R. Hoe & Co., New York, and L. Johnson & Co., Philadelphia.

An elusive little book for collectors is George Trumbull's *Pocket Typographia* (A7, Albany, 1846.) It is truly a pocket manual. It is only 3" x 4½" and weighs less than two ounces. The frontispiece is a charming wood engraving of Franklin before a Washington press with an acorn frame; Bigmore and Wyman say only "Coarse woodcut frontispiece."



Author's collection

Frontispiece and title page of *Pocket Typographia*, (1846). The book weighs less than two ounces. (reduced.)

Another scarce manual is that of Edward Grattan (A8, Philadelphia, 1846.) It is mostly original, but neither it nor Trumbull's manuals went past their first printings. Adams' *Typographia* remained the standard work.

Thomas MacKellar was an important member of L. Johnson & Co., a type foundry that traced its roots to the earliest successful typefounding enterprise, that of Binny and Ronaldson in 1796. In 1866 MacKellar, a learned and witty writer with a thorough knowledge of the printing trade, issued his own manual under his firm's imprint. It was offered "as an improvement on the typographical work formerly published by us" i.e., Adams *Typographia*. The new manual gave much space to power presses, which were now dominant in the trade. MacKellar's manual achieved great popularity. L. Johnson & Co. became MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan in 1868, and eventually the imprint also changed. The publisher had a habit of calling each new issue a "new edition," finally totaling 18, but many have no new material from the previous issue.

The American Printer remained the standard until the middle 1890s. Theodore DeVinne's series of books, *The Practice of Typography*, was issued starting in 1900, and represents the first modern approach to the subject.

The list printed here is cautious attempt to include every printer's manual published in this country before 1870. It should be considered preliminary; and errors or omissions will be gratefully received. The list is based on "An Annotated List of Printers' Manuals to 1850" by Philip Gaskell, Giles Barber, and Georgina Warrilow (London, *Journal of the Printing Historical Society*, No. 4, 1968.) Additional material came from a catalogue compiled by Ray Nash which appeared in *Printing & Graphic Arts* Volume V, No. 1 (Lunenburg, Vermont, 1957.) In the list, "B&W" stands for Bigmore and Wyman; the Gaskell/Barber/Warrilow item numbers of books in English [E] are given, as well as my own [A] of books published in America.

American Printers' Manuals

A list based on that of Gaskell, Barber & Warrilow

A1. Stower, Caleb. *The Printer's Manual*. Boston, 1817. Not known to Bigmore & Wyman, Gaskell, or earlier bibliographers. An abridgment of Stower. Copies at RIT, GATF (Pittsburgh,) and Yale. Reprinted by Garland.

A2. [E10] Van Winkle, Cornelius. *The Printers' Guide*. New York 1818; 2nd ed. New York 1827; 3rd ed. New York 1836. First ed. Copies at Columbia and Harvard. Abridged from Stower (1808). B&W, iii. 42. Reprinted by Garland and by R.R. Donnelley.

A3. [E12] Johnson, John. *An Abridgment of Johnson's "Typographia."* Boston, 1828. Probably edited by T.F. Adams (see below.) With some new American material and illustrations of presses. Copies at Columbia, Harvard, Wing. B&W i.373.

A4. [E15] Sherman, A[]N[]. *The Printer's Manual*. New York 1834. Copies at Columbia, Harvard. Heavily abridged from Stower. B&W ii.354.

A5. [E16] Dickinson, Samuel Nelson. *A Help to Printers and Publishers*. Boston, 1835. Over 200 pages of tables showing quantity of paper required for various numbers of signatures. No instructional text. Copies at Columbia, Harvard, Wing. B&W i.173.

A6. [E18] Adams, Thomas F[]. *Typographia*. Philadelphia, 1837. 2nd ed., Phila. 1844; 3rd ed. Phila. & Pittsb., 1845; later editions to 1864. Abridged from Johnson and Hansard. Copies of the first ed. at Columbia, Harvard, Wing. B&W i.3. Second edition reprinted by Garland.

A7. [E22] Trumbull, George. *Pocket Typographia*. Albany, 1846. Abbreviated manual based on Savage. Copies at Columbia. B&W iii.23.

A8. [E23] Grattan, Edward. *The Printer's Companion*. Philadelphia, 1846. Largely original material. Copies at Columbia. B&W i.279. Reprinted by Garland.

A9. Lynch, Thomas. *The Printer's Manual*. Cincinnati, 1859. Later editions dated 1864, 1866, 1872. Largely original; praised by Bigmore & Wyman. B&W i.448.

A10. Mackellar, Thomas. *The American Printer*. Philadelphia, 1866. Most popular printers' manual in America, it went through many editions. Reprinted by Harold Berliner, Nevada City, CA. B&W ii.3.

A discussion of the 1817 *The Printer's Manual*, now believed to be the first such American book, can be found in an article by John Bidwell, "A Hitherto Unnoticed American Printers' Manual," in the *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, Vol. 72, second quarter (1978.)

©1988 Stephen O. Saxe

EDITOR'S NOTES

A few errors crept into the last issue of the *Newsletter*, and I would like to correct them here before commencing any 1988 errors.

A typographic error resulted in an incorrect zip code for APHA's new Executive Secretary. Here is the correct address in full:

Renée Weber
Special Collections
Fairleigh Dickinson University Library
Madison, NJ 07940

Jeffrey Kaimowitz is the nominee for APHA's Vice President for Publications. His surname was misspelled, and the blame for that one is on a computer dot-matrix printer which made the "i" fill in to look like an "l."

Finally, I am informed that the American Antiquarian Society had rejected Mark Hofmann's forged *Oath of a Freeman* well before the bombs started to go off in Salt Lake City.

Incidentally, for those who are interested, the complete three-volume unedited transcript entitled *Hofmann's Confession* is available at \$27.50 postpaid from Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1350 So. West Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah 84115.

APHA NEWS

Annual Awards The APHA Annual Awards for contributions to printing history have been announced. The Individual Award will be given to Edwin Wolf 2nd, the eminent scholar long associated with The Library Company of Philadelphia. The Institutional Award goes to The Kemble Collections of Printing and Publishing at The California Historical Society. The awards will be presented at the APHA Annual Meeting on January 30th in New York. The Awards Committee, chaired by Peter VanWingen, included Irene Tichenor and Stephen Saxe. Further details about the awards and the presentation will be given in the next issue.

Annual Meeting The APHA Annual Meeting for 1988 is scheduled for 2 P.M. on January 30 in the Trustees' Room of the New York Public Library. In addition to the presentation of Annual Awards, the nominees for officers and trustees of APHA will be voted on.

Directory Plans have been made to include a directory of APHA members with the July/August issue of the *Newsletter*. The last such directory was published in the summer of 1986. All paid-up members as of May will be included.

Contributing Memberships Thanks to the generosity of publishers David Godine and Frederic C. Beil, III, Contributing Members will have their choice of three books of typographic interest as premiums. The books are Walter Tracy's *Letters of Credit*, Nicolette Gray's *The Art of Lettering*, and Joseph Blumenthal's *The Typographic Years*. Contributing Memberships are \$50 per annum; regular Members may upgrade by sending the additional \$30 over their regular dues to APHA, which will make them eligible for their choice of book (while supplies last to ensure a choice.)

The *APHA Newsletter* is published six times yearly by the American Printing History Association. All letters, news items and other material for the *Newsletter* should be sent directly to the Editor: Stephen O. Saxe, 1100 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10028. Subscriptions are through membership in APHA, and include all publications. Personal memberships for the calendar year are \$20; \$25 for U.S. institutions. Membership and other correspondence should be sent to APHA, P.O. Box 4922, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. Copyright © 1988 by the American Printing History Association. All rights reserved.

BRIEFLY NOTED

In the September/October Newsletter we discussed the repair and preservation of old presses. Roy Rice, Jr. (3848 Fox Glen Court, Atlanta, Georgia 30319) has written to say that damaged pinion gears for platen presses (and other machinery) are easily replaced with modern ones, at low cost. "Gear design was one of the earlier things to be standardized as U.S. industry developed," he writes. For complete details on how and where to order replacement gears, write directly to Mr. Rice at the address above. Mr. Rice was able to replace the damaged pinion gear of his C & P Old Style press with a brand new gear for only \$20.

A limited number of the keepsakes printed for the 1987 APHA Annual Meeting are available to members and others. They are handsomely printed, letterpress, and will be sent on receipt of a stamped 9 x 12 (or larger) envelope. Send the envelope to the printer, Lowell Bodger, Typographer, 41 Union Square West, New York, NY 10003.

The sixth biennial conference of the American Typecasting fellowship will be held July 15-17 in Terra Alta, West Virginia. A series of interesting talks, seminars, and workshops will be featured. Following the conference, an advanced workshop will take place July 18-20 for experienced typecasters. Further information from Prof. Richard Hopkins, Box 263, Terra Alta, West Virginia 26764. (This meeting will be the 10th anniversary of the group, which was founded by Prof. Hopkins. Past conferences have been extraordinarily interesting, and this one is unreservedly recommended by your Editor.)

The DeVinne Press Building at 399 Lafayette Street (or East 4th Street in Manhattan) has been restored and given a new lease on life. Its tenants now include two publishers and a bookseller, as well as other enterprises like a branch of The Gap, several bars and restaurants, Cooper Union, the Amato Opera, and the New York Shakespeare Festival.

The Ephemera Society of America announces the Ephemera 9 Conference and Fair, to be held March 11 and 12 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Greenwich, CT. The conference will offer a forum and dinner on Friday and a lecture program on Saturday. The Fair, which is open to the public, will take place on Saturday the 12th from 10 A.M. to 7 P.M. For membership information, contact William Frost Mobley, President, Ephemera Society of America, P.O. Box 37, Schoharie, NY 12157. Annual membership is \$25.

BOOKS

Some important books have changed hands during the past year. Recently the Old Testament volume of the 42-line Bible (Mainz, ca. 1455) sold for \$5,390,000 (an auction record for a printed book) to a Japanese publisher. This will be the first Gutenberg Bible to find its way to Japan. The volume was part of the Estelle Doheny Collection. Mrs. Doheny had bought the book from Maggs in London for \$70,000 in 1947. Also sold in the same sale were her *Biblia Pauperum* which sold for \$2,420,000 and Caxton's *The Dictes or Sayengis of the Philosophes* (1477), the first dated book printed in England, for \$330,000.

The Society of Printers in Boston has just issued *T.J. Lyons: A Biography and Critical Essay*, by Al Gowan. Lyons, the well-known Boston printer and collector of antique type, died last year. His work had been praised even by purists like Daniel Berkeley Updike. His collection of antique type was the largest in private hands; it has since been purchased by David Greer of Connecticut. The book is 7" x 10," 112 pages, hardbound, well-illustrated in black and white, with a color keepsake tipped in, and includes specimens of many of Lyon's typefaces. It is available for \$25 postpaid (\$30 to Europe) from The Society of Printers, c/o Publishers Storage & Shipping Corp., 231 Industrial Park, Fitchburg, Mass. 01420.

The Guild of Book Workers exhibition "Billy Budd, Sailor: Bound to Vary" will be traveling across the country during 1988. After leaving the Metropolitan Museum in New York at the end of January, it will be shown at the following institutions: Swarthmore College, McCabe Library, Feb. 3-26; University of Colorado Library, at Boulder, March 5-29; Mills College Library, Oakland, CA, April 4-May 6; University of Chicago, Regenstein Library, May 14-June 14; Tulane University, Howard-Tilton Library, June 21-July 15; Museum of New Mexico, Palace of the Governors, Santa Fe, July 30-Sept. 2; University of Texas, Ransom Humanities Research Center, Austin, Sept. 12-Oct. 21; MIT Museum, Cambridge, Mass., Nov. 4-Dec. 31. A fully-illustrated color catalogue of the exhibition is available from the Guild of Book Workers, Inc., 521 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10175 for \$17.50 postpaid.

Of Typefounding (vom Schriftgiesen) has just been published by the Printing Laboratory of the Technische Hochschule of Darmstadt, West Germany. The 108-page oblong-format 12" x 9" book contains 84 black and white photographs of the entire process of typefounding taken by Dutch photographer Ronald Schmets. Prof. Walter Wilkes has provided a descriptive narrative of the process and the history of the D. Stempel foundry, and Hans Reichardt has compiled a complete list of the matrices in the Stempel vaults at the time of the foundry's closing in 1986. A full English translation of both captions and text accompanies the volume., which is available for \$60 postpaid from Prof. Richard L. Hopkins, Box 263, Terra Alta, WV 26764.

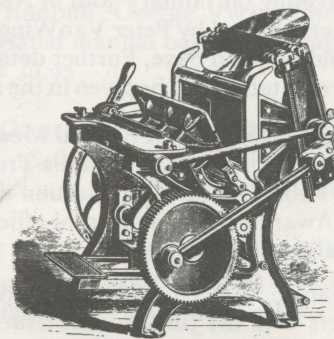
In 1815 Congress purchased Thomas Jefferson's library, which became the foundation of the Library of Congress. But after the sale Jefferson remained an active collector and reader. He wrote to John Adams, "I cannot live without

books." In his later years Jefferson's interest in law and politics waned and he bought Greek and Roman authors "in the beauties of their originals." Forty-four of these volumes have just been given, fittingly, to the Library of Congress. The books were bought at auction in 1829 by Lewis Henry Machen, a clerk employed by the secretary of the Senate. They were given by his descendants to the Library of Congress.

The annual Pforzheimer Lectures on Printing and the Book Arts have been announced by the New York Public Library. The subject this year is *The English Book in the Age of Romanticism*. Lectures will take place on six Thursday evenings and one Wednesday at 6 p.m. beginning April 21. The lectures are \$3.50 each and orders will be accepted at The New York Public Library, Room M-6, Fifth Avenue and 42nd St., New York, NY 10018-2788. Include a stamped, addressed envelope. For further information telephone 212-930-0855.

April 21	Donald H. Reiman	Technology, Audience and Authorship in the Romantic Age
April 28	Paul N. Banks	Ruskin and the Romantic Roots of Book Conservation
May 5	David Pankow	Some Remarks on Early 19th Century Printing
May 12	Bernard McTigue	Bibliophily and Bibliomania in the Romantic Era
May 18 (Wed.)	Richard D. Altick	The Romantic Reader and His Books
May 26	Nicholas Barker	Neo-classicism and the English Book
June 2	Francis O. Mattson	The Beginnings of the Private Press in England

TYPE & PRESSES



Sylvan Kamm (The Oedipress, 3503 Rodman St., NW, Washington DC 20008; tel. 202-244-4276) has issued a new catalogue of the foundry type, borders and ornaments he imports from Hong Kong. The catalogue features a new, simplified pricing scheme. The catalogue is available to anyone sending a No. 10 stamped, addressed envelope to Mr. Kamm.

Harold Berliner's Typefoundry (224 Main Street, Nevada City, CA 95959; tel. 916-273-2278) has announced a special casting of an elegant Monotype Bodoni, as well as cast ornaments. Write for further information on this and other type from the foundry.