

North Carolina Libraries

Volume 19, Number 4

Summer, 1961

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The Fall Issue of North Carolina Libraries will contain the Biennial Reports. Mrs. Elizabeth Hughey will act as Guest Editor for this issue. All reports should be in to her by the end of July.

Published four times a year by The North Carolina Library Association. Membership dues of \$2.00 per year including a subscription to *North Carolina Libraries*. Subscription to non-members: \$2.00 per year and fifty cents per issue. Correspondence concerning membership or subscription should be addressed to the Treasurer, Miss Marjorie Hood, The Library, Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, N. C.

THE BUSINESS END OF BOOKS

By CARLTON L. APOLLONIO

Manager, Intimate Book Shop, Chapel Hill, N. C.

I hold every man a debtor to his profession, from the which, as men of course do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty to endeavor themselves, by way of amends, to be a help and ornament thereunto.—Bacon

These words which appear in each issue of "*Publisher's Weekly*," the trade magazine of the retail book business, constitute a definitive statement of purpose for those of us who make our living by retailing the printed word. They are important words and if read with care can serve to remind us of an ancient tradition. The publisher, librarian and bookseller have traditionally, despite their relatively minor financial position in society, been accorded a degree of respect far out of proportion to their income and numbers. It is only in recent years that the functions of printer and bookseller have been separated and there is no need to re-tell here the story of the great political, intellectual, social and economic force which has been wielded by the printer-bookseller throughout the Western history. In every vital political movement, in each social upheaval, the printer has played a dominant role; the libraries destroyed and print shops burned are eloquent testimony to the fear and respect which the printed word has commanded. It might be said that the strength, vitality and idealism of the booksellers, librarians and publishers make an excellent barometer of the intellectual strength of our society.

If the foregoing comments are accepted, then it may be well that we give some serious thought to the status of the booksellers and librarians of today because there are indications that both groups are in grave danger, through their own faults and mistakes, of losing this position of influence and respect.

Probably no other civilization has been so systematically and agonizingly probed as our own. The flood of books, articles, films, congressional investigations and miscellaneous committees which have devoted themselves to the examination of every conceivable problem are eloquent testimony to our masochistic and desperate introspection. The result, like the result of drug addiction, has been, not to heighten our sensibilities, but rather to dull them to the point where nothing much bothers or moves us. It is already painfully obvious that our booksellers and librarians are no longer as concerned with using their tremendous latent power as much as they are, in the first instance, with the "fast buck," and in the second with the refinement of the machinery involved in cataloging and shelving. A schism is developing between the publishers, booksellers and librarians and the breakdown in communication is analogous to that which we see separating the scientist from the humanist. Too few of us are sufficiently aware of the power of the printed word. Many of us, for reasons which I will discuss in this article, treat the book more and more as a "package," an item to be sold, processed, promoted or filed, depending upon our particular place in the system. Perhaps we are becoming subject to forces similar to those which in time bleached the force and color from medieval Christianity, with the ultimate result that the essential futility and absurdity of it all became so obvious that history decreed a new beginning.

There has always been a lunatic fringe which insists upon treating the printed word as anything but what it really is—an attempt by man to communicate to his fellows. We have always had the illiterate fine binding collector, the retail prostitute who will sell filth to all comers, the status seeker who will happily purchase anything, so long as it comes by the yard. We will always have the society bookseller and the covetous librarian who secretly dislikes books; such people will remain in the minority unless of course no one cares enough to see that they do.

The primary responsibility for seeing that books remain vital and alive lies with the retail bookseller because the books actually purchased are the most reliable indicator yet devised to determine what will be printed. While it is true that important books are seldom published with the expectation that they will be commercially successful, it is also true that the books read by most people are books which *do* make money for their publishers. This is, like it or not, the Age of the Common Man:

The characteristic of the hour is that the commonplace mind, knowing itself to be commonplace, has the assurance to proclaim the rights of the commonplace and to impose them wherever it will. As they say in the United States, 'to be different is to be indecent.' The mass crushes beneath it everything that is different, everything that is excellent, individual, qualified and select. Anybody who is not like everybody, who does not think like everybody, runs the risk of being eliminated. (From, Jose Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses*, New York, 1932)

If the bookseller does not make it his duty to see that the best is at least available, people will read what they find in the cigar stores and railroad terminals; the result will be a further widening of the schism between the isolated intellectual and the 99% voting majority. If our libraries, particularly our university libraries, continue a trend which has already gone too far, of investing their limited resources in valuable but essentially useless "rare" books to the extent that the libraries become museums rather than workshops, then they will find themselves even more out of contact with young, impatient and impressionable students. Of course it is the function of the librarian to preserve the unique and valuable just as it is a function of the bookseller to make a profit but it is also the function of each to remain a dynamic and influential community force, to see that he never loses sight of the fact that books are important only as they make men think. Human beings can be tiresome and irritating as any bookseller or librarian well knows but to quote Harry Truman, "If you can't take the heat get out of the kitchen." It is a great temptation to use one's bookshop or library as a peaceful haven of retreat. Already too much of this attitude has infiltrated the academic world and the bookshops.

To define more clearly the essential purposes of bookselling, let us consider some of the problems which confront the person who attempts to make a living selling good books. At once one finds his idealism, no matter how burning and sincere, circumscribed by a number of frustrating and at times unpleasant realities of the world of commerce.

The first and most striking of these is that even in a thoroughly collegiate and supposedly intellectual community, the bookseller will quickly discover that he can sell books to only a small percentage of the population. The reason for this can be summed up by an elucidation of the obvious—the fact that ours is primarily a society which

honors the practical and immediate value of things, and books, at least many of the more worthwhile books, do not always appeal to this social mentality. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with the practical or utilitarian for to a great extent we are all dependent for our daily bread upon the efforts of pragmatic people. Unfortunately, it is more and more obvious that even the best of our educational institutions are encouraging this view by turning themselves into training schools rather than fulfilling their more ancient and honorable function as trainers of "thinkers," the less practical kind of man who in the long run may do far more to influence practical day-to-day affairs than the engineer or plumber. In the past it has not been the intention or practice of the great universities to teach specific skills. Today a perusal of the catalogs of almost any college will show an increasing number of courses devoted to the teaching of immediate marketable trades. Most obviously, this is true of the business schools with their courses which purport to impart the many skills needed to operate loan companies and ten-cent stores. The teachers' colleges devote themselves to How-To-Teach courses rather than to basic knowledge of the subject. The pseudo-sciences of psychology, sociology and anthropology imply and even state the idea that man is simply a creature who can be precisely measured in all his important characteristics. Perhaps this is true (though I seriously question it) and I would not be overly concerned if at the same time the legitimate disciplines were receiving equal attention. If our students are to be taught that the reasons a man loves, or composes or writes can be measured and graphed I would have no serious objections if he were also actually reading and listening to our great literature and music. I could excuse his graphs and charts if at the same time he was learning something about mathematics, history, philosophy and astronomy. Unfortunately, Gresham's Law apparently applies as effectively in the academic world as in the economic sphere; the long term result will undoubtedly be even greater ignorance of and contempt for serious reading of the books which have proven their intellectual value over many centuries.

"Those who are ignorant of history are destined to repeat it."

The consequences for the bookseller and librarian can only be detrimental, for the false doctrine that only "easy" things are "enjoyable" will result in an even greater production of picture books, "Made Simple" books and similar tripe which "Time" magazine so accurately labeled as "Non-Books."

The second reality of bookselling is the problem of gross profit, margin, or mark-up. Usually, when a business deals with a relatively small segment of the population, its profit margin is high in order to off-set the disadvantages of dealing with a small number of customers. In the book business, however, we not only deal with few people but we must cope with a narrow margin of profit. The margin on trade books is less than forty per cent: a book which sells for one dollar costs the bookseller about sixty-five cents. How does the bookseller go about making a profit on this thirty-five per cent margin? Despite this relatively narrow margin, the bookseller must occupy expensive real estate to insure that every passer-by is at least exposed to his wares. Furthermore, he must pay standard wages and meet the same utility bills, insurance premiums and other expenses which confront every merchant for, like it or not, the bookseller is a merchant and all the idealism in the world cannot change this fact.

Since the profit margin is fixed, the problem is to sell as many books as possible in the shortest period of time, without allowing expenses to rise beyond a certain point. If the location is reasonably good and if operating expenses are not excessive, the book-

seller will be successful if he can sell in a year roughly five times as much in dollars as he has invested in stock on any given day. If the cost of books on hand at any time is \$10,000, then the annual sales must be very close to \$50,000 and practically all of these sales *must* be made without doing anything to reduce the 35 per cent gross profit margin. Anytime a book is sold at a discount price the bookseller must realize that he at best broke even on the transaction and more probably lost money. We have learned that after all expenses have been met the bookseller can expect to take home about fifteen cents on each dollar of sales and when predicting the success or failure of a proposed bookshop, the smart owner will count on a take-home figure of no more than ten per cent, especially during the formative years. In most retail businesses the same amount of gross income can yield a take-home percentage of twenty or even twenty-five per cent.

The bookseller faces peculiar problems in acquiring stock. Many of the books he buys are purchased months before they are much more than a dream in the mind of the author. In most cases the book buyer sits in his office with a publisher's representative (more crudely known as book peddlers) and discusses merchandise which does not even exist. He will consider how many copies of this nebulous product he can sell to people who at the moment are happily unaware of its potential existence. Nevertheless, let us assume that the books are actually ordered—more often than not they won't be for publishers have a propensity for publishing large numbers of books which haven't a chance of paying back their costs of production. The reason is simply that publishers must be gamblers, hoping for one best-seller out of a season's list.

For the larger book shops, of which there are only a few hundred in the United States, five to ten copies of this unpublished book is a very fair order. Many books are purchased in two's and three's, more to fill out the shelves than in serious expectation that they will all be sold. Few new books are bought in initial lots of more than ten unless they are of major importance—a new novel by Steinbeck or Faulkner, for example. The glaring exception to all this is the book which for some strange and undefinable reason a particular bookseller thinks he, in his supreme wisdom, can sell in great quantity. The really good booksellers operate in this way because they are the ones who possess the invaluable book buyer's instinct—the ability to smell a fine and saleable book long before they have seen it. This is a quality which is acquired by only a few after many years of experience. I have heard many book buyers admit that if they could be right seventy per cent of the time they would consider themselves successful—meaning that they were finally able to sell more copies of a book than were originally ordered, returning to the publisher (when this is permitted) only one or two per cent of the total orders.

The question arises as to whether a special effort should be made to sell a new book, or whether it should simply be put on display in hopes that the right customer and book will come together at the right psychological moment, for bookbuyers are a notoriously impulsive breed. Most books are not "promoted" but are shelved, because of the expense and uncertainty involved in advertising and the shortage of the bookseller's time. The cost of advertising a book is staggering to the uninitiated. As noted above, we deal with a small segment of the public, which, being perhaps slightly more discerning than its fellows, is the element least likely to be susceptible to routine advertising methods. Consequently, a special kind of effort is needed to make this type of

person aware of the book. This ability is a special one which is not always possessed by the person who might have the other qualities needed to run a successful book shop. Make no mistake, bookselling is, like librarianship, largely a question of attention to detail. The bookshops which maintain a profitable advertising program are few in number, perhaps not more than a dozen in the country. Like the bookshop's other traits, its advertising will reflect the personality of the owner. Many bookshops are without advertising in the conventional sense but the most successful will have at least one person who combines in himself a reliable commercial instinct with a deep-seated knowledge of the world of books. The bookseller's best chance of success is the personalized mailing piece which will list with appropriate comments a number of new books or perhaps be devoted to only one book of special interest. Even the best mailing list will bring a return of only three to five per cent which means the bookseller will break slightly better than even. The real value of the mailing piece is that it serves to remind the customer that the bookseller is still in business. The stereotyped commercial "stuffer" is worse than useless; not only is it seldom read but it may detract from the reputation of the book shop as a personal place, different from the high-pressure, chrome plated business operation.

Important as they are, current books are only a part of the total business of the bookseller. As with the library, the ultimate success or failure of the shop will depend upon its ability to maintain a wide range of standard books in many subject areas. One difference between the librarian and bookseller is that in the first instance the object is to make the books go and come back, while in the second it is to get rid of the books and to replace them with others! Thus the book shop in one sense is a strange kind of library where we try to establish a reputation for good books of which we want to dispose.

Earlier, I referred to the shortage of time in the bookseller's day. Much of his time is spent in coping with the problems of getting rid of and replacing the stock. Again, the bookseller and librarian have something in common—they are both expected to be experts in many subject areas. It is not enough to have the book; often you must know enough about it to be able to answer any number of strange questions from the customer. Some bookmen, recognizing the impossibility of stocking "everything," specialize in books on one subject, including out-of-print titles. The drawback is that this takes many years of experience and a great deal of capital. The problem of maintaining a specialized stock is further complicated by the increasing demand from libraries which permanently remove scarce books from the open market.

The bookseller's stock must be balanced as to sales. He must carry just the right number of copies of each book so that he neither orders too frequently, thus losing sales because the book is too often out-of-stock, nor too seldom, thereby tying up valuable working capital in books which are not selling rapidly enough. In order to maintain a degree of control over this situation most book shops utilize a simple card system which enables them to keep a sales record for each book. The cards, one for each book, give title, publisher, retail and wholesale price and show when books were received and the date each copy was sold. The card system is simple compared to that used in libraries because there is little need for cross-indexing or summaries of content. Books in the shop are shelved by subject to make browsing easy. When a customer needs help we fall back on several standard reference tools, the most important of which are "Books In Print" and "Subject Guide to Books In Print," both published annually by the R. R. Bowker Company. We also maintain a file of circulars and catalogs. Fundamentally, however,

any filing system or reference material is secondary to the knowledge of the stock by the store employees.

I believe that a reasonable amount of stock control work is the key to successful book store operation. I say "reasonable amount" because there is always the danger that The System may become an end in itself. We should constantly remind ourselves that we are dealing with human beings, that we are trying to get books for *people* and we should be on guard against unnecessary "busy work." The tendency to make the machinery perfect for its own sake, while neglecting or losing sight of its original purpose is always a danger. The sad evidence of the results of pencil-pushing and allied forms of nit-picking is painfully obvious in all forms of social activity, particularly in government and the academic world.

Even in the largest stores a surprising number of books are not in stock and must be special-ordered. At "The Intimate Book Shop" we place as many as fifty or seventy-five special orders per week. This part of the business causes more headaches than all the others combined. We deal constantly with about one hundred different publishers and less frequently with another hundred. Each one of these suppliers has distinct policies for orders. To receive the best discount we combine orders wherever possible. Ideally, we order no less than five books at a time from one publisher because an order for less than this number is close to an act of charity. There have been numerous efforts to establish jobbing houses to handle the books of all or most publishers. Unfortunately, the same economic facts of life apply to jobbers as to the rest of us. No jobber can handle *all* books and the very books which the book store is least likely to have are the same ones few jobbers would be expected to carry. One of the few good features of the recent mergers in publishing is that when several publishers combine their shipping and billing facilities, it means that it is also easier for the bookseller to combine his own orders.

A partial solution at the retail level is for the bookseller to keep close tabs on his special orders. If he notices several orders for a certain kind of book then obviously it will make sense for him to increase his stock in this area. It is a constant process and a little self-defeating because the more you have, the more you are expected to have.

One of the most discouraging problems in the American book trade is the desperate shortage of experienced personnel. Publishers have never made a real effort to find on the campuses the young people who might be interested in bookselling with the result that the best of each graduating class is wooed away by the professional schools, the corporations and the universities. What ends up in publishing and bookselling is all too often the ineffectual C-minus English major who couldn't quite make graduate school and who is unacceptable to the gray flannel suiters. A tour through a dozen typical bookshops can be a depressing experience; indeed—they are staffed almost exclusively with delicate young men, maiden ladies and intense female intellectuals. Almost never does one meet the well-read, incisive, business-man turned-bookseller.

If American publishers, in co-operation with The American Bookseller's Association could work out a recruiting program, with emphasis on a training period in our best bookshops, the complexion of retail bookselling could be changed in a few years. We need the man or woman who wants a more active life than can be found in today's university climate, with its unfortunate emphasis on research and so-called scholarship, rather than on class room teaching and creative expression. The retail bookshop is an extension of its owner's personality and offers a fine outlet for the person with an un-

derstanding of genuine intellectual integrity. In the retail book business as in few other fields, one has an excellent outlet for his commercial talent and for his more idealistic and intellectual interests. College students have never been exposed to the essential facts of bookselling life and have in their minds a picture which is so misleading and discouraging that they have never given the idea any serious consideration. Though much of the blame can be laid to the inertia of the publishers, the fault lies primarily with those of us in bookselling, teaching and librarianship who refuse to take the initiative in "selling" the profession.

Perhaps you have the impression that I consider the life of the bookseller to be one continual headache and if so, you might well ask, "Why, then, do you bother with it?" Let us look for a bit at the bright side of the picture. Though much of our activity is petty, routine and dull; though much of the merchandise is frothy and of nebulous character; though there is a tendency for the methods of big business to sap the individualism of publishing, in recent years there have been two encouraging developments.

Because of increasing production costs, it has become more difficult for publishers to handle many serious and worthwhile manuscripts. Even such a financially independent publisher as Alfred Knopf has commented on the difficulty of producing books by new authors and of publishing serious works of literature and non-fiction. Fortunately, the university presses are taking up this slack and in many cases the results have been striking. Notable examples are books issued by Harvard University Press, The University of Chicago Press, University of Oklahoma Press and The University of Michigan Press. There is little need to remind anyone of Oxford University Press or Cambridge University Press. Despite the unavoidable fact that a great deal of practically worthless "scholarly studies" are still being issued, the best of the university presses are producing books which live up to the highest standards of publishing, books which might never be realized if they had to be commercially successful. If competent humanists can be found to administer and improve the university presses we will see an increasing number of fine books from this source. The only dark cloud I can see is the danger that, like too much else in the academic world, these organizations may fall prey to the tender mercies of the bureaucrats and bookkeepers.

The number of small special publishers of higher quality is increasing. Harry Abrams Inc. is publishing magnificent art books, as is Skira. Frederick Praeger Inc. is issuing vitally important books on international affairs. The Charles Tuttle Company in Rutland, Vermont has made available a great deal of important Oriental material and there are numerous other publishers of top-quality. One of my most enjoyable experiences is the discovery of these publishers and the collecting of their catalogs so that occasionally we can help a customer who never dreams that so much is available. Much of this development seems to be in the hands of young people and this is a very healthy sign. In North Carolina we have several fine small publishers—Heritage in Charlotte, John Blair in Winston-Salem and most recently, Mr. Charles Sanders of Raleigh has issued the first of what promises to be a fine group of rare historical documents.

The second encouraging development is the flood of quality paperbacks. The subject is worthy of an article in itself and I would not attempt to assess here the many implications of this development. We should see improvement in reading level in the colleges because it is now possible, financially, for a teacher to assign more material of a worthwhile nature than heretofore, when the works were either not available or

obtainable only in expensive editions or in badly mutilated anthologies. Because of the quality paperbacks many more students are being exposed to books and though many of them are still merely putting in time, it is apparent that some of this exposure will have permanent and beneficial effects.

If the paperback can replace the dull and tedious textbook a great gain will have been made. It is a depressing experience to read pages at random from almost any text book in the so-called "social sciences." It is even more discouraging to note the rapidity with which these abortions are revised and promoted by highly paid travelling salesmen who infest the corridors of the universities. The quality of these books declines steadily from year to year; the bindings get worse; the print gets larger; the text becomes simpler and it is progressively displaced by more colorful and "meaningful" illustrations, the resulting mess being an insult to the intelligence of any adult. The whole dismal business is the ultimate projection of the gruesome "Dick and Jane" readers of the primary grades. The students are openly treated as consumers, to be exploited at every turn, to be sold text books as they are sold sweat shirts, desk sets and fraternity decals. The responsibility here rests squarely with the faculties which will defend at length their freedom to choose whatever material they wish, etc., etc. Despite the faculty argument college textbooks are big business and too much of the money is paid to professors who obligingly revise books frequently, thus making the old editions obsolete.

Booksellers and librarians should recognize more clearly their common aims. Though both are trying to do the same things, at times one detects a feeling of mutual antagonism, suspicion, or perhaps condescension. Booksellers are viewed as a breed of money changers, while frequently we "practical people" see librarians as rather nice but ineffectual paper-pushers. It is too bad that these attitudes, which I suspect are grounded in a kind of jealousy on both sides should persist. Both jobs are too important; we have only a few short years in the life of the student during which we can influence his mind. I have never been one for the soft-spoken rationalization. The truth should be clearly stated: ideas and books are more important than fraternities, basketball games (even honest ones), miscellaneous peripheral social activity of student government. All these things have their place but they are not at the center of the circle. If our schools are to have strength, then dedicated teachers and librarians, assisted by good books must be in full control. We cannot afford to ignore the essential fact that teachers with time to read and think, rather than to spend chasing bigger and better "research grants," and books, the important books, are the heart of any educational system. It is easy to say "important books" but exactly what are they? Bluntly, they are the books which make us uncomfortable, angry or pensive. If one cannot understand that statement and all its implications, then in my youthful arrogance I say, "There is no hope." Only teachers, librarians and booksellers can insure that students are constantly exposed to such books.

Samuel Johnson once said with tongue in cheek, "Booksellers are generous and liberal minded men." I am sure that if he had not had tongue in cheek, he would have included librarians.

BOOK PUBLISHING IN NORTH CAROLINA

BY WILLIAM OWENS
Duke University Press

Book publishing is often confused in the lay mind with one or more of its parts. There is perhaps no better statement of what it actually is—and isn't—than that of Chandler B. Grannis, associate editor of *Publishers' Weekly*, in his book, *What Happens in Book Publishing* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1957):

Publishing, let it be emphasized at the outset, is to make public—to send forth among the people—the words and picture that creative minds have produced, that editors have worked over, that printers have reproduced. As applied to books, it is a formidable succession of activities no one of which can, by itself, be called publishing. It is only when a manuscript has been transformed into a book and then distributed to its intended marketplace, that the process of publishing is complete. To perform an editorial service alone, whether at a risk or for a fee, is not to publish; to purchase printing and binding services alone is not to publish; to promote sale is not, in itself, to publish; to distribute another's printed product is not, in itself, to publish. Book publishing is to do all of these things, in an integrated process, whether carried out by a single firm or several. *It is the whole intellectual and business procedure of selecting and arranging to make a book and of promoting its ultimate use.*

In North Carolina, book publishing in its modern, complex, sense dates from the founding in the early 1920's of two college or university connected presses which from rather humble and academic origins were to grow into full-fledged book publishers. The Trinity College Press (now Duke University Press) was founded in 1921 and published its first book, Randolph G. Adams' *Political Ideas of the American Revolution*, in August 1922. The University of North Carolina Press was organized in March 1922 and published its first book, William C. Coker's *The Saprolegniaceae*, the following year. Perhaps "published" is not the correct word to use for what these two presses did with their books in the first few years, but as time went on they grew and learned and became publishers.

During the 1950's they were joined by three commercial houses—Jonathan Williams of Highlands in 1951, John Fries Blair of Winston-Salem in 1954, and Heritage House of Charlotte in 1956—to make North Carolina one of the centers of book publishing activity in the South.

I.

Of the five North Carolina book publishers, unquestionably the largest—in numbers of books published, in sales volume, in staff—is the University of North Carolina Press at Chapel Hill. It began as a non-stock corporation organized on March 13, 1922, by ten members of the faculty and three members of the Board of Trustees. The incorporators became the first Board of Governors and provision was made for adding new members or filling vacancies by a majority vote of the members. One of the purposes of the new corporation, as stated in its charter, was: "To promote generally, by publishing deserving books, the advancement of the arts and sciences, and the development of literature." At this first meeting a book manuscript was mentioned. Dr. W. C. Coker

was said to have a volume ready for publication, and he was requested to publish it in the name of the University of North Carolina Press. As noted above, this became the press's first book.

Although the university and groups within it had for many years been publishing, or having printed, journals, monographs, bulletins, and other material, there had not existed local arrangements for publishing books. The new organization was intended to coordinate and improve existing publishing enterprises and to encourage research and creative work by providing facilities for several types of publications, including books. Resources were limited. Some members of the faculty had been successful at writing or editing, but there was no one who had the experience or the professional knowledge necessary to start a publishing house. Nonetheless the faculty and the Board of Governors undertook the job. At the second meeting, Louis R. Wilson, one of the incorporators, was elected director of the press. The minutes of the third meeting reveal that he had in his budget, in addition to money for periodicals, monographs, etc., the sum of \$250 earmarked "for a Revolving Fund to Finance Publications of Books that Would Pay for Themselves Eventually."

Today that sum would hardly do more than pay for the dust wrappers for one or perhaps two of the press's books, but Mr. Wilson was able to say in his first annual report that one cloth-bound and one paper-bound book had been published, three were in process, and several others would be ready within eight months. By the end of the third year, eighteen books were in print.

In its first ten years, the press, with the aid of Howard D. Odum, director of the Institute of Research in Social Science, was able to obtain important financial support from the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Memorial; and, by 1930, the university's appropriation for book publishing had increased to \$12,500.

But the next few years, the years of the Great Depression, were difficult. In 1930 the university appropriation for books was suddenly cut to zero and funds from the Rockefeller Memorial ceased. For two years assistance was received from the Rockefeller Foundation, but two more years were to pass before the university's appropriation was restored. Income had to be derived from sales, and they were dropping. Staff and staff salaries had to be cut to keep within income. In 1932, when Louis R. Wilson left for the University of Chicago, W. T. Couch, assistant director since 1925, became the director. Among his first duties was to consult President Graham on the question of whether the press should be continued. The president pledged his support and urged continuance. Printers, anxious for work, extended credit—and the press survived.

In the fourth year of the second decade, important outside aid was again secured, this time from the Rosenwald Fund and the Carnegie Corporation. But in many ways more important to the press than this outside financial aid was its gradually acquired experience in book publishing. At first the staff had had as its sole function the overseeing of the manufacturing, designing, advertising, and selling of whatever its Board of Governors approved. Gradually, during the depression, the staff was able to take more responsibility for what was published. Manuscripts were rewritten by authors on the basis of detailed criticism by the press's editors, and in some cases were rewritten by the staff and the director. Most of these books were both financial and critical successes. Thus an

important function of a book publisher, editing, as distinct from mere proof reading, was added to the staff's duties.

In the 1940's and 1950's the press received liberal grants from a number of sources, notably the General Education Board and the Ford Foundation, and the university increased its appropriation. An experienced staff was able to take full advantage of the additional funds at its disposal. Under the present director, Lambert Davis, who has been an editor for several of the larger book publishers and is a former editor of *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, growth has been rapid. The press now publishes a number of books for the Institute of Early American History and Culture in addition to its regular book publishing program. In its first decade it published an average of twelve books per year; last year it published thirty-eight. About 850 books now bear the Chapel Hill imprint.

More important, however, than the number of books published is their nature and quality. Bestsellers like Josephina Niggli's *Mexican Village* (1945), Michihiko Hachiya's *Hiroshima Diary*, translated and edited by Warner Wells (1955), and Gwen Terasaki's *Bridge to the Sun* (1957) have made the press's imprint known and respected throughout the nation; and literally hundreds of equally distinguished, if less well-known, titles bear ample testimony of the press's high standards. It has published books on a wide variety of subjects written by scholars and writers from all over the world. It has always considered manuscripts strictly on their merits, but it has deliberately cultivated writing and scholarship about the South, its history, arts, science, and culture. In this field, especially, it has given its region and its state truly outstanding service.

II.

The Trinity College Press was founded in 1921 through the efforts of Professors W. T. Laprade, William K. Boyd, R. L. Flowers, and others, for the purpose of publishing research work engaged in by the faculty. As at Chapel Hill, the college or groups within it had for a number of years published a variety of scholarship material, including a journal and a monograph series of historical studies, but the need was felt for facilities for book publishing. In addition to Professor Adams' *Political Ideas of the American Revolution*, mentioned earlier, three books were published during the following three years, all four bearing the imprint of the Trinity College Press.

After the acceptance of the benefaction of James B. Duke, Trinity College became one of the undergraduate colleges of Duke University and the Trinity College Press became the Duke University Press, a non-academic department of the new university under the direction of a Press Board made up of members of the faculty and administration. The first book issued under the Duke University Press imprint was E. Malcolm Carroll's *Origins of the Whig Party*, published October 20, 1925.

For the next few decades the history of the press in Durham paralleled in many ways the history of the press in Chapel Hill. There was the same struggle for money and the same difficulties with an inexperienced, amateur staff—but in Durham the struggle and the difficulties lasted longer than they did in Chapel Hill. Such funds as were available went to support the journals published by the press. By 1935 there were seven of these scholarly journals, and they were a heavy drain on the press budget. As late as 1939 only \$4100 was available for the publication of new books. There was not enough continuity in the staff for anyone to gain the necessary publishing experience; and, dur-

ing most of the period, the directorship was a part time job for members of the faculty or administration. Business and accounting, even editorial selection, procedures were haphazard. Planned publication, aimed at achieving a balanced list, was unknown. There was only the illusion of planning because projects took so long to reach completion. Under these circumstances, growth was, of course, inhibited; but, with the years, a solid backlist of over three hundred titles was slowly accumulated.

In the 1950's matters began to improve. Ashbel G. Brice, for several years editor and assistant director, became full time director. There was a set-back in 1954 when lack of proper accounting information led to a sizeable deficit. For a time the press was unable to make additional book publishing commitments. But the set-back was only temporary—and in the end, it proved beneficial. The university appropriation, which, in the face of rising costs, had remained the same for many years, was increased. Late in 1956 many of the antiquated accounting procedures were overhauled and the press's business put on a sounder basis.

Outside assistance came from several sources, particularly the P. Huber Hanes Fund and the Ford Foundation. Within the university, the Duke University Research Council provided support for the technical or esoteric research studies that made up a good portion of the press's list. In 1956 the press began publishing a series of books for the Duke University Commonwealth-Studies Center which had been established with the assistance of the Carnegie Corporation; and, in 1959, a series originating with the university's Lilly Endowment Research Program in Christianity and Politics. In 1960, *The Historical Papers of the Trinity College Historical Society*, a series of paperback monographs which had begun at Trinity College in 1897, was replaced by a new series of books, *Duke Historical Publications*, sponsored by the History Department and supported by special grants from the university.

In the broadest sense, it is the policy of the Duke University Press to make available to the public any scholarly work which, because of the merits of its contents, its style, and its general value, deserves publication. That is the policy of most university presses. Though founded primarily to afford a medium of publication for the results of scholarly research carried on by the faculty, it has not limited its scope to any one field of study or to any one group of authors. Less than half of the Duke Press authors have been or are now teachers at Duke, but the publishing program has reflected the faculty's needs and interests. The University of North Carolina, a state university, has naturally developed a strong interest in state and regional studies. Since Duke is a private institution, there has been less emphasis on such studies and on regional publishing. Nonetheless, the press has published a number of books of a regional nature, notably the *Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore*, a monumental work which is nearing completion. In the last few years, although the number of new books published per year has remained relatively static, sales have more than doubled—thanks largely to the success, both critical and financial, of books like Theodore Ropp's *War in the Modern World*, Walter Ansel's *Hitler Confronts England*, Clarence Gohdes' *Bibliographical Guide to the Study of the Literature of the U. S. A.*, Peter Bauer's *Economic Analysis and Policy in Underdeveloped Countries*, and George W. Nitchie's *Economic Values in the Poetry of Robert Frost*. A marked increase in the circulation and back issue sales of the journals has greatly eased their drain on the press budget and has released more money for book publication and promotion. At present, expansion is limited

only by the ever-present publishing problem of finding good manuscripts and the limitations imposed by inadequate quarters for the staff.

III

The first of North Carolina's three commercial book publishers appeared on the scene in 1951 when Jonathan Williams, a poet of Highlands, North Carolina, began issuing a series of beautifully printed and illustrated books, mostly of poetry, under the imprint of Jargon Books. In 1960, Mr. Williams summed up his experience as follows:

The purpose of a writer's press like Jargon is reckless and doomed. It is to make coherence in the avant-garde community—a community which is snide and sullen and generally deserving of the rock-bottom place it holds in America. Regardless of what they say ('they' being poeticules, criticasters, kitschdiggers, or justfolks) I believe the writing of poems to be more than a minor art and the only way to impress this upon a distraught American attention is by stating and restating the main traditions of the few poets who move us from generation to generation. "Our memory is as weak as our heart," Charles Olson once told me. God knows, it is true. But that is not the end of it, for we go from one poem to the next, one poet to the next, hoping to find the world imaginable. In the midst of an endless number of alienations and arguments, Jargon has now been on the scene for nine years. And if a press is to be known by its writers, there is no equal to Jargon's list of new poets, and the formats in which they have been presented. This seems obvious enough. What has not been as obvious is the fact that I, the publisher, am not very capable of being 'business-like' about Jargon. This is true by nature; and, undoubtedly, because there has never been anything but thousands of dollars in debts to printers to worry about and no income for a living, I have tended to let things slide often in favor of writing my own poems or editing and designing someone's new book. This is the reckless part. But to hell with that too. There are always a hundred people to tell you what's wrong with what you're doing and why it shouldn't be done. There isn't much time to argue. The accomplishment of the press, modest as it is, is the only answer to give.

Mr. Williams is too modest. That accomplishment has been solid. His books, many of them printed in Europe, are, typographically, works of art. So far about forty have appeared. Among the authors are such well-known writers as Kenneth Patchen, Henry Miller, Charles Olson, and Paul Goodman, and there have been contributions by Kay Boyle, William Carlos Williams, Kenneth Rexroth, and others.

IV.

John Fries Blair brought an unusual background to book publishing. After twelve years of practicing law in Winston-Salem, he decided that he was more interested in things literary than things legal and went to Columbia University to study English and comparative literature, receiving his M. A. degree in 1921. Thereafter he taught English at Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and at Salem College; was on the staff of the Institute of Government in Chapel Hill; and on the staff of the University of North Carolina Press.

His first book was published in 1924 and over twenty books now bear his imprint. *The Hattersman* by Ben Dixon MacNeill was awarded the 1958 Mayflower Society Prize. Many of his books are regional, but on his list are an elementary music book, a book on the American colonial legal system, a book about Mexico, a book about

collegiate basketball, and a Scottish cookbook. Mr. Blair considers himself "a general publisher, limited somewhat by a purse that is not inexhaustible and an education too exclusively literary and legal."

V.

The youngest of North Carolina's book publishing companies is among its most productive. Heritage House* is the publishing imprint of Heritage Printers, Inc., of Charlotte, a book printing firm started in 1956 by William E. Loftin and William J. McNally. Heritage has printed books for both Jonathan Williams and John Fries Blair. Bill Loftin has said frankly that he became a book publisher because he couldn't find enough book printing business to keep his presses operating.

Loftin grew up in his father's printing plant in Gastonia. He graduated from Davidson College and studied at the University of North Carolina and at Harvard Business School but returned to commercial printing in 1950. He and his partner, William McNally, vice-president and editor, researched their projected business for two years before Heritage was launched. The publishing department has now issued more than thirty books. Loftin is an outstanding designer and typographer and a firm believer in quality design and production. As a result each year since its founding Heritage has placed in the annual Southern Books Competition. In 1960 it was the only non-institutional publishing house winning this recognition.

The books published by this Charlotte company—other than those it manufactures for other publishers—represent a considerable financial speculation on the part of the young firm. But because of its ability to operate at costs which defy the national averages, a Heritage House book begins making a profit for the company with the sale of about 3,000 copies. Most commercial publishers must attain sales of at least 5,000 to 7,000 copies before reaching the break-even point. The titles published by Heritage House appeal primarily to regional buyers and Civil War buffs, and tourist centers have proved a good market for them. Among the more successful have been Manly Wade Wellman's *The Rebel Songster*, the same writer's *Harper's Ferry: Prize of War*, and Bruce and Nancy Roberts' *An Illustrated Guide to Ghosts and Mysterious Occurrences in the Old North State*. Not all of the firm's books, however, have been regional. *Army Lady Today*, by Helen T. Westphaling of Fort Bragg, has sold over 8,000 copies.

Regional publishing and book printing has its pitfalls—especially for a new firm with limited capital. The process of becoming known and of finding acceptance for their titles in the book trade has frequently been the cause of temporary discouragement for the two partners, but the future is bright. They are adding to their printing facilities and they are gradually building a substantial backlist.

*McNally of Charlotte is now used as the name of the publishing division of Heritage Printers, Inc.

ANNOUNCING

DEVELOPING A GOOD SCHOOL PROGRAM, a guide for librarians, teachers, and principals, is a new 40-page publication issued in February 1961, by the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction. This well-illustrated bulletin containing 38 photographs made in North Carolina schools, offers suggestions for planning and implementing an effective program of school library services.

Part One presents three functions of the school library: guiding pupils in reading, listening, and viewing; teaching library study skills; and advising with reference and research work. Examples and ideas for implementing these functions are put forth in carefully selected illustrations and clear cut phrases.

Part Two discusses guidelines for the school faculty in planning the library program, making library resources available, and selecting and using instructional materials. Emphases are placed on developing a school-wide plan for library services; policies for library attendance; policies for circulation of library materials; suggestions for teachers in finding appropriate library materials and planning ahead for reference assignments.

The format of DEVELOPING A GOOD SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAM is a departure from the traditional curriculum bulletin. Photographs and well-chosen phrases are integrated to present ideas to challenge those who have any part in developing a school library program.

DEVELOPING A GOOD SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAM was prepared by the School Library Services Section, Division of Instructional Services, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, under the direction of Cora Paul Bomar, Supervisor of the Section. Staff members of the Driver and Safety Education Section and the Division of School Planning assisted with the photographic work and cover design.

Available at 50c per copy, from:

Director of Publications
State Department of Public Instruction
Raleigh, North Carolina

Orders should be accompanied by check payable to "State Treasurer."

NEW NORTH CAROLINA BOOKS

By WILLIAM S. POWELL

John F. Blair, Publisher

NELL WISE WECHTER. *Betsy Dowdy's Ride*. Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1960. 173 pp. \$2.95.

Betsy Dowdy, 15-year-heroine of this story, may really have lived on North Carolina's Outer Banks. Traditional accounts of her brave ride during the Revolution to warn Patriots of a threatened British attack have been handed down from generation to generation in that area. Mrs. Wechter, a Dare County native, has woven a delightful story for young people from the accounts which she has heard all her life.

Duke University Press

WILLARD B. GATEWOOD, JR. *Eugene Clyde Brooks, Educator and Public Servant*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1960. 279 pp. \$6.00

Slowly but surely the recent history of North Carolina is being recorded in a series of readable biographies of those who brought us to our present state of development. Brooks, whose career was highlighted when he became State Superintendent of Public Instruction and President of North Carolina State College, was director of Governor Aycock's educational campaign. A public school teacher and college professor, he was also editor of the *North Carolina Journal of Education*. Between 1924 and 1933 Brooks played an important role in the movement which brought about the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

WAYLAND D. HAND, editor. *Popular Beliefs and Superstitions from North Carolina*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1961. 664 pp. \$10.00

This sixth, and next to last, volume in the Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore is fascinating. Among the subjects treated are birth, infancy, and childhood; the human body and folk medicine; the home and domestic pursuits; economic and social relationships; travel and communication; and love, courtship, and marriage. Few of the statements are longer than one or two lines, but in nearly every case variants are given as well as references to sources and fuller discussions of the subject. Every library and collection of North Caroliniana in the state must have the complete series of which this volume is a part.

Heritage House and McNally of Charlotte

MARTHA NORBURN ALLEN. *Asheville and Land of the Sky*. Charlotte: Heritage House, 1960. 208 pp. \$3.95. (Revised and enlarged edition)

Combining the best features of a local history and a guidebook, Mrs. Allen has given us a concise yet readable handbook of Western North Carolina. There are a number of chapters on general subjects, but separate chapters are devoted to such specific topics as the Biltmore Estate, Flat Rock, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and the French Broad River. The index is most inadequate, but a classified bibliography will suggest further reading. An occasional error (J. S. Wheeler for J. H. Wheeler; W. T. Tomeroy for W. T. Pomeroy) mars this book.

Selected Poems of James Larkin Pearson, Poet Laureate of North Carolina. Edited with an Introduction by Walter Blackstock. Charlotte: McNally of Charlotte, 1960. 68 pp. \$2.75.

Under the general editorship of Richard Walser, this is the first of a projected series of volumes devoted to "Old North State Poets." We have here the best of James Larkin Pearson's poems from five volumes which appeared between 1908 and 1952. Professor Blackstock's introduction sets the stage by presenting the poet as a man and as an artist in words. This book is attractively printed and bound—truly a Tar Heel product all around.

BRUCE ROBERTS. *Harper's Ferry in Pictures.* Charlotte: McNally of Charlotte, 1960 (48) pp. \$2.95 cloth. \$1.50 paper.

This fascinating picturebook contains the products of artists who worked with sketch pencil as well as camera when Harper's Ferry was on the front page of every newspaper. It also contains the work of Charlotte photographer Bruce Roberts who visited the site more recently. The happy combination of old pictures and new to tell the meaning of Harper's Ferry in American history and to publicize the recently-established Harpers Ferry National Monuments sets a pattern which might well be followed for other events and places in the American past.

ROBERT STRANGE. *Eoneguski, or The Cherokee Chief.* Foreword by Richard Walser. Charlotte: McNally of Charlotte, 1960. 2 volumes in one. \$4.95.

This is a facsimile reprint of a two-volume novel by Robert Strange, Fayetteville attorney, published in 1839. It has the distinction of being the first novel to use North Carolina material and to have its setting entirely in the state. Strange was familiar, through personal association, with the Cherokee Indians about whom he wrote, and this novel, Professor Walser points out, adds much to our knowledge of the daily life of the Cherokees.

State Department of Archives and History

J. G. DE ROULHAC HAMILTON, editor. *The Papers of William Alexander Graham.* Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1960. Vol. III, 541 pp. \$3.00

The third volume of the Graham papers covers the period 1845-1850 and includes the four years of Graham's governorship. As is generally true in the case of similar documentary volumes published by the Department of Archives and History, this is a veritable mine of information on a variety of topics. There is a letter concerning the birth of President Jackson in Union County, North Carolina, and citing the statements of persons who were present on that occasion. A list of the 49 newspapers published in the state in 1850 gives the names of the editors. And there are a number of references to historical documents and collections of records being made at that time looking towards the publication of a history of North Carolina. This is, indeed, a fertile source for the Tar Heel researcher. The index is useful, but we could wish that it included *every* name mentioned in the letters and notes, and that more subjects were cited.

JOHN G. BARRETT. *North Carolina as a Civil War Battleground, 1861-1865*. Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1960. 99 pp. 35c.

BARBARA CRAIG. *The Wright Brothers and Their Development of the Airplane*. Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1960. 23 pp. 15c.

RICHARD WALSER. *Picturebook of Tar Heel Authors*. Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1960. 46 pp. 25c. (Second edition)

These three most recent pamphlets in a series directed primarily to school children, fill a need in North Carolina reference collections. Each of the pamphlets is clearly written but not in a childish style—they will be used and enjoyed by readers of any age. All have interesting illustrations and are attractively printed and bound. The Publications Division of the Department of Archives and History is to be commended for its splendid service to North Carolinians in producing the series of pamphlets of which these three titles are a part.

Charles Towne Preservation Trust

JAMES SPRUNT. *Tales of the Cape Fear Blockade*. Winnabow: Charles Towne Preservation Trust, 1960. 134 pp. \$5.00

An introduction, notes, a map, illustrations, and a bibliography by Cornelius M. D. Thomas have been added to this reprint of James Sprunt's account of an interesting period in Cape Fear history which appeared in 1901 and 1902. The author was purser on the Confederate Steamer *Lilian*, and his experiences at sea and on shore during the Civil War make fascinating reading indeed.

Tryon Palace

THE TRYON PALACE COMMISSION. *A Tryon Palace Trifle or, Eighteenth Century Cookery, &c.* Williamsburg: Printed by The Virginia Gasette, 1960. 74 pp.

In eighteenth-century fashion a lengthy subtitle describes the contents of this attractive little book as "Being a Selection of Household Receipts from an hitherto Unpublished Manuscript Household Book of the Middle Eighteenth Century now housed in the Housekeeper's Room at Tryon Palace, at New Bern, North Carolina, which Domestic Matters will assuredly entertain & astonish the Modern Housewife, with which is combined Sundry interesting Accounts of Colonial Life, including a Study of the Art of Cookery as practised in America before the Revolution, a chatty Letter from Royal Governor William Tryon to his uncle, a Report of the Visit of President George Washington to Tryon Palace, and various other Matters having to do with the Life of our North Carolina Colonial Ancestors." This assortment of items is printed with the old-fashioned long *s* and catchwords to give the flavor of old times. As a souvenir of a visit to the Palace it is acceptable. It is to be deplored, however, for its inaccurately transcribed manuscripts, its unattractive titlepage, and for the inclusion of much material related neither to the Palace nor to eighteenth century cookery—"Washington's Query about Water," "The Ladies of Olden Days Ate Little at Debutante Balls," and "A New Bern Wedding in the Last Century." It is our guess that too many cooks (in this case the Cookery Book Committee) spoiled the broth.

Privately Printed

CHARLOTTE IVEY HASTINGS, compiler. *Our North Carolina Heritage*. (Charlotte: School Printing Service, 1960.) 212 pp.

Mrs. Hastings is to be commended for her diligence in collecting and publishing this assortment of stories and legends relating to North Carolina. They were written or collected by children of the state under the sponsorship of The Children of the American Revolution and The Children of the Confederacy. The sketches are, of course, uneven in quality, but they are evidence that many Tar Heel youngsters are interested in local history.

THEOPHILUS NOEL. *A Campaign from Santa Fe to the Mississippi*. With an Introduction by Neal Austin. Raleigh: Charles R. Sanders, Jr., 1961. 152 pp. \$17.00.

Originally published in Shreveport, La., in 1865, and now issued in a handsome new edition by Raleigh bookseller, Charles R. Sanders, Jr., this book will be of especial interest to North Carolina librarians for its Introduction written by Neal Austin, Librarian, High Point Public Library. This is the first volume in a "Confederate Series," and has been printed in a limited edition of 500 copies.

NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Report of the Nominating Committee

June 28, 1961

The Nominating Committee of the North Carolina Library Association reports the following officers for 1961-1963 elected by mail ballot:

- President Carlton P. West
- Vice President and President-Elect Margaret E. Kalp
- Second Vice President Dr. Benjamin F. Smith
- Recording Secretary Mrs. Louella S. Posey
- Corresponding Secretary Mrs. Anna J. Cooper
- Treasurer Mrs. Pattie B. McIntyre
- Directors Evelyn Parks and Elvin E. Stroud

- Beatrice Holbrook, Chairman
- Margaret Johnston
- Mrs. Ray N. Moore
- Mildred Mullis
- Dr. Benjamin E. Powell

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