

THE DIRECTORY OF COMPANY HISTORIES OF THE BOOK INDUSTRIES

THE IMPORTANCE OF THAT SECTOR of our industry which produces our printed matter is perhaps second to none. By this I mean not only those engaged in the production of books for research or enjoyment, but the whole range of printed matter from the ephemeral leaflet or brochure which provides an insight into the workings of our society to such things as jam tin labels and biscuit wrappings. The basic research material for any serious study of the printing and allied trades is provided by such material as type face sample books, machinery catalogues and booklets, paper sample books, price lists of all kinds, ink colour sample books, house or company magazines — all material which is primarily produced for distribution outside those channels which normally allow information to be acquired, processed and preserved for future research. This usually includes a chain of transactions such as commercial publication or some other form of public distribution, sale through booksellers, documentation such as listing in catalogues, national bibliographies or books-in-print, acquisition and processing for use by a library or similar body. The “difficult” nature of this type of publication is that it bypasses this system of distribution. The problem with acquiring this type of publication and the failure of the established libraries to interest themselves in this subject or effectively come to terms with non-standard forms of acquisition have resulted in very little of this kind of material being available to the researcher today.

Similar problems are encountered with a more obviously important category of publication like the “company” history. Usually produced to celebrate the jubilee or founding of a particular firm, organization or group, many are lavishly produced, a showpiece publication with many unique photographs and often compiled from documents unavailable outside their archives. All are important to the researcher in this field. However, as they are often also produced outside the mainstream of commercial book marketing, are not sold but distributed to customers or employees, not listed in national bibliographies or similar publications, they are also very rarely represented in our public collections.

In my work in bringing together a collection of information on books and printing I have received many such works and have come across references to many more. A checklist of these publications would I think be of wider interest — to the researcher, making him aware of the availability and potential of this kind of material, and to the library, as these works often remain in print for many years and can be obtained in return for a little public relations. I am therefore producing a checklist of such publications, *The Directory of Company Histories of the Book Industries* (*Verzeichnis der Jubiläumsschriften der Graphischen Industrie*), to contain sections about the following subject groups:-

- B. Booksellers and their associations;
- BB. Bookbinders and their associations;

- M. Manufacturers, suppliers and their associations;
- P. Papermakers, distributors and their associations;
- T. Typefounders and their associations;
- V. Publishers and their associations.

For inclusion each publication must be produced by the body itself and not by a commercial publisher. One or two parts will be published each year, containing about 250 references per part. These will provide the basis for compiling a final directory with locations (well in the future). A limited number are available for sale at A\$5.00 per part (prepaid but postfree) from:

J.P. Wegner
Brandywine Press & Archive
20 Murray Road
Beecroft NSW 2119
Australia.

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