

## EARLY IMPRINTS PROJECT QUEENSLAND (EIPQ): A UNION LIST

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In 1993 the *EIPQ: Union List* was published on microfiche by the State Library of Queensland. This publication represents for scholars an interim stage in the successful completion of a series of projects which have continued for many years and are now nearing completion.

Recording of titles for the Early Imprints Project Queensland (EIPQ) was undertaken during 1986. It was part of a larger scheme, the Australia and New Zealand Early Imprints Project (ANZEIP), the Australian component of which later became the Australia's Book Heritage Resources Project (ABHR) (Morrison, 1993). Queensland was the last state apart from the Australian Capital Territory to receive funding from the Australian Research Grants Scheme (ARGS) in order to list and contribute its holdings of pre-1801 printed books to the ANZEIP database and also to the London-based Eighteenth Century Short Title Catalogue (ESTC).

Ultimately, there has been little in the Queensland experience of the Early Imprints Project which stands out as unique. EIPQ sought to gather the same information from similar public and private collections using the standard reporting procedures and record cards used elsewhere in Australia. The major difference perceived was the project's contact with Queensland country collections (Tilley & Young, 1987). The Rare Books Librarian, State Library of Queensland, coordinated the listing of the private collections in Brisbane and the country areas. Over 2,500 pre-1801 titles were recorded in private and institutional Queensland libraries.

In all, twelve libraries (in addition to the private collections) contributed records to this union list. Work began on the Queensland Parliamentary Library, working with the historic O'Donovan Collection, then advanced to the Supreme Court Library. The State Library of Queensland was next.

The State Library's Rare Book Collection was begun in 1963 and was based on the collection of George Rogers Harding, an early Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland, and on a donation in 1922 of early Greek and Latin classics by Percy Frank Hockings. Mr Justice Harding was also responsible for building the fine collection of the Supreme Court Library, and it was his private collection which was purchased after his death in 1895 to begin the Public Library of Queensland.

The University of Queensland's libraries had some 1500 books printed before 1801. At least one third of the project's recording time was spent at the University of Queensland, as it was the largest institutional collection of EIP titles. Working at the Fryer Memorial Library at the University of Queensland meant access to their excellent collection of bibliographical tools for verifying the Project's listings. EIPQ used two methods for gathering bibliographic data. For the large institutional collections, a photocopy of the title page was made and relevant data transcribed

onto the recording card – that is, pagination, format, illustrations, binding and anything (for example, cancel leaves) which might distinguish that volume from others of the same edition. Copy-specific information – provenance, manuscript additions, imperfections – were also noted. For smaller collections, the necessary details were transcribed onto the record card and no photocopy of the title page was attached. For all pre-1701 works of English origin, EIPQ endeavoured to establish Wing or Pollard and Redgrave (STC) numbers.

For a variety of good reasons, but largely because of the geographical isolation of the Australian States one from another, ANZEIP had been regionally organised, and Queensland was no exception to this arrangement. With approximately nine per cent of EIPQ titles located outside the Brisbane area, the committee had to devise an effective method of listing country collections. Two alternative procedures were adopted: private owners were asked either to take their EIP titles to their local country library or, as a last resort, to mail them to the State Library of Queensland.

The Project in Australia, and more specifically in Queensland, has had untold benefits in that it has unearthed works the existence of which in Queensland were unknown (for example, the Eber Bunker Maritime Collection of books on whaling donated to the State Library of Queensland as a result of EIPQ); it has helped libraries identify items in need of preservation and/or conservation, and it has found items that were believed lost. Some contributing libraries have, for the first time, the basis of a catalogue entry for their Rare Book collection provided by a researcher with expertise in this area. The Project engendered considerable local pride and cooperation, and the publication of the *EIPQ: Union List* in 1993 by the State Library of Queensland represents for scholars an interim stage of the successful completion of the project.

The records in the *EIPQ: Union List* will substantially expand our conception of what was published abroad and brought to Australia. Our local scholars are in for some surprises when they use this first provisional edition of EIPQ. This will more than compensate them for any lack of uniformity and consistency in the cataloguing of imprints – an unavoidable result of the manner in which the project was undertaken.

Brisbane

#### REFERENCES

- Morrison, I. (1993), 'The Australia's Book Heritage Resources Project', *BSANZ Bulletin*, 17(3), 113-124.  
Tilley, C. and S. Young (1987), 'The Early Imprints Project in Queensland', *Australian Library Journal*, 36(3), 141-144.