

## NEW HORIZONS

THEIR FLY-LEAF INSCRIPTIONS show that I received my copies of *Winnie-The-Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Horner* for Christmas in 1944. Some thirty years later I bought in Dunedin a bundle of paperbacks containing (among more immediately interesting titles) 'Yank' Levy's *Guerrilla Warfare*, a Penguin Special published in 1941. In December 1980, a serendipitous visit to a New York second-hand bookshop produced a copy of *Of Wives and Wiving*, an anthology compiled by the pseudonymous John Buncle Jnr. and published by the Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, probably in 1947 or 1948.

During this period I had discovered that disparate items such as these can be linked not only by their chance coexistence on my bookshelves, but also by the fact — revealed in the printers' colophons and sometimes on the title-pages too — of their having been printed in New Zealand on behalf of overseas publishers, sometimes for distribution at home, sometimes for shipment and distribution abroad.

New Zealand is a community long accustomed to importing books: the first produced specifically for this market must be Thomas Kendall's *A Korao no New Zealand; or, The New Zealander's first book* (Sydney, 1815). There is also a solid complementary tradition of internal book production for internal consumption: William Yate set up his short-lived press at Kerikeri in 1830, and William Colenso his more successful venture at Paihia in 1835. In this context, the discovery of radically different printing/publishing patterns confuses the accepted order of things and upsets the perceived balance of the world. But once one acknowledges this situation, it is easy to see that precedents exist. I have beside me a collection of biblical extracts translated into a New Hebridean language, and printed in an edition of 4000 copies by the Caxton printing Company, Dunedin, in 1891.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the most interesting cases seem to date from the 1940s.

From early 1941 (at the latest) until at least 1949, a number of British publishers had books printed in New Zealand. Sometimes this was done to avoid paper restrictions in Britain, but during part of that period it may also have been done to reduce the risks of wartime damage and destruction, both at home and at sea.

Penguin Books appear to have led the way. As early as January 1941 John Rhode's crime novel *The Murders in Praed Street* was printed in Auckland for the publishers by Wilson & Horton Ltd., who were still producing Penguins in 1944. Other firms involved in this practice were Stone, Son & Co. Ltd., Wellington (1942–December 1944), Abel, Dykes Ltd., Auckland (the only examples sighted date from mid-1944) and the National Printing Co. Ltd., Auckland (1944–45). As with Penguins issued in Britain during the war years, advertisements appear on the back cover and both inside covers. In New Zealand they were for De Reszke cigarettes, Roma Tea, His Master's Voice, the Red Cross, Gem razor blades and Parker pens. Nine of the 16 titles seen are works of detective fiction, by Margery Allingham and Ngaio Marsh among others. Six are more

'literary': Isherwood, Dorothy Parker and Stephen Leacock are represented, and an anthology of American short stories includes work by Hemingway, Runyon, Erskine Caldwell, Saroyan, Steinbeck and Faulkner. This antipodean connection could well pose unsuspected problems for assiduous author-collectors and author-bibliographers, and present them with new opportunities.

Coulls Somerville Wilkie of Dunedin printed novels by Ngaio Marsh, published for the Crime Club by Collins, of London. I have seen *Colour Scheme*, first published in 1943 and issued in New Zealand in that year, *Died in the Wool* (first edition 1944) and *Final Curtain* (first edition 1947) : the New Zealand editions of these last two titles are undated. Bindings are cloth boards.

The same firm also printed editions of A.A. Milne 'Published in New Zealand by | HICKS SMITH & WRIGHT, WELLINGTON | for | METHUEN & CO. LTD., LONDON | 36 Essex Street, Strand, W.C.2'. *When We Were Very Young*, *Now We Are Six*, *Winnie-The-Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner* all saw their 'First Australasian Edition' in October 1943, and their second in 1944, the verse in February and the prose in September. In 1949, the two prose volumes reached their sixth Australian and fourth New Zealand editions. All the copies sighted are bound in distinctive mottled-green paper-covered boards.

*If Ever I Cease to Love*, by Frances Parkinson Keyes, first published in London by Eyre & Spottiswoode in 1943, appeared in New Zealand in the following year, printed by Ferguson & Osborn, Ltd., Wellington for A.A. Davies, the original publishers' New Zealand representative.

Christchurch's Caxton Press, the most lively and innovative printer-publishers in the country at the time, also forged international links during the 1940s, although the reasons are different. A widening interest in some New Zealand writers may lie behind the Australian edition of Frank Sargeson's *When The Wind Blows*. Curiously, the title-page acknowledges only 'The Caxton Press | [double rule] | CHRISTCHURCH N.Z. | 1945', but there exist two distinct dust-wrappers, one prepared for 'THE CAXTON PRESS', the other for 'REED & HARRIS MELBOURNE'.<sup>2</sup>

A war-time friendship led John Lehmann to the Caxton Press in 1946.

My difficulty had not been to find authors or books to suit my ideals, but to get the venture [his publishing house, John Lehmann Limited] going at all in the face of the bar by the Paper Control, the unlikelihood of the control being relaxed for some time, and the enormous difficulties of staff and materials in which all printers found themselves as accumulating war-born obstacles piled up on one another in the first years of peace. I even sent two small but important books of poetry to New Zealand to be printed by my old friend Denis Glover at his Caxton Press: Laurie Lee's *The Bloom of Candles* and Edith Sitwell's *The Shadow of Cain*.<sup>3</sup>

Friendship, and the avoidance of irksome restrictions, but surely also a measure of admiration for the quality of the Caxton product? Such admiration must have been one factor in another international undertaking. P. A. Lawlor writes that:

... when Caxton produced John Buncke's 'Of Wives and Wiving', an American publisher took a fancy to the book and ordered some thousands of sheets to be printed and shipped over there for binding,<sup>4</sup> but since the grey paper-covered boards of the American binding match exactly those of the home-grown Caxton edition, I question that final detail. John Lehmann must have shared the Henry Regnery Company's fancy, for he too published an edition, under his own imprint, and with his own (blue cloth) binding. The Caxton and Lehmann editions are both dated 1947, the Regnery edition is undated.

Traditional book collecting and bibliography have always reflected the web of relationships linking New Zealand books, and books in New Zealand, to the wider world beyond these shores. Less conventional collecting areas, such as I have drawn on for part of this exploratory note, reveal that those relationships are more complex, and more varied, than we had realised. Forgotten corners may sometimes open out on to new horizons.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Patrick O'Reilly, *Bibliographie méthodique, analytique et critique des Nouvelles-Hébrides*, (Paris, 1958), No.1770.

<sup>2</sup> The colophon (verso title-page) reads: Printed at THE CAXTON PRESS, 129 Victoria Street | Christchurch C.I., N.Z. The Australian edition has | been specially printed for | REED AND HARRIS | publishers, 360 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria

<sup>3</sup> John Lehmann, *The Ample Proposition: Autobiography III* (London, 1966), p.23. *The Shadow of Cain* was printed in 1946 (colophon on verso of title) and published in 1947. *The Bloom of Candles* was printed and published in 1947.

<sup>4</sup> *The Caxton Press, Some Impressions and a Bibliography*, New Zealand Collectors Monographs: No. Five, The Beltane Book Bureau, Wellington, New Zealand, 1951, p.12.

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