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PRESENTS

The
Book
Beautiful

Illustration by William Morris from the Kelmscott Press's *The Golden Legend* (1892)

An Exhibition of
Private Press Books
from the Sterling Library

6 May - 24 October 2003

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Introduction

The University of London Library is privileged to hold amongst its many fine collections an extensive and representative selection of private press books from the late 19th century to the present day. Most are held in the Sterling Library, thanks to the collecting genius of Sir Louis Sterling, and are, singly and collectively by press, fine examples of “the book beautiful”. They are pleasing artefacts in their own right, many with exquisite bindings, engravings and hand-colouring, created lovingly and with care to be enjoyed. They are also, today, used for research and teaching in the history of the book, to illustrate the finest examples of printing, typesetting and hand-binding from generations of craftsmen and artists. We are delighted to be able to display these fine volumes and hope that you will find works which will surprise and delight you.

The Sterling Library

The private collection of rare and first editions of Sir Louis Sterling (1879-1958) comprises 4,200 volumes received in 1956, supplemented by purchases from an endowment fund and other gifts. Some 100 manuscripts complement the collection of printed books, now well over 7,000 volumes, forming an unusually integrated resource for research on the transmission of English literary texts from the 14th century to the present. While early works include such treasures as all four Shakespeare folios, the strengths of the collections are primarily 18th to early 20th century literary classics, especially fine or association copies. Illustrated and extra-illustrated books form a further strand of the collection. The works of English and Irish private presses enhance all three other areas in addition to constituting an independent strength. The Library continues to collect editions from modern private presses such as Fleece, Whittington, Gregynog and Old Stile.

Exhibition

Centre Case

KELMSCOTT PRESS

William Morris’s Kelmscott Press (1891-8) has been described as peerless, ‘far and away the most splendid of all private presses’. It arose from the Arts and Crafts movement to make well-designed products in a craftsmanlike way. William Morris (1834-96) laid emphasis on fine production. To this end, spurning the cheap machine-made paper of his day and greyish British ink, he had paper and vellum made to his own specification and imported ink from Germany. Morris designed founts of type, borders, and 384 ornamental letters, looking back to the incunabula period of the second half of the 15th century as the time of the finest printed books. He set out to prove the readability of gothic characters, and his founts included two gothic typefaces, called ‘Troy’ and ‘Chaucer’ after the texts in which he first used them. The Press’s main illustrator was Sir Edward Burne-

Jones (1833-98). The Press, which inspired the creation of several other private presses, produced 53 books, comprising 1,800 copies in all; the Sterling Library is fortunate to possess a complete set of its publications.

Poems by the Way

William Morris

Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1891

Apart from editions of poetry, most Kelmscott publications were either reprints of Caxton or, as here, Morris's own work. This is the first Kelmscott Press book to have been printed in two colours.

The Golden Legend

Jacobus de Voragine; translated by William Caxton

Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, [1892]

A reprint of the Caxton translation of what was, after the Bible, the most popular book of the High Middle Ages. The Kelmscott Press had originally intended to make it its first publication.

The Shepheardes Calender

Edmund Spenser

Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1896

This was illustrated by A J Gaskin (1862-1928), with what have been described as 'perhaps the happiest of all Kelmscott illustrations'. Only 22 copies were printed.

Poems Chosen out of the Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1896

This quintessentially Kelmscott double opening, with its solid block of capitals on a thick border, has been called 'a nonsense of decoration at the expense of all meaning, a designer's enjoyment with no inhibition'. The book is printed on vellum, an expensive and difficult printing surface.

Love is Enough, or, The Freeing of Pharamond

William Morris

Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1897

This is the second of two Kelmscott Press books printed in three colours. The book is printed on vellum.

The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer

Geoffrey Chaucer

Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1896

The Kelmscott Chaucer has been described as Morris's greatest achievement, showing the advantages and disadvantages of his method to the full, and as the finest book since Gutenberg. Sir Edward Burne-Jones designed the woodcut title, five borders and 87 illustrations, and William Morris designed the rest of the borders and the woodcut initials. It is for this book that Morris designed the 'Chaucer type', a smaller form of the 'Troy type' which would have been too large.

Kelmscott Press: [Catalogue]

[Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1897]

The final catalogue of the Kelmscott Press.

Case 1

MATRIX

Matrix: a Review for Printers and Bibliophiles began publication in 1981, and reached its 22nd issue in 2002. Published by the Whittington Press of Risbury, Herefordshire (see case 9), it is a miscellany of articles, inserts and samples relating to all aspects of fine printing and book production. It is a part of the Library's Private Press collection by the very nature of its production (fine printing, excellent illustrations, the quality of its paper and limited numbered 'editions') and in the contents which, amongst other topics, describe and illustrate the Private Press movement. In the first issue of *Matrix* the editors quote from the first and only issue of *The Thing* (1939) and the words of Edward Walters and Michael Sewell to give some indication of their intention in starting the journal: 'The racks and galleys of the printing-office accumulate many things which the printers would like to disseminate: a periodical affords a convenient outlet', hence the inclusion of samples of paper and printing ephemera as well as articles and illustrations. An index to nos. 1-21 (1981-2002) has been completed, making accessible the 500 articles published in the 4,000 pages of *Matrix* during those years. The Library was fortunate to be able to acquire the early issues formerly owned by Ruari McLean which complement its own subscription copies, making a complete run of *Matrix* to date.

***Matrix*, 1 (Autumn 1981)**

The printer operating the hand press here is Edward Walton, who had a long involvement with private presses. Walton and Michael (now Father Brocard) Sewell produced *The Thing*, referred to in the case introduction.

***Matrix*, 12 (Winter 1992)**

This typical cover lists the range of articles carried in the journal.

***Matrix*, 22 (Winter 2002)**

This issue is opened at an article by and about Nelly Gable, a punch cutter working in Cabinet de Poinçons at L'Imprimerie Nationale in Paris. The article is

entitled *Gy: ou la promenade fantastique du graveur de poinçons à l'ouvrage*, with a translation and further material by James Mosley.

Case 2

THE DOVES PRESS

The Doves Press was founded in 1900 by T J Cobden-Sanderson (1840-1922). Cobden-Sanderson had given up the law to become a craft bookbinder of great elegance and originality, and in 1893 had set up the Doves Bindery. Although an admirer of William Morris, he thought that the Kelmscott books were excessively decorated and disliked their heavy Gothic type.

Cobden-Sanderson first set out his own ideas on fine book creation at a meeting of the Art Workers Guild in 1892, when he delivered a paper on 'The Book Beautiful.' He became determined to produce such books: 'I must,' he wrote in 1898, 'before I die, create the type for today of "The Book Beautiful", and actualize it - paper, ink, writing, printing, ornament and binding. I will learn to write, to print and to decorate.'

Cobden-Sanderson took into partnership Emery Walker, who had a wide knowledge of both the technical and commercial aspects of fine printing. They developed a type based on the Roman type of the great 15th-century Venetian printers, Nicholas Jenson and Jacobus Rubeus. In October 1900 the first small book came off the press, Tacitus's *Agricola*.

Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1902) and *The English Bible* (1903-5) are considered the finest of the Doves Press books. The initials drawn by Edward Johnson complement the austere typography and layout to produce the quintessential Book Beautiful.

The Doves Press closed in 1917. It had been immensely influential on both private and commercial presses, and Cobden-Sanderson considered that it had achieved its objectives. He had fallen out with Emery Walker and their partnership had been dissolved in 1909. To stop any of the founts of the Doves Press going to Walker or being used for commercial printing, Cobden-Sanderson threw them into the Thames.

Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam

Translated into English Verse by Edward Fitzgerald
London: Macmillan, 1898

Bound at The Doves Bindery, 1900.

Ecce Mundus: Industrial Ideals and the Book Beautiful

T J Cobden-Sanderson

Hammersmith: Hammersmith Publishing Society, 1902

Paradise Lost

John Milton

Hammersmith: Doves Press, 1902

The English Bible, Vol. I

Hammersmith: Doves Press, 1903

Case 3

GOLDEN COCKEREL PRESS

The major achievement of the Golden Cockerel Press (1920-1961) was to inspire a revival of English wood-engraving, especially through the services of the stone-carver, engraver and typographer Eric Gill (1882-1940). Other illustrators/engravers employed include John Buckland-Wright, Blair Hughes-Stanton, Agnes Miller Parker, David Jones and Eric Ravilious. Among private presses, Golden Cockerel was unusual for having three successive managers: firstly Harold Midgeley, who began the press in a large wooden hut behind his house near Twyford; after his death, Robert Gibbings (1925-33); and finally, Christopher Sandford (after 1934).

The Four Gospels of the Lord Jesus Christ

Decorations by Eric Gill

Waltham Saint Lawrence: Golden Cockerel Press, 1931

This book has been described as the greatest work of the Golden Cockerel Press. Eric Gill fused illustration and decoration in his initials, showing the action of the text. Further notable characteristics are the typeface and the unjustified lines.

No. 168 of 500 copies.

Roses of Sharon: Poems Chosen from the Flower of Ancient Hebrew Literature

Wood-engravings by Mary Groom

[London]: Golden Cockerel Press, 1937

No. 6 of 10 copies so bound, and of 125 copies in all.

The Twelve Moneths

Nicholas Breton; wood engravings by Eric Ravilious

Waltham Saint Lawrence: Golden Cockerel Press, 1927

No. 385 of 500 copies.

Count Stefan

A E Coppard; illustrated by Robert Gibbings
Waltham Saint Lawrence: Golden Cockerel Press, 1928

One of 19 of the 58 books produced by Robert Gibbings which he illustrated himself.

No. 128 of 600 copies.

Case 4

VALE PRESS AND ERAGNY PRESS

These two presses can be considered together as there was a close personal and business relationship between Charles Ricketts (1866-1931) of the Vale and Lucien Pissarro (1863-1944) of the Eragny Press. Early Eragny titles were printed with Vale type, and both men were artist-designers who created entire books from type design to illustration. The Vale Press ran from 1896-1904, and the Eragny Press from 1894-1914; the first Eragny book (*The Queen of the Fishes* - not exhibited) was issued by Ricketts and his associate the artist Charles Haslewood Shannon (1863-1937) from The Vale in Chelsea, where they were publishing before the foundation of The Vale Press. Pissarro also contributed to their periodical *The Dial* (Nos 1-5, 1889-1897), which was a very well produced publication combining art and literature, prefiguring art nouveau in style.

The Vale Press's principal motivator was Charles Ricketts, with involvement of Shannon and Thomas Sturge Moore (1870-1944), many of whose papers are held by the University of London Library. Later L Hacon became the business partner of Ricketts. The Press published 48 works, if its complete Shakespeare is counted as one work. Much of the design for the title-pages, illustrations and ornaments was done by Ricketts, and he designed three types used by the Press: Vale, Avon and King's. His researches into the history of letter forms led him to suggest in the *Bibliography* of the Press: 'I would therefore urge that all attempts to remould our alphabet should be based on a study of Carolingian miniscules, revised and recast.' Ricketts's interest in the complete book also extended to the bindings, some of which share with Eragny books a style of paper boards adorned with patterns with attached printed labels for the title and author.

Pissarro was an experienced artist and had trained as an engraver, and used these skills in creating his books. He took great pains over printing using gold leaf and colour in illustrations and print, and he felt that he had improved on the general effect of printing on vellum by the use of the more absorbent Japanese vellum. By 1903 he had designed his own typeface, the Brook. Pissarro worked closely with his wife, Esther, who assisted greatly with the engraving and printing. The 'wholeness' of his books is perhaps best seen in those incorporating colour,

the Brook type and a French theme, for example *Some Old French and English Ballads*, edited by Robert Steele (1905).

A Defence of the Revival of Printing

Charles Ricketts

[London: Vale Press, 1899]

This work contains Ricketts's arguments for type design in which he diverges from William Morris's gothic type preferences.

Vale type.

A Bibliography of Books Printed by Hacon and Ricketts Between 1896 and 1903

Charles Ricketts

[London]: C Ricketts, 1904

The introduction continues on the following page: '...with the winding up of the firm which has used them. This bibliography therefore contains the three founts brought together for the first and last time. The punches and matrices are for the most part in the Thames, and on completion of the last page of this pamphlet, the type becomes type metal again.'

Vale type.

The Descent of Ishtar

Diana White; frontispiece designed by Diana White and engraved by Esther Pissarro

[Hammersmith: Eragny Press, 1905]

Brook type.

Some Old French and English Ballads

Edited by Robert Steele; frontispiece designed and engraved by Lucien Pissarro

[Hammersmith: Eragny Press, 1905]

Brook type; music type designed specifically for this work from sixteenth century models.

Poems

William Wordsworth; selected and illustrated by Thomas Sturge Moore

[London: Vale Press, 1902]

Vale type. The 1923 binding is by Sybil Pye.

Case 5

ESSEX HOUSE PRESS

The Essex House Press formed an integral part of the Guild of Handicraft founded by C R Ashbee (1863-1942) in 1888, and its first book was published from the eponymous Essex House in the Mile End Road in 1898. The Guild and Press moved to Chipping Campden in Gloucestershire in 1902. The Press's *Bibliography* published in 1909 lists 83 publications, and a few more were to be printed after that date.

The Essex House Press and the Guild were part of the tradition of British socialism influenced by John Ruskin and William Morris that sought a return to craftsmanship, co-operation and a meaningful engagement with work which had been lost during the process of industrialisation. The Guild Rules of 1899, drawn up by the members, underlines the link with that tradition, as quoted by Ashbee in *Craftsmanship in Competitive Industry* (Chipping Campden: Essex House Press, 1908): 'The Guild of Handicraft is a body of men of different trades, crafts and occupations, united together on such a basis as shall better promote both the goodness of the work produced and the standard of life of the producer. To this end it seeks to apply to the collective work of its members whatever is wisest and best in the principles of Co-operation, of Trade Unionism or of the modern revival of Art and Craft... '.

Essex House not only continued the ideals of the Morris tradition, but also absorbed some Kelmscott workers and acquired the two Albion presses Morris had used. The Press produced a wide range of work some using Caslon type and some with Ashbee's own type designs, Endeavour and Prayer Book. Among Essex House's notable publications not included here are the 'great poems' series, printed on vellum in Caslon with hand coloured frontispieces and illustrated monographs for the London Survey Committee. The Essex House Press chose white pinks (*dianthus*) as its symbol, and the flower can be spotted in many of the works on display.

C R Ashbee had broad interests, including the conservation of buildings and he was also involved in the early work of the National Trust. The Guild of Handicraft had a shop in London and also founded the Campden School of Arts and Crafts, where local young people were taught useful skills. The Guild had financial problems after about twenty years of existence, and had to be reorganised around 1908; annual reports of the School continued until 1913.

A Bibliography of the Essex House Press from 1898 to 1904

C R Ashbee

[Chipping Campden: Essex House Press, 1904]

The image of the building on the Mile End Road continued to be used on the colophon. Endeavour type.

Last Records of a Cotswold Community

Edited by C R Ashbee; drawings by Edmund H New
[Chipping Campden: Essex House Press, 1904]

Endeavour type. No. 14 of 75 copies on Batchelor hand-made paper.

The Essex House Song Book

Edited by Janet Elizabeth Ashbee
[Chipping Campden: Essex House Press, 1903-4?]

Endeavour type.

A Mornyng Remembraunce

Johan Fysher; frontispiece by C R Ashbee
[Chipping Campden: Essex House Press, 1906]

Prayer Book type. No. 47 of 125 copies on Batchelor hand-made paper.

A Journal of the Life and Travels of John Woolman in the Service of the Gospel

John Woolman
Bow: Essex House Press, 1901

Caslon type. No. 65 of 250 copies on Batchelor hand-made paper.

[List of publications]

[Chipping Campden]: Essex House Press, [1903 or later]

Guild of Handicraft

Essex House Press
London: [Essex House Press], 1898

Announcement of the purchase of plant and presses and the employment of ex-members of staff from the Kelmscott Press, and proposed publications.

Dial, 4 (1896)

No. 4 of 5 nos. (1889-1897). The earlier issues predate the foundation of the Vale Press and were published by Shannon and Ricketts, but nos. 4-5 (1896-1897) were issued under the Vale Press imprint.

The University of London Library has nos. 2-5 (1892-1897).

Case 6

THE GREGYNOG PRESS

The Gregynog Press was founded in 1922 by the sisters Margaret and Gwendoline Davies. The private press, named after the sisters' country home in Wales, produced many fine works relating to Welsh language and literature, and with a Celtic theme, and many more besides. The University of London Library

has a complete set of specially-bound Gregynog Press works, presented in 1965 by Professor Sir David Hughes Parry, Chairman of the University Court from 1962 and Vice-Chancellor 1945-1948. The Press ceased work in 1940, but was revived in 1978 as Gwasg Gregynog, to continue the tradition of fine printing in a contemporary vein. The University of London Library has continued to acquire works in limited editions. Dorothy A Harrops's *History of the Gregynog Press* (Pinner: Private Libraries Association, 1980) and the Gregynog Press website at <http://www.the-old-school.demon.co.uk/gregynogpress.htm> provide more illuminating detail.

Anne Boleyn and Other Poems

Loyd Haberly

[Newtown, Powys]: Gregynog Press, 1934

Loyd Haberly (1896-1981), an American, was a devotee of the arts and crafts movement, learning the printing trade in England. In 1933, he took up the position of Controller of the Gregynog Press. Four works were produced under his direction, although this was a difficult period for both Haberly and the Press. Unusually, he declined to have review copies of *Anne Boleyn* sent out, writing in a letter of 2 December 1934: 'I have always considered my verse to be my own private concern and naturally wish no more publicity than is necessary'. This may have contributed to the work's reported lack of commercial success.

No. 10 of 15 copies bound in dark brown polished oasis with gilt, and of 300 copies in all.

XXI Welsh Gypsy Folk Tales

John Sampson; with engravings on wood by Agnes Miller Parker

[Newton, Powys]: Gregynog Press, 1933

Dr John Sampson (1862-1931) was Librarian of the University of Liverpool and a leading member of the Gypsy Lore Society, writing widely on gypsy dialects. The 21 tales recorded in this work were selected from over 50 collected by Sampson.

No. 11 of 15 copies bound in mustard-yellow polish levant morocco with black and red inlays, and of 250 copies in all.

The Star of Seville

Lope de Vega; translated by Henry Thomas

[Newtown, Powys]: Gregynog Press, 1935

Lope de Vega (1562-1635) is generally regarded as the greatest playwright of the Spanish Golden Age. Of some 2200 plays, some 50 *autos*, or religious plays, and 431 comedies survive, of which *The Star of Seville*, exploring issues of honour, virtue and morality, is considered to be his finest work.

No. 10 of 15 copies bound in unpolished purple levant morocco, with blue and scarlet onlays outlined in gilt, and of 175 copies in all. The invoice for the purchase of the volume in 1939, for the sum of eight guineas, survives.

Deg Soned

T H Parry-Williams

[Newtown, Powys]: Gwasg Gregynog, 1987

This collection of 10 sonnets by Sir Thomas Herbert Parry-Williams (1887-1975), poet, essayist and Celtic scholar, contains his reflections on the cultural and political future of Wales and the role of poets and intellectuals.

No. 105 of 270 copies.

The Life of Saint David

Ernest Rhys

[Newtown, Powys]: Gregynog Press, 1927

Saint David (d. 589 or 601) is the patron saint of Wales and in fact the only Welsh saint to be so canonised. This text by Ernest Rhys (1859-1946) is based on the Latin Life by Rhygyfarch, written c. 1090, the source of the main details of the saint's life. A few months before publication, a small brass depicting Saint David was discovered in Hereford Cathedral; a block image of this brass is displayed on the title-page. This work is the first by the Gregynog Press to use hand-coloured wood engravings.

No. 20 of 25 volumes bound in polished scarlet levant morocco with gilt, featuring a Celtic cross on the front cover, and of 175 copies in all.

Greetings and Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year from the Misses Davies, Gregynog, 1930

Gregynog [ie Newtown, Powys]: G and M Davies, 1930

This folded sheet is one in a fine series of ornate Christmas cards sent out from the Gregynog Press in the 1930s, the front cover depicting a dove with an olive branch. The four woodcuts in the card are unsigned. The stanza is from the philosophical poem *The Testament of Beauty*, which Robert Bridges (1844-1930) published on his 85th birthday in 1929.

The Curate of Clyro

Francis Kilvert; illustrated by wood engravings by Sarah van Niekerk.

Newtown [Powys]: Gwasg Gregynog, 1983

The diary of the Rev. Francis Kilvert (1840-1879) was first published some 60 years after his death, in 1938. It was immediately recognised as classic of its genre, recording with grace and affection the everyday lives of ordinary people in the village of Clyro and environs in Radnorshire.

This volume of extracts from the journal is no. 109 of 250 copies.

Case 7

THE DOLMEN PRESS

The Dolmen Press was founded in 1951 by Liam Miller and published many fine works until it closed in 1988 shortly after Miller's death. The original mission was to print, in limited editions, works reflecting Irish literature, history and literary life. The output of the press included fine editions of leading Irish literary figures such as Samuel Beckett (1906-1989), and modern interpretations of important works in the Irish literary heritage, such as Thomas Kinsella's translation of the *Tain*, illustrated by Louis Le Brocquy and others. The University of London Library holds one of the most complete collections of Dolmen Press publications in the United Kingdom.

The Voyage of Saint Brendan

Translated by John J O'Meara

[Dublin]: Dolmen Press, 1976

Saint Brendan (circa 486-578?) was an Irish monk who travelled to Europe and the Canary Islands, as well as to Scotland and the Faeroe Islands. He may even have been the first explorer to sail to North America. His travels inspired the *Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis*, a very popular medieval work.

The woodcuts in this version are reproduced from *Die wunderbare Meerfahrt des hl. Brandan*, printed in about 1476 by Anton Sort at Augsburg.

No. 8 of 50 hand-coloured and specially bound copies signed by the translator, and of 750 copies in all.

A Slow Dance

John Montague

Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1975

Although born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1929, the poet John Montague was brought up in rural County Tyrone, Northern Ireland. After studying at University College Dublin, where he met contemporary poets such as Thomas Kinsella, he returned to study in the USA, before finally settling in County Cork.

No. 42 of 150 specially bound copies, signed by the author.

Riders to the Sea

J M Synge; linocuts by Tate Adams

Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1969

Riders to the sea, first performed in Dublin 25 February 1904, has lost nothing of its haunting pain over the years. Maurya, an old woman in the remote Aran Islands, endures the agony of the loss of her husband and five sons to the harsh sea which dominates their lives. By the end of this brief work, her sixth son, Bartley, is dead, Maurya is left to keen with her daughters and the local women, and to accept with resignation her bitter fate.

Dubliners

James Joyce; lithographs by Louis le Brocqy
[Mountrath, Laois]: Dolmen Press, 1986

Dubliners, a collection of 15 short stories reflecting the lives, passions, melancholy and hopes of citizens of his native city, was published in 1914, the same year as Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The memorable phrase 'dear dirty Dublin' in the story *A little cloud* reflects Joyce's mixed views on his home city from his self-imposed European exile.

The illustrator, Louis Le Brocqy (1918-), illustrated many Dolmen Press works.
No. 10 of 500 copies.

The History and Topography of Ireland

Giraldus Cambrensis; translated by John J O'Meara
Portlaoise: Dolmen Press, 1982

Topographica Hibernia is one of some 17 scholarly works which Giraldus Cambrensis, or Gerald of Wales (c.1146-c.1223), wrote in a varied career as author, priest, diplomat and courtier.

No. 17 of 75 specially bound copies with hand-coloured illustrations.

The Easter Proclamation of the Irish Republic, 1916

Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1975

One of the most resonant documents in Irish history, the Proclamation was drafted and made on Easter Monday, 24 April 1916, by members of the Irish Republication Brotherhood, including James Connolly and Sean MacDiarmada. Read on the steps of the General Post Office at Dublin by Pádraig Pearse at precisely 12.45, the Proclamation states the case for Irish nationhood. At the time, 1500 broadside copies were printed.

The design is by Liam Miller and the frontispiece is based on the statue, by Oliver Sheppard (1865-1941), of the Irish mythical hero *The Death of Cuchulain*, now located in the General Post Office.

No. 31 of 125 copies.

Finistere

Thomas Kinsella
Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1972

The work of Thomas Kinsella (1928-) is considered by many to be the most experimental of contemporary Irish poets. His association with the Dolmen Press started in 1952 with his first published collection of poetry, *The Starlit Eye*, for which he helped to set the type himself. This has been followed by numerous further collections.

The designs, by Hugh Kearns and Liam Miller, are based on carvings from the Newgrange Megalithic Passage Tomb and Knowth, Co Meath, and Cardonagh, Co Donegal.

No. 166 of 250 copies.

After the Funeral

Paul Scott; illustrations by Sally Scott
Andoversford: Whittington Press, 1979

Paul Scott (1920-1978) is probably best known for his novels *The Raj Quartet* and *Staying On*, depicting the British in India before and after Independence in 1947. The illustrator, Sally Scott, is Paul Scott's daughter.

No. 75 of 200 copies.

Wall Case

THE WHITTINGTON PRESS

The Whittington Press is one of the most active private presses currently operating in the United Kingdom. Since its formation in 1971, in the eponymous village in the Cotswolds, John Randle and his associates have produced some 150 titles. The Whittington Press is now based in Herefordshire. Its website at <http://whittingtonpress.com> describes the work of the printer John Randle, administrator Rose Randle, compositor Miriam Macgregor and typesetter Peter Sanderson, and their major output in *belles-lettres*.

Portraits of Presses

Ski Harrison
Risbury: Whittington Press, 1997

The Whittington Press published *Portraits of Presses* to record the work of the most famous active presses. These include Fleece Press, Gwasg Gregynog and Old Stile Press, displayed in this exhibition; and others such as the Tern Press and Rampant Lions Press, whose work is also represented in the University of London Library's collections.

In his introduction, John Randle comments: 'This book grew out of the realisation while putting together our annual *Matrix* that very few photographs existed of earlier private presses at work'. The photographs and examples of the presses' work form a valuable record in private printing press history.

No. 162 of 500 copies.

Britten's Aldeburgh

John Craig

Risbury: Whittington Press, 1997

In his introduction to this work, John Craig (1937-) writes: 'It started with my reading somewhere that Benjamin Britten did a great deal of his work on composition while walking around Aldeburgh following several known and regularly used routes. I thought it would be interesting to know how Britten could possibly "work" without pen and paper or instrument, to find out where these routes were and then to walk them myself, using the places I found as a basis for a collection of landscape engravings'. These fine wood engravings, conveying the signs, sounds and smells of Aldeburgh, are the result.

No. 127 of 440 copies.

London Scenes

Hellmuth Weissenborn

Risbury: Whittington Press, 2001

Hellmuth Weissenborn came to London in 1939 as a refugee. London quickly became his adopted city, and internment in the Isle of Man in 1940 did little to diminish his enthusiasm. Weissenborn wrote: 'I was deeply impressed by the pulse of the city with its ten million inhabitants, the largesse of London, the advertisements in the streets, the rushing masses travelling by underground or bus, and now suddenly I was transposed into this novel, exciting atmosphere'. This series of twelve wood-engravings of post-war London show how much and how little has changed in the capital.

No. 221 of 300 copies.

THE OLD STILE PRESS

The Old Stile Press is the partnership of Frances and Nicolas McDowell. Having founded the Press in 1979, Nicolas is the designer and printer, working with the artists and authors; Frances handles publicity and promotion, and, as often as time allows, makes paper on which some of the books are printed. The Press is based in the Wye Valley, near Tintern Abbey, and the McDowalls have been inspired by earlier private presses to 'carry their standards and their creative spirit forward into this new century'. The University of London Library holds a considerable number of Old Stile Press works.

For more information, see Dorothy Harrop et al, *The Old Stile Press in the Twentieth Century: a Bibliography 1979-1999* (Monmouth: Old Stile, 2000); and the website <http://www.oldstilepress.com>

Oenone in January

Kevin Crossley-Holland; illustrations by John Lawrence

Llandogo: Old Stile Press, 1988

Kevin Crossley-Holland has written for both adults and children; his novella *Storm* won the Carnegie medal in 1985, and his re-telling of *Beowulf* for younger readers is well-known. *Oenone in January* is a charming poem depicting a three-year-old girl's growing experience of life. John Lawrence is a celebrated illustrator of children's books, including works by Roald Dahl. He won the Francis Williams Award for Illustration twice, in 1972 and 1977.

No. 97 of 350 copies.

Gymnopaediae

J Martin Pitts

Llandogo: Old Stile Press, 1989

The Gymnopaediae, the dances of young men in the ancient city of Sparta, were dedicated to Apollo Kouroutrophos, and formed an important part of the festival of Karneia. J Martin Pitts (1939-), who has long been associated with Old Stile Press, has illustrated the sheer athleticism of the Gymnopaediae.

No. 118 of 200 copies.

The Journey of Thomas the Rhymer

Thomas the Rhymer; wood engravings by Angela Lemaire

Llandogo: Old Stile Press, 2000

The Scottish poet Thomas of Erceldoune (1220?-1297?) was also known as Thomas the Rhymer, and was renowned for his prophecies and mystical abilities. This text of his *Journey* is based on 15th-century documents and describes how Thomas received his prophetic powers.

The Revelation of St John the Divine

Illustrated by Natalie d'Arbeloff

Llandogo: Old Stile Press, 1999

The words of Saint John, from the Authorised Version of the Book of Revelation in the New Testament, have been illustrated in a striking manner by the artist Natalie d'Arbeloff. The images are printed on one side only of the sheets, which are concertina-folded and contained within a case-like binding which has an added, enveloping cover.

No. 31 of 150 copies.

White Voices

Marcel Schwob

[Llandogo]: Old Stile Press, 2001

Marcel Schwob (1867-1905), the French essayist and critic, based *White Voices*, or *La Croisade des enfants*, on the unparalleled events of 1212, when thousands of boys from France and Germany were inspired to join a crusade to the Holy Land. It is estimated that of the 50,000 boys who originally set out, very few may have reached their final destination. Inspired by these tragic events, Schwob wrote this powerful symbolist work, here illustrated by the Welsh artist Keith Bayliss.

No. 30 of 200 copies.

THE FLEECE PRESS

The Fleece Press was founded in 1980 by Simon Lawrence, the grandson of the craftsman Stanley Lawrence. The Fleece Press, based near Huddersfield, is essentially a one-person operation, producing three or four books annually. Simon Lawrence describes on its website (<http://www.the-old-school.demon.co.uk/fleecepress.htm>) how he was inspired to take up printing and publishing hand press books, and reports there that his particular interests lie in works illustrated by or about wood-engravers, and also in collections of literature.

Of Gardens

Francis Bacon; perspex engravings by Betty Pennell

Netherton: Fleece Press, 1993

Sir Francis Bacon, Viscount St Albans (1561-1626), wrote amongst many other literary works a celebrated series of essays on subjects such as death, education, revenge – and gardens.

The white boards are onlaid with grass clippings binding by Smith Settle.

In praise of John Baskerville

F E Pardoe; engravings by Anthony Christmas

Netherton: Fleece Press, 1994

John Baskerville (1706-1775) was born in Wolverley in Worcestershire and is one of the greatest exponents of typography. From his first trade of engraving tombstones, he took up typography; his name lives on in classically simple Baskerville type. In 1758, he became Printer to the Cambridge University Press, where he created what is widely regarded as his most famous work, the folio Bible. F E Pardoe here describes Baskerville's life and achievements, and recounts the bizarre story of Baskerville's burial.

One of 260 copies, appropriately printed in 8 point Baskerville type.

A Cross Section: the Society of Wood Engravers in 1988

Wakefield: Fleece Press, 1988

This work was published to mark the 50th exhibition of the Society of Wood Engravers and illustrates the work of its members. While older members of the Society may have passed away, the craft of wood engraving is being carried on by a younger generation. The contribution of Stanley Lawrence (1900-1987), the craftsman-proprietor of the last company to manufacture engravers' boxwood blocks', is particularly commemorated.

Baigneuses

John Buckland Wright

Denby Dale: Fleece Press, 1995

John Buckland Wright (1897-1954) was born in New Zealand and first explored his skill in art while at Rugby School. After studying history at Magdalen College, Oxford, and training in architecture at the Bartlett School 1920-1922, he became a full-time artist, expressing in particular the female nude through wood and copper engravings. This collection has been compiled from woodblocks left in Wright's studio at the time of his death of all the engravings of bathers or of women in watery landscapes and seascapes. *Baigneuses* was judged the best designed and produced limited edition book of 1995 by the Publishers Association and British Printing Industries Association.

First Friends : Paul and Bunty, John and Christine – and Carrington

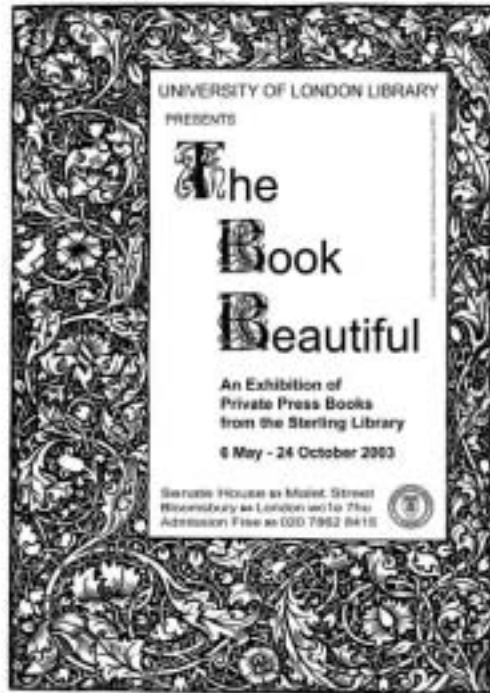
Ronald Blythe

Huddersfield: Fleece Press, 1997

Ronald Blythe (1922-) writes, by way of introduction: 'This is essentially a student story, a tale of first friendships and their consequences'. The Paul, Bunty, John, Christine and Carrington are, respectively Paul Nash (1889-1946); his wife Margaret Theodosia, known as Bunty; his brother John Nash (1893-1977); John's wife Christine Kuhlenthal (1895-1976); and their great friend Dora Carrington (1893-1932). From student days at the Slade School of Art, their lives and careers as artists were inextricably bound together.

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