THE PRIVATE LIBRARY

AN EDWARD THOMAS COLLECTION
TRIALS OF AN OVERSEAS BOOKMAN
HUMFREY WANLEY ON ERECTING A LIBRARY
OTTO ROHSE PRESSE
VOL 6 : 4 OCTOBER 1965
The Private Libraries Association

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The Private Libraries Association is an international society of private book collectors. Membership is open to all who pay one guinea on January 1st each year regardless of the date of enrolment.

Wallace Hildick

WORD FOR WORD

A study of the alterations made to their own work by nine great authors. The book contains passages from MS works, and employs a new and very clear method of reproducing in print deletions, substitutions and addenda. Mr Hildick contributes an illuminating introductory survey of the kinds of alterations authors make. Faber 21s

The Private Library
Quarterly Journal of the Private Libraries Association
Hon. Editor: Roderick Cave, 81 Maplewell Road, Woodhouse Eaves Loughborough, Leicestershire
Vol. 6 No. 4 October 1965

Association Affairs

The Private Library

The Council is happy to welcome back to the editorship of The Private Library Roderick Cave, recently returned from work in libraries in the West Indies and Nigeria. It is also appropriate at this time that the Council should record, on behalf of all members, the thanks which are due to the departing editor, Philip Ward, for all his work for the Association, in recent years as editor of the journal, and before that, of course, as founding Secretary. Without his devoted work PLA would not exist.

Among the articles in this issue, by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum we are able to include Humfrey Wanley's memorandum to Robert Harley on erecting a library (now BM MS Harley 7055 f. 16).

Publications

Romantic Book Illustration in England, 1943-55, by Rigby Graham, is sent free of charge to members with this issue. Further copies may be obtained from the Publications Secretary, 41 Cuckoo Hill Road, Pinner, Middlesex, price 5s. a copy (9s. 6d. to non-members).

Private Press Books 1964, a checklist of books and pamphlets printed by private presses in the year, was published in August last. Edited by Roderick Cave, David Chambers and Peter Hoy, it contains some 170 entries, and is illustrated by twelve line-block reproductions of specimen pages. Copies may be obtained from the Publications Secretary, price 15s. or $2.50 (10s. 6d. or $1.75 to members).

British Wood-engravers: John R. Biggs

The engraving on the cover of this issue is one cut by John R. Biggs some years ago for the SCM Press. Mr Biggs is the author of several books on printing and illustration, including An approach to type, Illustration and reproduction and The craft of woodcuts (all published by Blandford Press) and his work has been extensively reproduced in Studio, London Mercury and other journals.

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AN EDWARD THOMAS
COLLECTION
by C. A. Prance

IT IS appropriate that my interest in Edward Thomas first arose when I was living in Wales, for although he was born in England his parents were Welsh and he always thought of himself as a Welshman.Shortly after my release from the R.A.F. in 1946, good fortune took me to a bookshop in North Wales which yielded a copy of Collected Poems by Edward Thomas, with a foreword by Walter de la Mare. I knew little of Edward Thomas then, but I had only recently come to Wales and I had found the Welsh most attractive and friendly people; so I rather haphazardly acquired the book by an author with a Welsh name, whose work I had seen praised somewhere.

At home my fancy was soon caught by the contents of the volume, particularly by poems such as 'If I should Ever by Chance grow rich'. Then there was de la Mare's fascinating foreword. I knew his poetry and felt that anyone he had praised was worthy of keen attention.

My second acquisition was John Moore's Life & Letters of Edward Thomas, which whetted my appetite for more of Thomas's work. Before the end of the year I had Horae Solitariae, one of his early books, for some of the essays were written while he was still at Oxford. It is full of the talk of old books, of nature and the contemplative life. The first essay 'Horae Solitariae' bears the title of a book by Ambrose Serle published in 1776 and Thomas says 'is it not a title under which many might expect a record of their daintiest pleasures' He adds that a friend had told him Serle's book was theological, but he likes to think of the title as regulating his life at that time, and the book occupies a place of honour on his shelf. It was reprinted six times in the nineteenth century and I have a copy of the 1834 edition of Serle's book sufficiently well bound to look attractive on one's shelves. I bought it from a bookseller formerly in Leather Lane near Holborn, from whom I also bought some of Edward Thomas's books containing the signature of his friend E. S. P. Haynes. Is it too much to hope that this is the copy from Thomas's shelves? They must have had many talks about old books when he was an undergraduate at Lincoln College and Haynes was a brilliant Balliol man.

Edward Thomas's Horae Solitariae has come to be one of my favourite books. It has been criticised as too consciously a literary production and I suppose it is, but I find the atmosphere it creates most attractive. Perhaps the second favourite is the book on Oxford. I have the first edition of 1903 with John Fulleylove's illustrations, but in some ways find the 1932 reprint in dark blue marbled linen a more attractive edition to handle and re-read.

One of the scarcest of Thomas's books must be the slim Rose Acre Papers published in 1904. John Moore in the Life & Letters says 'You could buy it, then, for one-and-six. To-day neither love nor money will buy it.' It contains four essays, two of which have never been reprinted. My copy has inserted at the end a newspaper cutting from the Daily Chronicle of 25 April 1905 containing a review by Edward Thomas of the Poems of Michael Drayton. Underneath the printed initials E. T. at the end of the review a hand very like Thomas's own has added the full name and it may well be his signature.

In his early years Thomas came very much under the influence of Richard Jefferies, and when Hutchinsons commissioned him to write a life of Jefferies he looked forward to the task greatly. Although having to write it against time, he did, in fact, make an excellent job of it, and dedicated it to W. H. Hudson. My copy is inscribed 'E. S. P. Haynes from Edward Thomas' in Haynes's handwriting and is one of the books from the Leather Lane bookseller.

An author's first book is something rather special in his development, particularly if it is published when he is only sixteen. Edward Thomas's first book was issued as a result of encouragement from James Ashcroft Noble, an established writer, who saw merit in the schoolboy author. Following a visit to Swindon and the Jefferies country, young Thomas had kept a diary of country events and this was incorporated in his first book, The Woodland Life, published in 1897. William Blackwood thought well enough of the manuscript to issue it and it even went into a second edition. I have both editions, but it is a book which is not often seen.

Although he frequently had to work against time in his efforts to keep to the ridiculously tight schedules that the publishers gave him, Thomas produced much good work, and the years 1905 to 1909 saw Beautiful Wales, The Heart of England and The South Country, besides the Life of Jefferies. All these were good, and I have first editions of all of them. If I were writing a criticism of his work instead of an account of my collection of his books I should want to praise them greatly. The year 1910 saw Thomas producing some surprisingly good pot-boilers, but he also published a volume of essays written not at a publisher's request, but as something he wanted to do for himself,
Rest and Unrest. An attractive volume, uniform in format with *Horae Solitariae*, it contains some of the best of Thomas’s prose. There was a first and a second issue containing minor differences of binding. I have both, but perhaps my copy of the second issue is the more interesting for it contains a label stating that it is ‘from the library of T. E. Lawrence, Clouds Hill’, and I am reminded of Lawrence’s comment on Thomas ‘He must have been a beautiful person’. Although one thinks of Thomas as an earlier writer than Lawrence there was only ten years difference in their ages and both were at Oxford.

The next year saw another volume of essays Light and Twilight, an almost better book than Rest and Unrest. There was a first and second issue here as in the earlier book and I have both in green cloth, as well as the second issue in orange cloth. I have also seen a copy of this issue in buff-coloured cloth.

A book which contains some fine work is *The South Country* first issued in 1909. It was published in Dent’s ‘The Heart of England Series’ with a decorative binding. Another volume in the same series was Hilaire Belloc’s *The Historic Thames*, and I have a copy of this in which the similar style of binding has so misled the binder that he has lettered it on the spine ‘The Historic Thames by Edward Thomas’. A fine edition of *The South Country* was published in 1932 with wood engravings by Eric Fitch Daglish and an introduction by Helen Thomas. In it she says that it was written at a time of comparative tranquillity in her husband’s life and is one of his happiest prose works. It is indeed an attractive book.

Edward Thomas continued to write prose until his last few years when he turned to poetry, but during his life he published only one novel *The Happy Go-Lucky Morgans* issued in 1913. It was not a success as a novel and has never been reprinted, but it is a pleasing book in some ways. It is very difficult to find and I have only once come across a copy, which I thankfully purchased from Griff’s shop in Cecil Court, off Charing Cross Road, where they specialise in Welsh books and often accumulate a number of Thomas’s books.

*Six Poems by Edward Eastaway* is a most desirable book, not only from its being one of the earliest publications of Thomas’s poetry, but also because of its format. It was published by James Guthrie at his Pear Tree Press and less than a hundred copies were printed. It is a good piece of work, entirely hand made with the result that copies differ slightly from one another. My copy is signed at the end ‘Of 100 copies No. 50. James Guthrie. May 1927’. Since the book was first issued in 1916 the date raises a question in one’s mind, and inserted in the book is a letter from Guthrie to Percy Muir on this point. Guthrie says the date ‘represents when the copy was done, or when it was sent.’ He adds that Thomas remarked that the figure on the title page was ‘a mixture of Christ and Walt Whitman.’ Although this book is an attractive piece of work, it is not one of which Guthrie was proud, and he rightly said that his later work was much better.

An example of this is Edward Thomas’s *The Friend of the Blackbird* which Guthrie published from his Pear Tree Press in 1938. The format is the same as *Six Poems*, but the work is of a higher standard. Of 100 copies printed, mine is No. 7. Originally published in *The Nation*, this delightful sketch was also reprinted in *The Last Sheaf* in 1928.

Robert Eckert in his first class bibliography describes in detail an early version of *Poems* by Edward Thomas 1917, but as this is one of two proof copies, collectors are unlikely to find it. The real first edition is scarce enough, in fact my copy is the second impression, although only minor differences occur between the two; the chief of which are the printing on the verso of the title the words ‘First printed, Oct., 1917. Reprinted, Nov., 1917’, and the addition of two pages of advertisements at the end. It contains some of the best of Thomas’s poetry. Unlike *Last Poems* it is printed on excellent paper. The latter volume coming in December 1918 when paper was scarce is printed on inferior paper, but also has fine poetry in it.

At the same time as *Last Poems* there appeared another book of poetry printed on the same poor quality paper. Entitled *Twelve Poets. A Miscellany of New Verse* it included ten poems by Edward Thomas, all included in *Last Poems*. The other eleven poets were W. H. Davies, Walter de la Mare, Vivian Locke Ellis, A. Hugh Fisher, Robin Flower, John Freeman, James Guthrie, Ruth Manning Sanders, J. C. Squire, Rowland Thirlmere and W. J. Turner. It was published by Selwyn and Blount and dedicated to W. H. Hudson. My copy is inscribed on the fly-leaf ‘W. H. Hudson from Roger Ingpen’. A number of poems are marked in pencil and someone, presumably Hudson, has written scathing comments against some of the poems, although not against those of Thomas.

Another interesting and uncommon volume is *An Annual of New Poetry, 1917* which contains eighteen poems by ‘Edward Eastaway’, besides poems by Gordon Bottomley, W. H. Davies, Robert Frost and others. It was published in March 1917 just before Thomas’s death.

The year 1920 saw the *Collected Poems* with its valuable foreword...
by Walter de la Mare. In addition to the trade edition there was a de luxe edition on Japon paper which has an additional portrait of Thomas inserted. Of 100 copies mine is No. 86. One of the handsomest editions of Thomas's poems is the Gregynog Press Selected Poems published in 1927, with an excellent introduction by Edward Garnett. The edition was limited to 275 copies, of which mine is No. 83.

After Thomas's death several collections and selections of his essays were published. In 1922 came Cloud Castle with an unfinished foreword by W. H. Hudson—he died before he could complete it. The book contains two pieces from The Happy Go-Lucky Morgans, but the rest were new, some of them written when Thomas was young: for example 'A Colloquy in a Library' is dated 1900 and is reminiscent of the papers in Horae Solitariae.

Another handsome volume from the Gregynog Press was Chosen Essays by Edward Thomas published in 1926. The selection was made by Ernest Rhys and it contained wood engravings by Robert Ashwin Maynard and Horace Walter Bray. Again it was a limited edition, this time to 350 copies, of which mine is No. 131. This is a fine selection of Edward Thomas's prose.

In 1927 Messrs. Ingpen and Grant published Two Poems which comprised Thomas's 'The Lane' and 'The Watchers', both hitherto unpublished. Only 85 copies were printed by The Curwen Press. Mine is No. 39 and it has the bookplate of Oliver Brett (Viscount Esher).

The Last Sheaf which appeared in 1928 contains essays not published before, but well worthy of preservation. Thomas Seccombe's letter to The Times Literary Supplement was printed as a foreword. My copy has the signature of E. S. P. Haynes in it.

I also have three uncommon items written in memory of Edward Thomas. The first is a small pamphlet In Memoriam: Edward Thomas. This was published in July 1939 as No. 2 of the Green Pastures Series by The Morland Press. It contains tributes by friends, by his brother Julian and the first publication of his poem 'Up in the Wind'. The designs are by James Guthrie. This copy came to me through the kindness of Miss Teresa Hooley and Rowland Watson, the secretary of the Edward Thomas Memorial Committee. The second item is entitled These Things the Poets Said, again issued from the Pear Tree Press, this time in 1935. Poems in memory of Thomas by twelve poets are printed with a foreword by R. P. Eckert, Jr., and the edition was limited to 150 copies, of which mine is No. 56. The third of these items To the Memory of Edward Thomas 1937 is a particularly fine volume produced by Guthrie and containing an account of his friendship with Thomas. It also includes the letters to W. H. Hudson, originally printed in The London Mercury, and a new portrait of Thomas by Robin Guthrie. My copy is No. 25 of 250 copies.

Two of the most exquisite books ever written about an author are surely Helen Thomas's volumes about her husband. As It Was was published in 1926 and World Without End in 1931. Since then they have been reprinted in one volume more than once. The first issue of As It Was is said to have been suppressed before publication, and pages 53–6 of the second issue are cancels attached to the stubs of the cancels. The passages omitted from pages 54 and 55 were printed in the 1931 reprint and they are said to have been included in the American edition of 1927. Helen Thomas is a daughter of James Ashcroft Noble, who encouraged Thomas as a youthful writer. Noble was himself the author of two interesting books The Pelican Papers and The Sonnet in England, both of which I have, and the former of which belonged to Thomas Hutchinson, an editor of Charles Lamb's works.

Edward Thomas published many books, some of which are not mentioned in this article, but I have copies of all of them, together with those I could find about him. After Helen Thomas's books, two of the most valuable are Robert P. Eckert's Edward Thomas: A Biography and a Bibliography 1937 and John Moore's The Life & Letters of Edward Thomas 1939. Eckert's book particularly deserves praise for the excellence of its bibliography. On the later years Eleanor Farjeon's Edward Thomas: The Last Four Years 1958 is fascinating, while a recent excellent study of Thomas and his work is that by H. Coombs.

Thomas contributed much to periodicals and it would be difficult if not impossible, to acquire copies of all of them. I have, however, a few odd numbers of Guthrie's little magazine Root and Branch which contained contributions from Thomas, copies of The Thrush and The Open Window, and a nearly complete set of The Bookman 1891–1934. I have had this set for many years, but it was only after I had started to collect Edward Thomas's books that I realised The Bookman contains more than seventy contributions by Thomas. Most are reviews, but one is an essay on 'Richard Jefferies and London' and another is an article on William Morris. His reviews include books by W. H. Davies, W. B. Yeats, W. H. Hudson and Walter de la Mare. The Bookman also contains reviews of Thomas's own books and articles on him.

My collection includes some books by Thomas's friends, particularly those which mention him. One such is Gordon Bottomley's The Riding
TRIALS AND TREASURES OF AN OVERSEAS BOOKMAN

by J. H. Chaplin

I FIRST began to buy books while still at school: the Remainders at Baker Street Smith's, and the Farringdon Road stalls were my goals. Wartime evacuation took me to Cornwall, where market day brought barrows out, and a healthy cycle ride brought Truro within reach, with some amazingly cheap (and dusty) bargains.

In due course war service took me abroad, with a spell at Cape Town. Here the Grand Parade Market offered book browsing at its best: barrows and stalls of unsorted delights, all under the brilliant southern sun, with Table Mountain ever magnificently present; and the Square surrounded by stalls with exceedingly cheap fruit if one tired a little. A period away from civilisation, then Durban where friendship with a bookshop assistant made it possible to obtain new books which were all but rationed. But Able Seamen (Meteorological), rare fish though they may have been, were not encouraged to have a great deal of luggage and so began the first of several packings and the descent on my long-suffering mother of a shower of books.

Antarctica came next, a two and a half year tour, hardly conducive to book buying one would think, but by then I had subscribed to the TLS, and during the first winter season back went the orders. This was a complex procedure: at a penny a word messages were sent by radio to Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands, there typed on an air letter which travelled by the monthly steamer to Montevideo in Uruguay thence by air to my London bookseller, who patiently saw my reasonably fat credit balance dwindle and become a similarly sized adverse balance, but he kept the flow going. So, when November brought the first sight of men (other than my five companions), for eight months, there was the bulging sack. And just as well, as later in the season, with the establishment of a new base, the library box was forgotten in the rush and left on board the departing ship and the four of us were almost entirely dependent on those books that had arrived, or I had brought with me earlier. To satisfy the curiosity of those who wonder which books best met the situation, they were diaries, those of Pepys and the Provincial Lady. But there had also arrived the previous year's supply of the TLS. These I set aside untouched, and solemnly every week would open that for the same date of the year before. It was as good as a regular letter from a rather erudite friend, and each week would be added items to my list of 'Books to buy', which I'm sure every booksman keeps somewhere in his desk.

After a brief year in England, out to Africa again, this time Northern Rhodesia (as it then was, now Zambia). Here I began to know the delights of booksellers' catalogues: the shiny, the scruffy; the informative, the abrupt; the expensive, the bargains. For the past decade and more this is the way my collection has grown, my choice limited by the offers. How I bless the few (sad to say the very few) dealers who stagger the sending of their lists so that overseas buyers get a sporting chance. Surface mail is never less than five weeks, and can be as much as nine. I am growing wiser now; it used to be my habit to note all I would like to buy (the bath is a good place for this exercise—the evening soaks the tropics demand), then pare down to what I could afford—usually about a third of the amount—write by airmail and wait hopefully, only to learn none was left. Now I ask for everything I am interested in, and sometimes am lucky, otherwise I have to be content with the slender joy of the chase itself.

The way of knowing one has not been lucky in the chase varies

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from complete silence, through a formal printed postcard with appropriate result underscored, to a sympathetic letter which convinces one that booksellers are amongst the most pleasant of men. Most of the larger dealers have no time for pleasantry, though my invoices from a famed Bristol firm will often have a kindly worded apology for disappointment typed in the corner.

This essay is partly concerned with trials, so let me set out a couple more. It appears to be a law as valid as any of Parkinson's, that the bigger the concern the laxer their accounting branch. The smaller, one man or family, booksellers take as much care with their accounts as they do with their merchandise. Once the seller and the accountant become separate people, with quite different mental attitudes to Books (accounting) and books (reading), things go haywire, reaching their nadir in a well-known Cambridge firm with whom I struggled for several years before giving up in despair.

Now to the greatest trial of all, change of address. Why, oh why, are notices of this so utterly ignored? In the past dozen years I have moved four times; each move has seen me send out notices of the event several months in advance; of the forty or so connected with publication subscriptions, books and so on, not a quarter respond with immediate change. A second distribution may bring a further quarter to a realization. But an individual (and expensive) airmail letter, showing signs of considerable exasperation, is needed to bring the majority to heel, and still there remains the hard core which seem entirely in the grip of their Addressograph, which, like some sf fantasy, goes churning catalogue to each of the four addresses, or sticking firmly to that of four years before giving up in despair.

Could we not see some uniformity in packing and postage charges? Most dealers realise that overseas post has a rough passage as sacks are dropped, trampled, jostled, subjected to heat and cold for long periods. Most pack well, but have not realized it is possible to pack securely and still keep within the Book Post regulations. Overpacking and the sending by parcel rates—which are very high—and registering as well (essential only for India whose postal service is indescribable), adds a considerable expense to the purchase. More booksellers should know of parcel insurance schemes, which save both seller and buyer money while allowing for adequate security.

Except from those long ago Cape Town days, I have yet to find a bookseller in Africa with a clear love of books; many shops sell books as they would cheese (and many sell both together) so the contact with genuine bookmen through catalogues and friendly letters is a great blessing. The other side of this lack is ignorance of values, and down in the depths of auction warehouses treasures may lurk among the dross. I have often been to auctions where the books are bundled in half-dozens, bidding is for the opportunity of selecting those bundles you want all at that price, then bidding begins again for choice of the less desirable remainder. One sheds the romances and reminiscences from the treasure you had spied in the bundle, and the chaff is set aside for the next bazaar stall, which can also be a happy haunt sometimes.

Apart from collecting books for a working library, and this is important in countries with few library facilities, I have a good deal of pleasure from displaying books, lending them to exhibitions and so on. It is here that I have reason to thank those dealers who from time to time offer pages. To rip a book apart is a sad thing to do; but as a buyer of the separated parts I have had the satisfaction of watching a crowd of children, their teachers not behind in appreciation, gaze in fascination at a real illuminated initial, a complete page of a vellum manuscript, an early woodcut. And with specimens of modern work, Stanbrook Abbey, for example, one can show that the art of fine book decoration has a long history, and is not yet dead.

What lies ahead? Africana is getting beyond the pocket of a student wanting a working library; the cause of this is the wholesale buying of books by the libraries of newly expanding Africana Departments of Universities, as well as by rich collectors. A purely local concern of mine has been the work from Mission presses, though the tracts of the early workers were meant for use and are seldom to be found. In Zambia I began a bibliography, but it remains on slips for I can think of no one who might want to publish it, or even be able to have it typed up. The same fate may occur to a Uganda effort, but I shall make it all the same.

So I shall go on hoping as my choice lists fly back to my friends, the booksellers, go on enjoying the opening of the parcels to see if they really contain what I hoped for. I shall go on ignoring the growing difficulty of moving my library each time I change my address (59 crates and cartons last time). I shall go on enjoying my books by reading them, looking at them, lending them (fearfully), trying not to become enslaved by them. I shall guard them from the insects that want to nest in them, stain them, eat them, destroy them. I shall go on looking forward to the next catalogue, go on being an Overseas Bookman.

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THE founding in 1962 of the Otto Rohse Presse in Hamburg, Germany, was an event of no small significance in the graphic arts world. Otto Rohse himself had realised after several years of working as an illustrator and typographer that the only way to achieve the ultimate in perfection through the harmony of well-set type, illustration, ink and paper was to establish his own private press on a large enough scale to enable him to undertake the rather ambitious projects he had in mind.

By 1963 Otto Rohse had achieved a considerable reputation in Germany as an illustrator, using wood engraving as his chief medium of expression. The Federal Government had also on several occasions commissioned him to design postage stamps. This success made it financially possible for him to set up the 'Otto Rohse Presse'.

Otto Rohse began his artistic career proper at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Hamburg, in 1948, his first attempt to study the graphic arts in 1943 having been frustrated by the war. Being autodidactic by nature, he found his first semesters at the Hochschule rather unfruitful; only his last teacher Richard von Sichowsky inspired and helped him to acquire a sensitive and fastidious feeling for typography.

Whilst still a student at the Hochschule, he won the first and second prizes of an external competition arranged by a Hamburg architect. His entry was a wood engraving; it was in fact the very first time that he used wood engraving as a means of illustration. After this initial success, Otto Rohse decided to use wood engraving as his medium of expression. This was wood engraving with a difference. He had a subtler approach than many of his contemporaries, lighter, so very free and expressive, a radical departure from the heavier, deeper Bewick type of engraving. Fish, birds, reptiles and flowers appear to be his favourite subjects, never the human form. His animals seem to have character and a powerful dignity of their own. The magnificent cockerel engraved for the Maximilian Gesellschaft edition of Herman Melville's Kikeriki, published in 1954, shows his engraving at its best.

The Otto Rohse Presse is vastly different from most other private presses. The layout and equipment does suggest at first sight a small but very efficient commercial printing house. One sees well-stocked spacing material and furniture racks, composing frames holding many
cases of types, a stone for imposition and a heavy machine-driven art platen press. The old hand litho and proofing presses are the only evidence that this is a printing house with a difference.

A very enthusiastic team of three people help Otto Rohse to run the press, compositor, pressman and bookbinder; these he refers to as his 'colleagues'. They help purely on a part-time basis and are paid for their work. Otto Rohse is left free to concentrate on the design, engraving, correcting and passing the work of his 'colleagues'. Like many other private presses, he prints mainly on dampened hand-made paper. All the type is hand-set from the two typefaces held by the press, Stempel's Garamond and Schneider's Old Style, in both text and display sizes.

Since the founding of the press, the most ambitious project undertaken by Otto Rohse has been the printing of Goethe's italian Journey. He decided to illustrate this book with copper engravings. Otto Rohse himself spent six months in Venice sketching and engraving the copper plates. The result is a successful combination of Goethe's beautifully descriptive writing with the thirty copper engravings illustrating the architectural and artistic treasures of Venice. The text of the book is hand-set in Stempel's Garamond, printed on a dampened hand-made paper and fully bound in parchment, in a limited edition of 300 copies.

Other books printed by the Otto Rohse Presse are:

Die Insel by Gottfried Benn, with four wood engravings by Otto Rohse, printed in 1962 in a limited edition of 150 copies.

Sapphische Strophe by Inge Westphal, with one engraving by Werner Bunz, printed in 1963 in a limited edition of 150 copies.

Eos and Tithonas by Inge Westphal, with one engraving by Werner Bunz, printed in 1964 in a limited edition of 150 copies.

Angeschwemmt by Hartmut Frielinghaus, printed on the hand litho press in 1964 in a limited edition of 100 copies.

The achievements of the Otto Rohse Presse since its foundation have been quite considerable but as yet the work of the press is comparatively unknown in this country. Fortunately, all the above-mentioned books, also copper and wood engravings, have recently been shown at an exhibition at The Times Bookshop, Rare Book Department, Wigmore Street, London, from the 4th to the 14th October 1965. This was an opportunity to see books which have a standard of quality that is unique, where the atmosphere of the author's writing is ably expressed in the typography, illustration and binding.

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HUMFREY WANLEY ON
ERECTING A LIBRARY

by Geoffrey Wakeman

In obedience to your high commands, I have been thinking about your noble intention of building a library. With these words Humfrey Wanley opened a memorandum addressed to Robert Harley in 1714 setting out his ideas on planning a new library. Wanley was born in Coventry in 1661-1724), the son of Nathaniel Wanley, Vicar of Holy Trinity. He became a draper's apprentice but attracted the attention of the Bishop of Coventry by the palaeographical studies which he pursued in his spare time. He was sent to Oxford but clashed with the academic authorities and never obtained a degree, although he was employed in the Bodleian where he pursued his studies in palaeography and Anglo-Saxon and was responsible for contributions to E. Bernard’s Catalogi manuscriptorum Angliae issued in 1697.

In 1700 he became Assistant Secretary to the S.P.C.K. (and Secretary in 1702) having failed in his application as Bodley’s Librarian in 1698 and as Bentley’s deputy in the King’s Library in 1699. His most important published work was the catalogue of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts forming volume 3 of George Hickes’s Thesaurus published in 1705. To complete this work he had to visit libraries in different parts of the country in addition to consulting the Oxford libraries. It was through Hickes that Wanley was introduced to Robert Harley (1661-1724) with whom he became progressively more closely associated, finally becoming his library keeper in 1708. He remained with the Harleys until his death in 1726.

Robert Harley had been a Member of Parliament since 1689, his political standpoint slowly changing from that of a hereditary Whig to leader of the Tory Party. In 1701 he was elected Speaker and in 1704 appointed a Secretary of State. In 1708 his main political enemies, the Duke of Marlborough and Sidney Godolphin, succeeded in persuading Queen Anne to dismiss him. He kept in touch with her while out of office through his cousin Abigail Hill, a Woman of the Bedchamber, who was in the process of supplanting the Duchess of Marlborough as Anne’s confidante. With Abigail’s influence Harley combined his own political talents to exploit the mistakes of his opponents and returned to power in 1710 as Chancellor of the Exchequer. In 1711 he became Lord Treasurer—then the Queen’s chief minister—and was created Earl of Oxford. He had secured the dismissal of Marlborough by 1712 and made peace with France in 1713 by the Treaty of Utrecht which ended the War of the Spanish Succession. The following year Abigail quarrelled with him and by that summer persuaded the Queen to strip him of his office of Lord Treasurer. Anne herself died in August and in 1715 Harley was impeached over the Treaty of Utrecht and imprisoned in the Tower. He was eventually acquitted and released in 1717, but from then until his death had no influence in politics.

Harley had started book collecting about 1700 and had spent almost £1,000 on it by 1704. In that year he made his first block purchase of the library which had been collected by the seventeenth-century antiquary Sir Simonds D’Ewes. This purchase was negotiated by Wanley who had been assisting Harley with his library since 1704.

From 1701 until 1714 the library was kept mainly at Harley’s house in York Buildings, Buckingham Street. The size of the collection at the end of this period is known from one of Wanley’s memoranda. There were 3,000 printed books and manuscripts, 13,000 charters and 1,000 rolls. This was the material which would have had to be accommodated in the proposed new library. Wanley mentions the need to allow for expansion, with some justification as it turned out, since by 1721 there were 6,000 manuscripts, 14,000 charters and presumably many more printed books. When the library reached its final size in 1741 there were 7,618 manuscripts, 50,000 printed books and 550,000 pamphlets. Robert’s son Edward had had immediate control of the library since his father’s appointment as Lord Treasurer. After Robert’s death Edward continued to add to the library and when he died in 1741 it was left to his wife Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles, who had not greatly cared for the wits and literary men who were her husband’s friends. She sold the printed books to Thomas Osborne, the bookseller (reputedly for £13,000). Samuel Johnson was employed by Osborne in cataloguing some of the books and his Proposals for printing Bibliotheca Harleiana, or a catalogue of the library of the Earl of Oxford was prefixed to the first volume of Osborne’s catalogue. It seems to have been in connection with this work that the celebrated story is told of Johnson knocking down Osborne with a folio volume. Johnson never actually confirmed this story in so many words, but it was too good for him to deny. The manuscripts were sold to the nation for £10,000 in 1753 and are now in the British Museum.

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Although Robert Harley vacated York House in 1714, the projected new library was never built, the manuscript portion of the collection being moved to Edward’s house in Dover Street in 1717 after Robert’s release from the Tower of the Tower and the printed books going to Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire—Edward’s country house.

In spite of the plans in the memorandum never having been realised, it is an interesting document for the impression it gives of how an eighteenth-century librarian thought his library should be organised. It may also be of interest to speculate where he got his ideas from. The basic plan of assembling all the books in one large room is one which is predominantly associated with eighteenth-century libraries and calls to mind such examples as the Codrington at All Souls College, Oxford, started in 1715, and Christ Church first proposed in 1705.

Architecturally eighteenth-century England was much under the influence of sixteenth-century Italy, which may account for Wanley quoting the example of the Vatican Library (dating from 1587) with the expression the grandeur of the collection is displayed at one view when in fact all the presses are fitted with doors so that no books can be seen at all.

The library whose interior most nearly resembles the plans in the memorandum is Trinity College, Cambridge, designed by Wren in 1673–6. Wanley had worked there in 1696 and the arrangement of cases projecting from the walls with students’ tables and stools between is strongly reminiscent of his suggestions.

THE MEMORANDUM

May it please, 27 Febr. 171\frac{3}{4}

In obedience to your high commands, I have been thinking . . . about . . . your noble intention of building a library . . .

As to the library, I suppose Your Illustrious Lordship will not divide it into many rooms, like those of His Imperial Majesty, The French King, etc. but rather will place the whole in one spacious room, which will in height answer proportionally to its length & breadth.

The [hall] of the Vatican Library (containeth sixteen thousand books written upon parchment, besides those on paper, and printed books) all in one oblong room, placed in presses, without chains. Hereby the whole is secured from thieves and dust; and from what is almost as bad, displacing, battering, defacing by idle & impertinent students, (for of such there are those who infest the noblest libraries;) and yet the grandeur of the collection is displayed at one view.

1. I presume the Your Lordship will have your [cases] made so large as easily to hold all that is already bought, or may be brought in during many years to come.

2. And since the present library is disposed into presses; and the books rolls, & charters, placed & marked accordingly; I suppose that the same method (which I take to be really the best) may be pursued, by setting a stated number of presses, back to back, between the several windows on each side of the room.

3. These presses may, besides their current numbers, be marked with black letters upon a golden ground (which are Your Lordships colours) according to what is preserved within them, viz Codd. MSS. — Libr. Impr. — Cartae, — Rotuli, &c. which will look well and be a proper direction.

4. Above the presses galleries may be made, on all sides, wherein the lesser printed books may be laid up in presses likewise.

By each window below stairs a table of wainscot & a russe-leather chair may be placed; that students may conveniently peruse what they came to see, without disturbing one another.

Below the windows, and next to the walls; cupboards may be made, wherein all parcels of books, deeds, papers etc. shall come in from time to time, may be deposited, until they are placed in their due order.

At the upper end of the library, on the right side of the window, may be a nich opening with folding doors (as in the Jewish Synagogues) wherein Your Lordships Hebrew volume of the Law may be set up, with room sufficient to hold suchlike rolls of the Heptaroth & Magiloth, when they can be gotten. This nich may be adorned with one or more figures representing Moses, Aaron, K. David or Q. Esther, etc. as may be found most proper.

On the left side may be set a press, wherein only such antient, beautiful, rich, rare, or otherwise valuable books, etc. may be placed, as shall be deemed most fit to be shown unto strangers.

In the middle, may be a large chimney for a cole-fire, with cross-bars within (to keep rogues from coming down), a round grate, a high-fender, etc. For a fire in winter will be good for the building, & for the books, etc. as well as comfortable to the Library-Keeper & students.

Over against the chimney, or at the lower end, may be a sort of office for the Library-Keeper, with room enough for books necessary to be about him; a desk, and (among other conveniences) some sines that may keep off loiterers, peepers, and talkative persons, whose practice it is to hinder business.

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Adjoining to the library, and as part of it, may be a lesser room adorned with pictures of eminent persons; statues & other pieces of antiquity; a collection of medals antient & modern; a collection of drawings & prints; a pair of large globes, a sphere, & other curiosities natural & artificial.

When this library shall be built & made of public use (if that is Your Illustrious Lordships intention;) persons will of course throw in many benefactions. These (as I am humbly of opinion) may be better entered into a book to be provided for that purpose, than into the catalogue, as is now done. Therein the benefactors may be honored according to the value of what they give. But when a nobleman or gentleman shall give a pressfull of MSS in token of greater honor, his name may be set upon it with golden letters; as thus CODICES WORSLEIANI.

Moreover, near unto the library, an apartment may be built for the Library-Keeper. This I mention not out of vanity, with respect to myself, but as a thing which being done will be perpetually convenient on all sides. Therein the fund allowed to the library may be kept and a particular room provided for the book-binder to work in. For the value & importance of books & papers which must necessarily go through his hands, is & will be so great, as that they cannot be prudentially trusted to his shop, where (through treachery or negligence) they are liable to transcription & other accidents.

Note: Capitalization has been modernized. Words in square brackets are not clear in the ms.

The text of the memorandum is printed by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

1. Now BM MS Harley 7055 f. 16.
2. For Wanley’s life see C. E. Wright, Humphrey Wanley, Proceedings of the British Academy 1960 and D. Douglas, English scholars, 1951, ch. V.
5. Wright, B.C., 160.
7. Wright, B.C., 160.
8. Wright, B.C., 160.
10. Wright, P.B.A., 111.
11. It was designed to impress, but not with books; see Lomieer’s De Bibliothecis Ch. X, ed. J. W. Montgomery, Univ. of California Press, 1962, p. 24. An illustration is in L. W. Clark, Care of Books, C.U.P., 1901, pl. 16.
13. The chaining of books was generally abandoned in England during the seventeenth century. At Oxford, traditionally the home of lost causes, it lingered on into the eighteenth.

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issued by some fifty dealers during 1963. There are 32,000 books and 28,000 periodicals in the two sections, making a very large book indeed—eleven inches high, eight and a half wide and three and a half thick. This is much too large to be handled conveniently or to withstand a great deal of heavy use, despite a substantial cloth binding. Many of the entries are needlessly full, and much more use could have been made of abbreviations: future issues are in fact to have a more compressed form of entry in an effort to reduce the size of the volume. The inclusion of periodicals is an experiment, which may not be continued in later issues. Whether it is or not, most private collectors would probably prefer to be able to buy the section on books on its own in future, and such an arrangement would also suit those wanting both parts, who would find two thinner volumes more manageable. Unfortunately no list is given of the dealers whose catalogues have been indexed, but a cursory check of the entries shows a dozen or so British dealers, among them Quaritch, Maggs, Sotheran, Sawyer, Traylen, Rosenthal, Breslaier, Marlborough, Dawson and Fletcher.

BPI will be of considerable value both as a guide to prices and as an index to the fuller bibliographical and other information hidden away in the original catalogues. It will be welcomed by serious collectors, librarians and dealers alike. The second edition is in active preparation and will appear early next year.—D. J. C.

*Introduction to Book Binding.* By Lionel S. Darley. 118 pp. Faber and Faber. 21s.

This book is in two parts; the first an elementary account of traditional hand binding techniques apparently written as an introduction for the amateur who wishes to rebind some of his own books, and the second a brief description of the machinery and methods used in trade casing of new books—a topic on which, as readers of Mr Darley's *Bookbinding Then and Now* will be aware, the author is very well qualified to write. It is a little difficult to know for whom the book is really intended, the description of hand binding being too brief to be of value to the complete tyro yet too elementary for those who have already had some experience of binding. If it is intended as a practical manual the chapter on trade casing seems out of place, too. But as a brief account for students of librarianship and others who want to know how a book is made, but do not intend to try their own hand, Mr Darley's text and the clear line illustrations are useful.—A. C.

### Recent Private Press Books

*Make your own book,* by Roger Robinson and Giles Oliver. (47 pp. 8 1/4 x 11 inches. 100 copies, spiral bound with white wire into printed white paper boards, price £1. Art Society Press, King's College School, Wimbledon, London, S.W.19, England.) The ASP here propose an easy way of making books, then put their newly codified principles into frivolous practice. Their 'Basic Kit A' comprises seventeen assorted lino cuts, some Albertus, and (not mentioned) a Catnachian disregard for exact illustration of the events described. A gay book, as inconsequential as ever.

An autumn anthology, Edited by P. M. G., with illustrations by Rigby Graham. (22 pp. 9 1/2 x 5 1/2 inches. 140 copies bound in printed cloth boards, with gold blocked leather label, price £1 11s. Printed by the Monks of Mount St. Bernard Abbey, and distributed by the Brewhouse Private Press, The Orchard, Wymondham, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, England.) Pieces by Keats, Shelley, James Thomson, Francis Kilvert, Gilbert White and Penelope Holt are given coherence and new life by some twenty-five complementary drawings by Rigby Graham—cut from a working notebook with backgrounds added . . . in no way related to the fragments chosen.' Well printed illustrations; not quite so well printed text. An interesting binding, printed with a rubber cut by Graham, spoilt only by a tendency to warp outwards at top and bottom of the spine.

The life of Old Jeremy Catnach, printer. (21 pp. 8 1/2 x 5 1/2 inches. About 200 copies sewn into paper covers, price 25s. plus postage. Printed by the late Redvers Jones at his Craft Press, and distributed by Derek Maggs, 36 Sherard Road, London, S.E.9, England.) An account, first published in the early 1860s, of the life of the celebrated broadside and ballad printer. Nicely designed and printed.

Poems and drawings, by Mervyn Peake. (13 pp. 9 x 5 1/2 inches. 150 copies stapled into paper covers, price 6s. 6d. Keepsake Press, 26 Sydney Road, Richmond, Surrey, England.) A happy collaboration between private and commercial printers; five drawings reproduced photo-lithographically by S. C. Cranston Ltd; the four poems and introduction etc. hand-set and printed by Fabian Peake, Phyllida Barlow and Roy Lewis at the Keepsake Press; cover silkscreen by J. Stafford-Baker.

Because last night my child clung to my neck
He was not therefore mine.
Life's cycle spinning in a void of cold
Lay in between.

*Venice,* by Adrian Stokes, with illustrations by John Piper. (66 pp. 9 1/2 x 7 1/2 inches. 400 copies bound in black cloth boards, blind blocked on the front to a design by the illustrator, and blocked in silver on the spine. The second of a series of three books issued for an over-all subscription of £7 7s. Lion and Unicorn Press, Royal College of Art, Exhibition Road, London, S.W.7, England.) Passages reprinted from six of Adrian Stokes' books, with twenty-six monochrome or two-colour lithographs by John Piper. Fresh, clean typography and fine printing. A most desirable book.

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The name of John Roberts Press is well known to collectors of fine editions and privately printed books. Their productions range from the twenty-guinea magnificence of a folio ‘Song of Songs’ to the more modest charm of ‘Twelve by Eight’, recently published by the Private Libraries Association.

Many bibliophiles cause small books to be privately printed, so to clothe some favoured item in worthy typographical dress. They may cost little more than a good Christmas card – though there is, of course, no limit at the opposite end of the scale.

Those contemplating the production of a book or booklet ‘printed for their friends’ may expect interested cooperation from John Roberts Press Ltd, 14 Clerkenwell Green, London EC1.

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Thomas Hardy from behind & Other Memories. Introduction by Peter de Malion. (11 pp. 8 x 5 inches. Sewn into paper covers, price 3s. plus postage. Melisa Press, Lovelace’s Copse, Plush, Dorchester, Dorset, England.) A scabrous, but most entertaining pamphlet, purporting to describe Hardy in his most unguarded moments.

The Poppy’s Song, by Jim Roebuck. (8 pp. 8 x 5 inches. Maroon Japanese paper wrappers. 90 copies on imitation Japanese paper, price 10s. 6d.; 10 on ‘the real stuff’ signed by author and artist, price 17s. 6d. Black Knight Press, 6 Lansdown Place, Bath, Somerset.) Two very pleasing four-colour lino-cuts by Deidre Carr illustrate a haunting poem. Printed as a long broadside and folded concertina-fashion so it can be read as a normal book or pulled out and appreciated as a whole. Striking title in red and black in Univers; colophon and lino cuts all very well printed; text, in Bembo, not quite so well impressed. In all a most attractive piece; the first from this press.