ADVENTURE AND ART:
LITERATURE PUBLISHING IN CHRISTCHURCH
1934-95

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To Amanda, who supported me and helped me to see the obvious when I was looking for complexities, thank you for your patience, understanding and perception.

To Steve for inspiration, Donne for intelligent friendship, and thanks to Al, the unreasonable man who opened the floodgates and therefore has unlimited liability, for not explaining Torts to me.

Finally, to Gareth, whose generosity never fails to surprise me.
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Explanatory Note: Parts of this thesis are not strictly in accordance with conventional expectations regarding layout and design. What rules that do exist were largely formulated prior to the widespread use of word-processing and desktop publishing programmes. Any departure from conventional presentation is not merely capricious, but is a deliberate attempt to draw attention both to these changes and the effect they have on the text. For example, by underlaying the 1947 Group catalogue under the text on page 78, I am trying to draw attention to the way in which Caxton Press mapped out a new printing topography by utilising new or existing technologies. It is also a graphic representation of the overlap between art and literary movements, represented elsewhere in Gill's notions of space and art. Similarly, my use of sidebar quotations conveys the impact that a book's appearance has on its reception, while suggesting a scene of radial reading that is in part determined by available printing technologies. Just as the computer has redefined what can be expected of art, so too has it altered the nature of literature.
ABSTRACT

This thesis charts the evolution of a publishing infrastructure in Christchurch, where a resourceful, and unusually professional commitment to the development of New Zealand literature has been exhibited. Specifically, it presents histories and preliminary bibliographical checklists of Caxton, Pegasus, Nag's Head, Hawk and Hazard Presses, as well as briefly examining the future of the publishing industry in the face of the Whitcoulls takeover and revolutionising computer technology. This examination of the development of a locally based publishing infrastructure provides insight into the development of a New Zealand literary canon, and goes some way towards contextualising the work of writers such as Allen Curnow, Janet Frame, Denis Glover, and Alan Loney.

By contrasting the different dynamics that operate in the private presses of Gormack and Loney with the more commercial presses of Caxton, Pegasus and Hazard, the thesis draws attention to the complex relationships existing within institutions of literature production. The extent to which technological change is revealed to influence the development of literary movements emphasises the very public process that intervenes between author’s imagination and the supposedly private act of reading. The establishment of an indigenous book culture is then located in a more international context, and is traced from its origins in the renaissance of printing in England in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, through a revitalisation of small presses in the 1970s (and the accompanying re-orientation of the cultural matrix to American models), to the impact of computer technologies in the eighties and nineties. The emergence of a distinct set of bibliographic codes (as per Jerome McGann’s formulation of “the textual condition”) is also contrasted with contemporaneous developments in the visual arts.
"It is, in fact, a hazardous venture - whether based on idealism or not - to operate a Publishing House. It becomes a commercial operation, though not a commercial venture. That is, if idealism is in play. But is idealism sufficient sustenance in the midst of commercialism?" (Chan)
INTRODUCTION

Publishing anything in the very small market that New Zealand represents is a precarious business, but to attempt to publish literature, and particularly verse, would seem to be a venture reserved for the foolhardy. Nevertheless, many have attempted it, although few have survived beyond their first publication or two. Christchurch, however, has provided, and still provides, a stability for publishing ventures rarely seen elsewhere in the country. The Caxton Press epitomises that often-sought-after but rarely achieved combination of continuity and a commitment to New Zealand literature, but it was not alone: although comparatively something of a late starter, Pegasus Press was roughly contemporaneous with Caxton; the Nag’s Head Press exemplified the private press tradition inherent, but to a large extent subjugated for commercial reasons, in these other two; driven by a desire to attain high standards of craft production, Alan Loney incorporated typographical innovation and American-derived “open form” poetry in his Hawk Press in the 1970s; and, finally, Quentin Wilson’s Hazard Press seems to ensure the continuation of a tradition of publishing patronage of the arts in Christchurch. All were essentially small-scale operations, but their extensive output of New Zealand literature belied their size.

Writing in the introduction to The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English, Terry Sturm welcomed Dennis Mc Eldowney’s chapter on “Publishing, Patronage, Literary Magazines,” stating that it placed “significant institutional moments within a much broader, much more diverse context, opening up the field for the more detailed investigations that are needed” (xvi). Implicit in this thesis is confirmation of Professor Sturm’s assessment of the need for more research in this neglected area of New Zealand literary history. This state of affairs would seem to be a product of the assumption that publication of a book - when its merit (itself a problematic area) is agreed upon - is a mere formality and of only peripheral concern to the study of New Zealand literature. However, the importance of this kind of contextualisation cannot be underestimated, and this thesis goes further and takes as its premise
that literary works are fundamentally social products and that writing is a collaborative process.

In answer to the question in the title of his article, "What is the 'History of Publishing'?" Morris Eaves wrote of "the history of publishing in the large sense ... the sense in which all 'published' works influence and are influenced by a complex technological, economic, social and artistic milieu" (60). In a series of books, Jerome McGann elaborated his own definition of what he termed "the textual condition - that scene of complex dialogue and interchange, of testing and texting" (Textual 5). He worked from the premise that "literary work can be practised, can constitute itself, only in and through various institutional forms which are not themselves 'literary' at all, though they are meaning-constitutive. The most important of these institutions, for the past 150 years anyway, are the commercial publishing network in all its complex parts and the academy ... Literary works are produced with reference to these mediat­ional structures" (Social 117). He extends this proposition to suggest that the authority for the value of literary productions is "a social nexus" which "takes place within the conventions and enabling limits that are accepted by the prevailing institutions of literature production" (Critique 48). It would follow then that an examination of the development of a locally based publishing infrastructure ("the history of publishing in the large sense") would provide considerable insight into the development of a New Zealand literary canon.

This thesis, then, is an attempt to lay the groundwork for an examination of the textual condition as demonstrated in New Zealand literature. However, just as a further concern of McGann's formulation of the textual condition is the semiotics of the text (such that the text becomes "a laced network of linguistic and bibliographic codes" [Textual 13]) so, too, does


2 "The meaning of works committed into language is carried at the bibliographic as well as the linguistic level, and that the transmission of such works is as much a part of their meaning as anything else we can distinguish about them" (Textual 149).
this thesis devote some attention to the bibliographic codes that have developed in New Zealand literature. It is hoped that such an examination will provide revealing insights into the concepts that have informed New Zealand writing, and will help to locate local literary efforts and movements within a broader international context.

Christchurch, however, provides the more specific, local context for a publishing infrastructure committed to New Zealand literature. A rare combination of tradition and determined idealism allowed writers to “learn the trick of standing upright here” (14), but just as the Canterbury Museum provided the location for Allen Curnow’s musing in “Attitudes for a New Zealand Poet,” Christchurch proved to be especially conducive to the “Little Publisher” who proved to be the backbone of New Zealand literature. While other regions or cities may lay claim to various authors, none was to provide as consistent or committed material support as Christchurch. A tradition of adventurous publishing evolved in the region, which was notable not just for what they published - New Zealand literature - but the way in which it was published. In this regard, its impetus can be seen to be derived as much from contemporaneous artistic movements as literary ones.

The existence of a vibrant arts scene, epitomised by The Group, but where artists, writers and musicians socialised together, freely sharing their ideas and influences, provided a fertile environment for a small cultural revolution that would direct the development of New Zealand literature for at least the next forty years. Just as The Group offered a refreshing and supportive alternative to the rigid infrastructure established by the Art Societies, Denis Glover and the Caxton Press provided a necessary focus for literary aspirations. As Peter Simpson stated, “[t]he achievements of the provincial poets are inseparable from the existence of this sustaining infrastructure - magazines, printers, publishers, designers, illustrators, a small but receptive audience - which Christchurch provided” (“Colonial to Provincial” 15). Similarly, when Patrick Evans affirmed that “[a]t its centre was a machine, the printing press” (Penguin 88),

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3 See page 28 of Curnow's *Sailing or Drowning: Poems.*
what was important was the location of that machine. Although the 'provincial' outlook outlined by Peter Simpson prevailed, a press devoted specifically to literature and the arts was situated "Here" rather than "There," and the groundwork was in place for the development of a literature unmediated by the conservative and distant English publishing hierarchy.

Although the primary purpose of this thesis has been to provide a history of publishing houses in the region, the focus has been limited to those publishers whose initial impetus was to promote New Zealand literature. Closer attention has been given to poetry publication in an attempt to examine the phenomenon that Terry Sturm describes in The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature: "journals like Phoenix and Landfall and publishers like the Caxton Press, whose function as touchstones of cultural value largely reflects the dominance of poetry and poetics in the hierarchy of genres in New Zealand" (xvi). This thesis would argue that, more than merely reflecting this hierarchy, presses like the Caxton Press were substantially responsible for it. By promulgating a national literature in a high quality format largely derived from English models, Caxton appropriated the authority of the dominant cultural matrix. This matrix found its clearest expression in poetry, for which the available printing technologies were most suited. The result was a body of work that conformed - physically, at least - with Eric Gill's prescription for art as "skill in the making."

Allen Curnow in his introduction to the 1960 Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse stated that "[t]he Little Publisher has played a very big part in the development of New Zealand writing, especially verse, during the last two decades" (50). More than this, the Little Publisher of which he speaks initially made available the majority of work published in his anthology. Based very loosely on the English private presses and the tradition of fine printing associated with them, New Zealand's own Little Publishers have published a wide body of work, including seminal work from Janet Frame, Allen Curnow and Alistair Campbell. There is some divergence over what actually constitutes a private press. Roderick Cave4 writes that,

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4 This is a summary of Cave's position in his comprehensive text, The Private Press (2nd edition).
strictly speaking, a private press is an unofficial press that runs not for profit, but to produce works of some aesthetic merit for a restricted audience. In England this sort of enterprise is further distinct in that the same press prints the material as distributes it. Until recently this sort of distinction did not really exist in New Zealand, as all publishers in this country, with the exception of Reeds, were printer/publishers. Of the presses that fall within the scope of this study perhaps only Bob Gormack's Nag's Head Press comes close to this ideal, and this, it would seem, is more by coincidence than by design. With the smallest amount of study in this area it quickly becomes apparent that the “ideal” press is also the fastest route to economic oblivion and the fateful legacy of “Vol. 1, No. 1.” Similarly, the very specialised “Book Beautiful” has not developed to any large degree in New Zealand. Again this would seem to be due to the negligible collectors’ market for such things; but more than this, it would seem that there is an aversion to printing for the sake of printing. A content of some significance, even if it is so only to the author, is a pre-requisite. However, as Roderick Cave points out, “waywardness and eccentricity are in the traditions of the material” (Private Press xv) and in New Zealand to publish poetry would certainly fall into both these categories.

To gain a better understanding of the development of publishing in New Zealand, and more specifically Christchurch, it is necessary to take a closer look at the influence of the English private press tradition. The Private Press Movement was formally founded on 15 November 1888, in reaction to a perceived lack of quality brought about by industrialisation. The Movement’s aim was simple: the preservation of a high standard of book production; however, the means by which various members achieved this differed somewhat. William Morris’s Kelmscott Press and Thomas James Cobden-Sanderson’s Doves Press were united in their advocacy of a pure, non-ornamental book typography. Cobden-Sanderson’s dictum that “the whole duty of typography is to communicate without loss by the way, the thought or image to be communicated by the author” (qtd. in Cave, Private Press 122) equated with the belief of William

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5 Pat Lawlor, in his book Books and Bookmen, remarked on the number of little reviews where “the sad legend - Vol. 1, No. 1 - has been their epitaph” (131).
Morris that “books should not dazzle the eye nor trouble the intellect of the reader by eccentricity of form in the letters” (qtd. in Cave, Private Press 105). Kelmscott and Doves were both firmly entrenched in the Arts and Crafts tradition, believing that everything should be done by hand to preserve the integrity of the work. Later presses such as the Nonesuch Press refused to ignore the benefits offered by mechanisation and endeavoured to obtain the best from both worlds for the ends of fine printing, and it is to these models that New Zealand’s Little Publishers would seem to owe their greatest debt.

The production of such presses was by no means confined to mere collectors’ pieces: in the 1920s the Golden Cockerel Press tried to print worthy new books by younger authors and Contact Editions published works by the likes of Joyce, W.C. Williams and Hemingway. All such operations were characterised by an idealistic fervour to achieve a harmony between the text and its presentation in book form, as unfettered by commercial considerations as possible. There is implicit in their endeavours an overriding concern for quality and a rejection of cheap, slipshod methods of book production. However, the corollary to this was the risk of “snobbery, dilletantism, affectation combining to produce preciousness” (5).

Whereas the English Arts and Crafts Movement was drawing on a long and distinguished history of the trade, by necessity the complex craft of printing in New Zealand had in a large part been carried out by enthusiastic amateurs. The scarcity of supplies required a good deal of resourcefulness and ingenuity, and the “New Zealand Caxton,” (qtd. in Macmillan 11) William Colenso, is a case in point. With a dauntingly incomplete and inadequate supply of equipment he managed to produce an estimated 74,000 works, mostly in Maori, between 1835 and

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6 In Black Riders: The Visible Language of Modernism, Jerome McGann makes a similar distinction between Kelmscott and Bodley Head. As regards the latter, he states that “[p]rinting runs were small as the books were being offered to a special audience. Indeed, the press succeeded in no small part because it helped to consolidate such an audience. To be a [Bodley Head] author, or reader defined you as a certain type of person - aesthetic and very modern” (78). One could easily read Caxton for Bodley Head, although it seems necessary to add that not to be a Caxton author/reader meant exclusion from the dominant literary discourse.

7 The Dutch typographical group Die Zilverdistel stated as regards private press work, “[t]here is one aim, inwardly and outwardly a perfect harmony. There is one risk: snobbery . . .” (qtd. in Cave, Private Press 148-9).
1840 (Macmillan 13). The first printing to be done in English was - ironically, considering the later associations of publishing - a report on the formation and establishment of the New Zealand Temperance Society. It would seem that the bulk of printing - outside of newspapers - done until 1920 was either evangelical or political (Macmillan 17).

Canterbury reflected this trend, but it also provides an excellent example of just how integral a part of the early settlements printing was. Within three weeks of the arrival of the first settlers the first issue of *The Lyttleton Times* appeared, on 11 January 1851 (Macmillan). This newspaper and the thriving competition that was to follow - at its peak in the late 1920s Christchurch had six competing dailies, including *The Sun*, which one commentator described as “probably the best in the history of journalism in New Zealand” (Smith 9) - not only provided local news and lists of new immigrants, but fulfilled the printing requirements of the settlement. Eighteen eighty-two saw the emergence of the first full-scale publishing operation when George Hawkes Whitcombe, a bookseller, joined forces with George Tombs, a printer and bookbinder, to form Whitcombe and Tombs (who later merged with Coulls, Somerville, Wilkie Ltd. to form the now almost ubiquitous Whitcoulls [Smith 27]). The establishment of a stable new settlement provided a sound commercial base for the printing trade: jobbing printing was plentiful and it seems that there was little time - for both author and publisher - to devote to literary aspirations. For the most part these were confined to the newspapers, as this first editorial in the *Akaroa Mail* somewhat uncomfortably reminds us: “In launching forth our literary barque upon the troubled sea of journalism, we trust that it will meet with favourable breezes to waft it to a safe haven of success” (qtd. in Smith 19).

William Golder, whose book *New Zealand Minstrelsy* (1852) was the first book of verse published in New Zealand, also produced a poem of some 200 pages, which, for obvious reasons, would not easily have secured publication. He thus set about printing it himself (and the result was noted at the time as being “execrably if worthily printed,” a judgement Roderick Cave also comments could “stand as an epitaph for many works from amateur presses of this
kind" [Cave, Private Press 58]). This aim of private presses - to cut out the middleman, the publisher - was not an uncommon one, yet it was often an unsatisfactory remedy. The material's appearance in print had been achieved, but its presentation could be such that it might be distracting, unclear or, at worst, illegible. Typography is no minor consideration (as anyone who has experienced the rapid changes in computer printing technology could attest), and the expected standards of quality change with the availability of new technology. In poetry particularly where meticulous care is given to the choice and placement of each word, a careless or haphazard approach to typographical considerations can radically alter the sense of a poem.

There also existed the problem of distribution. Not only was the audience for such poetic offerings limited, but the actual market was even smaller. Golder's methods of private subscription and then publicly hawking his material - what today would probably be considered primitive direct marketing - was burdensome but the most effective method available at the time. A more significant example, and one that exemplifies the pitiable state of the literary market prior to the 1930s, was the experience of R.A.K. Mason. His first work, In the Manner of Men, was circulated in manuscript and ran to two copies. He followed this with his Penny Broadsheet in 1925. His frustrations culminated in his decision to dispose of 200 unsold copies of The Beggar (Curnow, Mason Introduction 9). (Whitcombe and Tombs had agreed only to print the work for the author and so distribution was in his hands.)

Speaking twenty years later, the publisher A.H. Reed seemed to offer little encouragement: "The dice are loaded against the New Zealander in his own country" (13). Concurring with this bleak assessment, Eugene Grayland at least suggested a possible alternative: "book publishing will never be a profitable commercial operation here. In this direction, our private presses can play a considerable part in developing our native literature" (3-4). So it would

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8 W.C. Williams commented that "Spring and All" (1923) "was written when all the world was going crazy about typographic form" (48).
seem that, even at this late stage, the larger enterprises saw New Zealand literature as unsustainable and unprofitable. This is not surprising considering that the economic edition of a new book had been 1000 in the 1930s, and had, with post-war shortages, doubled to 2000 in the 1950s; furthermore, the publisher’s profit was not realised until 85% of an edition had been sold.\footnote{These statistics are taken from Ray Richard’s paper “The Man in the Middle - Publishing in New Zealand” (17), one of a series of articles published under the title of The Changing Shape of Books.} With books of verse in particular, these kinds of sales would be extraordinary, and even when they did appear they were spread over a few years. The problem was, and is, essentially one of scale.

As a symbol of emerging literary nationalism, The Phoenix has perhaps been a little too convenient. Its connotations of a sudden, miraculous re-birth of “serious” poetry out of the ashes of Georgianism have suitable literary impact to convey the break with a tradition perceived as redundant, while at the same time retaining some kind of nebulous link to European literary traditions. However well-suited to the literary aims of the time, in retrospect, this approach seems a little artificial, and takes little or no account of what was a protracted “labour,” during which The Phoenix magazine itself could be viewed merely as a contraction. The metaphor here is deliberate and particularly relevant in terms of James K. Baxter’s assessment of the role of Denis Glover’s and others’ printing presses as the ‘midwives’ for this new literature.\footnote{“The new movement began in the Universities, almost without parentage. It gathered force through the works of Denis Glover, A.R.D.Fairburn, Allen Curnow and others, with amateur printing presses as midwives” (Recent Trends 6 - published at the Caxton Press).} Unlike the Phoenix image, this metaphor does not have the violent, revolutionary associations of the clandestine presses that flourished under oppression,\footnote{The illicit Gestetner that appears in Renée’s play Pass it On is a literary example of an actual local clandestine press. Other pacifist presses appeared during the Second World War (see chapters two and four).} but, rather, it suggests a more natural birth that could not have taken place but for the facilitation of this particular species of midwife, unavailable to an earlier generation. Rachel Barrowman confirms that “[t]he Phoenix generation was not as original, or originating, as it perceived itself to be” (2), and it would seem, then, that the terminology has been transposed from a workers’ revolution to a minor
cultural rebellion against a previous generation of predominantly Georgian writers.

Certainly to outside observers this literary renaissance appeared to be centred on Christchurch, and this would seem to be largely attributable to the presence of the Caxton Press. What was it in Christchurch that could sustain a literary publishing house that did not exist in the considerably larger city of Auckland? For, despite his initial success with The Phoenix (even by today's standards, running to four issues in a Review is something of a milestone), Bob Lowry did not ever provide a regular or consistent outlet for literature. This is not to say that the quality of his work was ever in question; in fact, quite the opposite was true. It could be said that the four issues of The Phoenix were used to hone his skills as a typographer. He gradually acquired better quality Monotype bookfaces and finally "struck form" (Sturm 560) with the fourth and last issue. Lowry had transformed Phoenix from "an octavo ... in a variety of undistinguished types" into a "substantial quarto" (McEldowney 559-60), displaying a certain typographical flair, and featuring the comparatively new Gill sans-serif designed by one of the originators of the new thinking on book design. These are not merely technical details for the excited bibliophile; the use of such a comparatively recent typeface not only suggests an awareness of then current developments in typography associated with the modernist movement in art, but also implies a realisation of the considerable impact and authority of the comparatively new Gill sans-serif. In a way this was to set a standard of restrained typography that was to continue in literary publications, and can be seen as a sign of the seriousness with which such endeavours were regarded, as well as a revelation of their ideological history.

Although Bob Lowry could be said to be at the forefront of typography in New Zealand, he was no publisher, in that he failed to fulfill the profession's so-called first duty: to remain solvent. For example, when Lowry made a sojourn South in 1933, he left the Auckland Uni-

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12 John Lehmann's well reported observations about Christchurch in his autobiography were touted, in particular, by Allen Curnow in his 1960 anthology of verse. Curnow noted that this was "a pardonable error" as "various parts of New Zealand may claim them," and he suggested that a possible reason for this "error" was that "Denis Glover's Caxton Press, Christchurch, published them all" (18).
versity Students' Association to ponder the irony of his misnomer of "Business Manager" for The Phoenix magazine. This, Dennis McEldowney remarks, "established a pattern that Lowry was to follow through life" (561). Issue five of Phoenix was incomplete and, although there was no shortage of enthusiasm from those remaining, remained so. When Patrick Evans simply states that "[t]hey were full of ideas but they did not know how to make the machine work" (Penguin 81), he neatly illustrates the intellectual composition of this group of authors and the large gulf that existed between idealism and publishing realities. If we accept that the aim of the "Phoenix generation" was to build a new New Zealand literature, this gap serves to illustrate the need for a middleman,13 someone to mediate between these two polarities. In James Bertram, Charles Brasch, Allen Curnow, Blackwood Paul and Ron Mason - the future publisher (Blackwood Paul) through the self-appointed curators of their history - they had assembled an impressive array of "architects," representing (most particularly in R.A.K. Mason) the left-wing cultural movement that was dominant throughout the 1930s.14 In Bob Lowry they had the best "carpenter" available at the time, a craftsman who would not tolerate mediocrity. The missing link was an engineer, someone with a foot in both camps, someone who could ensure a structurally and financially sound base for literature building. Perhaps, as Bob Lowry may have realised, this man was to be found not in Auckland, but in the South Island's Christchurch.

The move from the "blousy, sprawling butterfat city ... [which] has had its nose in the trough for so long it has forgotten what the sky looks like" to the "dark pond of Christchurch culture - a diluted and slightly stagnant Anglicanism" (Fairburn qtd. in Trussell, 216) seems to be no great progress, but Christchurch at least seemed to offer some sort of permanence and stability, (not the least part of which was a relatively strong book-buying public). Perhaps this was attributable to the city's strong associations with England; for, although at this time there was

13 "A middleman is clearly a business man and it must be understood completely that a book publisher is positively a middle man" (Richards 11).
14 See Rachel Barrowman's book for an analysis of this movement.
a strong sense of literary nationalism in the air, the movement (if such it could be called) was still informed by contemporary literary events in Britain, not least in the field of typography. Even Lowry's Phoenix was closely modelled on Middleton-Murry's New Adelphi.

Perhaps ironically, when Allen Curnow came to anthologise this group in 1945 (needless to say published by Caxton Press), he began his selection with two poets, one from Canterbury and one from Auckland, who "could hardly be less alike" (26): R.A.K. Mason and D'Arcy Cresswell. What, in Curnow's mind, linked these two diverse personalities from opposite ends of the country was the seriousness with which they took their poetry: "both seemed to have discovered in verse an object worthy of a life's devotion" (6). Also what both these authors most graphically represent is the isolation of an author writing in the 1920s: the New Zealand community was not a large one, and the New Zealand literary community was correspondingly sparse. In the absence of a means of communication with other like-minded people (such as that afforded by publication) their respective responses were equally unequivocal. Cresswell simply shunned his country of origin and spent much of his time in England, living in documented exile. On the other hand, Mason, who, it seems to me, sits a little more comfortably in the role of New Zealand literary progenitor, remained to confront an exacting literary challenge.

The story of how the nineteen year-old dumped unsold copies of The Beggar off Queen's Wharf is literary legend, and it is no wonder that he threw himself so vociferously into the editorship of Phoenix. As Dennis McEldowney points out, this was more than a mere cautionary tale about the risks of self-publishing, it was representative of an absence of support, that was crucial to a book's distribution, from local publishing companies such as Whitcombe.
and Tombs. McEldowney goes on to quote Fairburn's assessment in the *New Zealand Artist's Annual* of the layout of *The Beggar* as demonstrating "that colossal lack of imagination which seems to be the outstanding characteristic of New Zealand publishers" (Fairburn). Even with the arrival of publishers of "imagination" like Bob Lowry, the outcome lacked certainty. Again Mason serves as the unfortunate example: his 1934 collection, *No New Thing*, remained unbound and only a few of the 120 copies printed by Lowry were sold privately (Curnow, *Mason* Introduction 13). Lowry's drive for perfection in typography was admirable and, it could be argued, necessary at the time, but what authors (and critics) wanted was a reliable *local* outlet for literature.

An interesting comparison can be made here with Ursula Bethell, who utilised her isolation in her poetry in a manner slightly reminiscent of Emily Dickinson. Unlike her male counterparts, she was content to concentrate on her immediate surroundings, to bide her time in reflection without feeling the need to confront the New Zealand public with her work. Her first book, *From a Garden in the Antipodes* (1929), was published anonymously in England, but her later books were taken up by Caxton. In many ways she marked the end of a more Anglophile generation, represented to a greater extent in her contemporaries in Christchurch: Blanche Baughan, Jessie Mackay and even D'Arcy Cresswell - but, fittingly, in her verse can be seen the first indications of something more local.

Although in many ways Christchurch can be said to be the model of an English town, a glance westward reveals an insistent and decidedly un-English landscape of plains and alpine terrain, and to a woman as connected with her landscape as Ursula Bethell, this was something that could not be ignored. Consequently, all her poems were set against "the Canterbury background, as she saw it, physical and historic" (Holcroft, *Bethell* 26). In her best poems is a spareness of style compatible with such a dominant landscape and which anticipates the powerful simplicity of Alistair Campbell's *Mine Eyes Dazzle*. As James K. Baxter said of Bethell at the pivotal Writers' Conference in Christchurch in 1951, "[t]he ancestral face of New Zealand
history was plain to her. The struggle of the pioneer with the land; reconciliation, as the features of the country possess the conscious or unconscious minds of its inhabitants; and the certain transience of human affairs" (Recent Trends 13). Except, unlike most of her male contemporaries, her New Zealand had a more acknowledged sense of its origins in English civilisation, and this dilemma is clearly demonstrated in her ambivalence about “Home” in her poetry. She may have stood noticeably apart from the new younger generation of writers, but she demonstrated a remarkably practical acceptance of her immediate surroundings and recognised their demand for a new descriptive language: “Not current coin primroses . . . but a foreign token . . . Not understood dale and meadow, not understood.”17 Although less harsh and insistent, this refrain could almost be seen as a precursor to Glover’s “The Magpies.” There is little sense in her work of hiding within an outmoded tradition that some poets of the time displayed.

All these factors were also to have a noticeable presence in the poetry of her contemporaries, as well as in the paintings of Rita Angus and Doris Lusk. However, Bethell provides a link, in that she represents the transition in publishing outlets, having first published in England, then having a generous and very favourably received18 representation of her poetry in the Christchurch Press, and finally appearing under the Caxton imprint. The city seemed to offer a necessary stability of tradition combined with a recognition of a new landscape, and it was this stability and sense of tradition that were essential to the establishment of that most unstable of businesses - publishing.

As has been noted, Bethell was a product - albeit a dynamic one - of an earlier tradition and it is perhaps for this reason that Holcroft felt that she did not really engage in “the colloquial speech that was bringing new energy to New Zealand verse” (Bethell 42). This new

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17 These are lines 9-12 from her poem “Primavera” in From a Garden in the Antipodes (19).
18 J.H.E. Schroder did not temper his enthusiasm when he introduced Bethell’s poem “The Long Harbour”: “Nothing the Press has ever printed, nothing else, has ever given it such cause for pride. Of that I am absolutely certain - not even Butler” (qtd. in O’Neill 182).
energy was considered by many to be the emergence of a uniquely New Zealand voice and a breakaway from colonial niceties; therefore it seemed inevitable that a person who “was determined to supplant the illusions of ‘colonial’ verse with images of the authentic New Zealand . . . [who] was, in effect, the first New Zealand poet to speak with a consistently antipodean voice” (Ogilvie 24) should head the first local publishing source committed to New Zealand literature. That the mantle of the New Zealand “Voice” should fall to Denis Glover seems to have as much to do with his pioneering publishing efforts as anything he actually wrote. By contrast, Bethell’s segregation from the vitalisation of New Zealand literature is equally attributable to her publication in England and suggests a failure to acknowledge her innovative poetic efforts to confront her colonial situation.

Nevertheless, Denis Glover seemed entirely suited to establishing such a precarious business: he was gregarious and fiercely independent, with an over-riding sense of humour. Alistair Campbell, however, declared that Glover “produced a great many poems which begin perfectly seriously, and end on a note which is often embarrassingly flippant” (“Glover” 23), describing this comic streak as “disastrous” (“Glover” 30) and arguing that his seeming inability to take things seriously was to the detriment of his poetry; this may be so when one considers his achievement in the only thing he did take seriously - publishing. In this field his determination and resourcefulness - like that of his poetical personae Arawata Bill and Mick Stimson - proved to be invaluable, if not indispensable characteristics for firmly establishing New Zealand’s first predominantly literary press.

In fact the independent amateur was to become a familiar figure, not only as a national stereotype, but, as a type, vital to literary publication in New Zealand. For it is these same characteristics that mark the more fragile, but no less vital, outlet of the Little Review. These more transient of publications have been described as “the incubators for the younger writers and

19 C.K. Stead notes a contrary tendency in Glover’s distrust of his own emotions: “it all seems part of that bristling public school and naval manner, ridiculously imported, needlessly sustained . . . in him the colony lives on” (“Denis Glover” 210).
from them have been born some of our best books” (Lawlor, Books 130). Especially prominent in the 1970s - seven were operating at one time - this less substantial form of publication has often been the focus for the literary vanguard. The illustrious Book from Caxton (1940-8) has often been lost in the shadow of its portentous sibling Landfall, but it is perhaps more representative of the vitality and idealism that characterises such publications. A measure of its success, and the healthy state of literature brought about by the opening up of publication outlets (as well, perhaps, as the spirit with which it was undertaken) is that it even inspired a spoof in the form of Bookie from Bob Gormack’s Nag’s Head Press, (both of which will be examined in later chapters on their respective presses). In many ways a microcosm of literary publishing, (albeit a slightly artificial one, in that, on account of its reduced scale and transience, it does not encounter the financial realities of the day-to-day running of a publishing house, and if it does the experience is usually terminal) the Little Review has also been an exemplar for another important, if not crucial facet of publishing, unequivocally identified in the following statement made by Pat Lawlor: “One aspect, which I regard as essential to the Little Review, is artistic format and typography” (Books 132).

Typography, then, can be seen as the cornerstone of the fledgling literary book publishing industry in New Zealand - an industry by and large established in Canterbury, where subsequent developments reflected (and often presaged) the state of the industry in the rest of the country. J.E.P. Thomson had observed that in the 1930s: “[F]rom the point of view of the excited tyro, printing in New Zealand no doubt seemed a trade lacking in both art and a sense of tradition” (24). The introduction of Monotype book fonts, quality papers and the influence of contemporary design masters such as Eric Gill and Stanley Morison, all contributed to a generally higher standard of book production in the region. This influence was felt more widely in the arts community and beyond. It was not long before “[s]mall presses became

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20 D.S. Long put it this way in his introduction to the special New Zealand issue of Second Coming (1974): “When you become large, substantial, prestigious or whatever, you lose something never to be regained until you go back to 600 copies an issue and setting the copy by hand. No one spends that much time on a poem or story unless they love it” (25).
known for their fine printing as well as for the quality of their authors [and] ... [e]stablished publishing houses took note, and standards were raised” (Mulgan 122).

Gone were the days when “[f]ine printing to him [the New Zealand printer] meant decorative printing” (Thomson 24). Pages cluttered with fleurons and ornate, looping typefaces21 (see Figure 1) conveyed a preciousness that was antithesis to a new, “serious” literature. Poetry, in particular, benefitted from this refined approach, not least because of its suitability to the limited resources initially available. Just as Glover and Lowry had taken over the means of production, re-asserting printing as a craft22 in the shared belief that the text was deserving of a professional formality, the new austerity in printing rejected images of the frivolous dabbling in words, conveying instead a similar sense of control over medium and craftsmanship. For they realised that if they were going to be taken seriously in the business of literature, it was necessary to dress the part. Gone were Mason's decidedly amateur (in terms of presentation) manuscripts, and in their place were the foundations of a professional publishing operation. The visual authority attained by Phoenix, and maintained by Caxton, ensured an authoritative voice for a generation of new authors. (In much the same way, Mason was voiceless for want of any outlet prior to the establishment of a local press sympathetic to New Zealand literature.)

Opinions differ as to the origins of this “voice,” but despite Robin Muir’s unequivocal statement that “the whole revival of printing and interest in typography in New Zealand is directly attributable to Denis Glover” (Interview), Glover himself made the almost identical attribution to Bob Lowry.23 However, Dennis McEldowney’s comment that Lowry’s Pelorus Press was “short on output, long on quality” (McEldowney, Interview) is typical and reflects Lowry’s

21 Poems of Annie Murgatroyd (1900) and The Songs of New Zealand (1924) are typical examples of this style and make a marked contrast with Ursula Bethell’s books.

22 Certainly, in terms of Eric Gill’s definition of art as skill in the making, Glover and more especially Leo Bensemann raised printing to an artform.

23 "If Typography is a word that some of us now understand, the credit is Bob Lowry's" ("Typography: Bob").
SONGS of New Zealand

By FRANCIS CLOKE

Song of New Zealand

NEW ZEALAND, glorious land!

Gone are the days when

Women's breasts were round and fair,

To meet each coming tale

From ocean deep.

No love is for ever true—

Wings are the sweetest green,

And all thy verdant plains

God's bounteous hand sustains

The terrors of the deep

In which your feet did tread.

Abundant foods,

The leaves are for ever turning—

Blest with the sun and breeze,

The leaves of the Book of Life.

Harkens like island seas

Each page is a memorandum

When ships may ride at ease.

Our constant tells us our feelings—

Of our favor'd pairings and strife.

We know in our heart there is not.

And the sun that this day we consecrated,

Is there a moment spoken?

And say, "Is our conscience at rest?"

A page with fear a blow?

Is there a moment spoken?

And the sun that this day we consecrated,

Our constant tells us our feelings—

And then they are turned down quickly—

We know in our heart there is not.

And we cannot make one.

Oh, think of the thoughts that this moment

And the sun that this day we consecrated,

When ships may ride at ease.

When ships may ride at ease.

And then they are turned down quickly—

And we cannot make one.

And the sun that this day we consecrated,

And say, "Is our conscience at rest?"

Is there a moment spoken?

A page with fear a blow?

Is there a moment spoken?

And the sun that this day we consecrated,

And say, "Is our conscience at rest?"

Oh, think of the thoughts that this moment

When ships may ride at ease.

And the sun that this day we consecrated,

And say, "Is our conscience at rest?"

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When ships may ride at ease.

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And the sun that this day we consecrated,

And say, "Is our conscience at rest?"

Is there a moment spoken?

A page with fear a blow?
somewhat unstable financial base. What is clear is that because of his sustained effort, Glover's, rather than Lowry's, publishing activities underpinned this new poetic voice: rebellious, independent and "masculine in quality and mildly anarchic in tone" (Baxter, Aspects 21), a description that is just as applicable to Glover himself. Caxton's output was not huge, but its consistency was significant, and in a time of uncertainty bespoke permanence.

Glover's early work at Caxton epitomises printing as "an art which must never forget that it is essentially utilitarian, ... [and] that it is an art whose traditions are not to be ignored" (Thomson 25). In contrast to Lowry's brilliant but ephemeral flights of typographical fancy, Glover's works erred on the side of conservative caution. Observing the maxims of the new typography, type and layout offered the least distraction and afforded the most readability. By focussing maximum attention on content, this approach reflects a belief in literature as an active social force. Nowhere is this belief more evident than in the publication of Tomorrow (1934-40), with its fiercely touted independence, savage Kennaway Henderson cartoons and biting squibs by A.R.D. Fairburn and Denis Glover. (Although its typographical style was not exactly memorable, it was remarkably consistent, again suggesting an overriding concern for content. In fact the only change - in typography, not layout - occurred in 1939, when it adopted the starker sans-serif typeface.) It would seem that, again, Eric Gill's ideas were influential, particularly the view of the artist as an "ordinary worker" without any special status, and therefore concerned with "workers' issues." Although, as Barrowman so comprehensively analyses, To-

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24 Two poems by Denis Glover and sent to Bob Gormack in the 1950s are indicative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Let Poets pant,</th>
<th>R.W.L.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Let frenzied Rhymsters rhyme</td>
<td>He did say Fri. or Mon. or Tues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Printer Lowry</td>
<td>His promises were rash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes his bloody time</td>
<td>Neither accuse him or abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>But comfort him with Cash</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25 For his definition of typography, Thomson appears to have drawn heavily on Glover's "Some Notes on Typography."

26 In her M.A. thesis on Rata Lovell-Smith (a member of The Group artists), Ann Elias states that "[m]any of these discussions from the Thirties are essentially political and echo in particular the writings of Eric Gill, whose book Art and a Changing Civilisation must have been familiar to many New Zealanders connected with the arts" (19).
morrow essentially remained written by and for an intellectual élite; nevertheless, by providing a locally relevant forum for debate, it exhibited a vitality and sense of evangelistic purpose that had not previously been manifest.

This vitality, however, was not confined to literature; artists, too, were sharing in the "search for landscapes of mind and spirit" (Holcroft, Bethell 43), and to a certain degree prefigured it. Again Christchurch seemed to act as something of a focal point. In fact one Australian art critic went so far as to "doubt if there is another city of its size in the Empire where the conditions are so favourable for future expansion, not only of painting and sculpture, but literature and music" (Moore 151). Despite sounding like an investment adviser, this critic had obviously seen the tangible results of the modest revolution in the arts that had taken place in Christchurch. (Literature, similarly, could now be evaluated, because, by way of publication, it was available to a wider audience.) Just as Glover and company had rebelled against the Establishment,27 so too did The Group artists rebel against the constraints of their Establishment, the Canterbury Society of the Arts.

The Group, a loose conglomeration of artists which included Colin McCahon, Toss Woollaston, Rita Angus, Doris Lusk and Olivia Spencer-Bower and W.A. Sutton, provided a new outlet for young, unconventional artists, particularly those of the modernist avant-garde. In their own words, they were "able to attract the works of artists who had nowhere else to go" (Bruce Robinson 4). The rigid formality of the Art Societies was exchanged for an atmosphere in which "[t]he accent has always been on individuality and informality" (Muir and Robinson 1). This allowed for a diversity and growth in the arts never before seen in New Zealand. Grouped loosely as regionalists and encompassing a wide variety of styles, The Group was, for the greater part of its existence, considered to be in the forefront of stylistic development. The

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27 Speaking of the establishment of Fine Arts (N.Z.) Ltd. and the Ex Libris Society by Harry Tombs in the late 1920s, one commentator wrote: "The venture smacks of an Establishment. Even as they were launched, an anti-Establishment was in the making" (Library Exhibition 4).
primary concern of the Australian critic cited above is with art, but there is an implicit recognition of a degree of cross-fertilisation. Certainly, the co-operative bookshops served the need of both artist and writer alike in providing glimpses of the developing modernist movement overseas, thereby "catering to this need for the stimulus of international culture felt by artists and intellectuals in a colonial culture" (Barrowman 128). The concentration of artists and writers in a city the size of Christchurch certainly made for a lively and dynamic artistic community.

Being both a member of The Group and a shareholder in the Caxton Press, Leo Bensemann was something of a pivotal figure. His aesthetic contribution to Caxton is undeniable, and one cannot help thinking when looking at Book, for example, that its appearance owes a great deal to his outstanding woodcuts, as well as for the general layout and typography. In fact it was in Book 8, in an article on the history of woodcuts, that a statement was made that was equally applicable to Bensemann's contribution: "Once more typography became a matter of importance; format, type, printing, binding and engraving began to be welded into a unity and beauty of form. Art and literature were again linked" (Hipwell). This may seem something of an extravagant claim, but just as his impact as an avante-garde artist has been underestimated,28 so too has his contribution to a fledgling native publishing movement, particularly as an exponent of the modernist concerns implicit in the above quotation.

Tomorrow, to which both Leo Bensemann and Denis Glover contributed, seemed to epitomise the atmosphere of revolutionary anticipation that gripped Christchurch in the 1930s. This was expressed in a dissatisfaction with the present - "Tomorrow is a satire on today, and shows its weakness" was its epigraph - but tempered by a cautious optimism about the future - the introductory notes to the specimen issue were followed by Jessie Mackay's poem, "To-

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28 In interviews with the author, artists Barry Cleavin and Trevor Moffit both emphasised Leo Bensemann's major contribution to New Zealand art, especially as the earliest, if not the only exponent of surrealism.
morrow's Child” (3). In his “Notes by the Way” to the first edition, Frederick Sinclaire stated, “[w]e inhabit a land of dreadful silence . . . It looks as if we are silent because we have nothing to say” (2-3); rather, it was more a case of having nowhere to say it. The benefits of a locally based infrastructure were, as the title of the journal suggested, in the future, but the missionary zeal with which they were pursued by a small group of artists and writers suggests a considerable degree of co-operation and shared ideals. New Zealand intellectuals were responding to a modernist call to arts and the result was that a modest revolution - artistic and typographical - took place. Control of the means of production ensured a voice for a new generation, in what Rachel Barrowman has so ably demonstrated was a cultural, rather than political protest, the effect of which is still evident in literature publishing today.
From
Bob Lowry's comet
to
Caxton's punctual planet.

Caxton Club's Epitaph
(Canterbury University College)

They say the Spider and the Cockroach keep
The cellar now. But Caxton broke our sleep
Of sixty years - he stirred our blood to take
Into the unknown darkness one bold leap.

(Glover, Myself When Young 19)
“Typus fever” is the term often used to describe those with an extreme, almost obsessional devotion to printing, those for whom the smell of ink is all. In the late 1920s and early 1930s this occupational disease was something of an epidemic. In the United States in 1928, the catch-cry amongst the printing trade was to “go modern,” as this extract from *The New Typography and Modern Layout* reflects so dramatically: “Excitement ran high. The printing trade was in a state of turmoil. ‘Elementary Typography’ was on every printer’s tongue. It was inconceivable! . . . It was ‘typographic revolution’” (Ehrlich 36). In America at least, New or Elementary Typography was principally derived from the Bauhaus movement in Germany and this led, as the war neared, to many of its greatest exponents emigrating to the country that had so readily adopted its designs. Its aim was simple - or simplicity: “Nothing was to be added that did not serve a functional purpose and the message was to be read with the greatest possible ease” (Ehrlich 38). Fired by this same unadulterated enthusiasm, some New Zealanders were also espousing these aims, principally Bob Lowry, who, in 1929, had shared his enthusiasm for printing with his classmate at Auckland Grammar School, Denis Glover.

Glover moved to Christchurch in 1930 to complete his schooling at Christ’s College. He left his mark there in terms of an exceptionally well printed - for a school production - edition of the *Harper House Chronicle*. This he had sent to Lowry in Auckland to be commercially linotyped before he printed it off himself (Thomson 91). As early as July 1931 Lowry had written suggesting the two of them set up a commercial printing house in Christchurch, although, perhaps somewhat fortuitously considering Lowry’s later business record, this union was never to eventuate. (In the same year Lowry had offered Glover a “semi-rotary” press

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1 Thomson provides much useful detail about Glover’s publishing (see particularly pages 21-28), some of which is repeated here. However, he appears to have relied heavily on Glover’s recollections without seeking further corroboration.
for £12. 10s., which he declined (Thomson 10).) Nevertheless, it would seem that the idea had stuck, and after visiting Lowry in Auckland while at the Easter Tournament and viewing the proofs for The Phoenix, Glover was inspired enough to set up the Caxton Club (with eight members contributing one pound each) at Canterbury University College in October 1932 “for the purpose of studying printing and typography” (Glover, Hot Water 83). This “theory” was given a more practical application with the purchase of a Kelsey handplaten from an Auckland firm for £6. 12s. 6d., “which was cheap, and some rather battered Goudy Oldstyle types from Lowry at a price that was not” (Thomson 10).

Glover did not hesitate to use this new equipment, for, in his own modest words, “any young man with the means of disseminating opinion would be unworthy of his salt if he didn’t try to print something that would practically reform the world overnight” (Glover, Hot Water 86). His first attempt appeared in April 1933: this “revolutionary” document was along similar lines to Lowry’s Phoenix, but, as its title suggests, Oriflamme’s origins were less political and more literary. With Glover at the helm, the self-proclaimed “spasmodical” was certainly less earnest than its Auckland counterpart (as evidenced by his own contribution to the first issue: an article entitled “Papology”). No doubt gratifyingly for Glover and his libertarian associates, the first issue was promptly banned by the University Council. At issue was a most seditious article called “Sex and the Undergraduate,” which vaguely advocated sex out of wedlock (Caxton Club). However, this merely served to confirm the existence of oppressive forces at work and helped to keep alive this modest spirit of revolt. Glover’s response to these events was typically pragmatic: “Oriflamme was editorially weighed and found wanting by

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2 According to the Club ledger they were Denis Glover, Ian Milner, Colin Hart, J.P.S. Robertson, W.M. Brookes, John Oakley, R. Straubel and E.K. Cook. All subsequent financial details relating to the Caxton Club Press are drawn from the ledger held by the Alexander Turnbull Library (Caxton).

3 The cash sale docket for the press was dated 23/2/33 (Caxton, Cash Docket). According to the Caxton Club Press cash ledger Bob Lowry was paid £1.4. 0 for his font of type on 21 March 1933.

4 Rachel Barrowman’s comment about J.C. Beaglehole seems equally applicable to Glover and his associates: “His was a political/cultural ethos which would have found its clearest expression not in Marx but in Milton’s Areopagitica” (121).
the pundits of the popular press. Oriflamme sold out in two hours” (Glover, Hot Water 86). This was the statement of a true publisher. After negotiations with the University Council, he followed this successful effort with a similar venture in July, entitled Sirocco, and by the end of 1933 the Caxton Club Press achieved a modest surplus of 15/9, receipts over expenditure. (Although it would appear from their ledger that a certain amount of creative accounting was necessary to achieve this balance.)

Nineteen thirty-four saw the Press take on an increasing load of jobbing printing, particularly from within the university, which consisted mostly of cards and letterheads and yielded the not inconsiderable profit of £9. 15. 5. Although this never led to the hoped-for sinecure of “The University Press” as Glover had initially envisaged (Thomson 10), it did provide an invaluable financial base with which the Caxton Club Press could continue to pursue its publishing activities. The same year also saw their first book publication, New Poems, edited by Denis Glover and Ian Milner. Glover later claimed that this anthology, printed in an outbuilding of St. Elmo Flats near to the university, “started the plague of anthologies that now infest us like hydatids” (Glover, Hot Water 94). This compact booklet set out in a brief foreword to delineate the “New” in poetry: the poet’s responsibility was “two-fold. First he is responsible to his creative impulse: he must be a good maker.” Secondly, “[t]he poet is the focal point of awareness in his time,” and was therefore particularly receptive to the “liberating effect” of social material in verse. (This second part was typical of the the spirit of heroic modernism that infused the establishment of the press.) This, in turn, involved a simple, unequivocal rejection of the “cloud cuckoo-land of elegant poetastry,” evidenced in the absence of any material from former New Zealand anthologies. With hindsight, it would appear that they began as they wished to continue, for many of these same thoughts were echoed, at greater length, in Allen Curnow’s introduction to his 1945 anthology. However, there were other indications of a new direction: on the page facing the Foreword, in stark upper case Gill sans-serif, were the names of the ten contributors. This face was used for the titles and authors of the following poems and the effect was a striking simplicity. Despite a far from perfect
typographical result, there is a sense of a confidence and competence about the whole production, which ties in with the idea of art, in Gill's sense of the word, as "skill in making" (the poet, then, must be a good maker [Curnow, Poetry 5]). Caxton was the first press in New Zealand to import this relatively new typeface, and showed a considerable degree of foresight in so doing.

Publications from the press continued to increase, both in number and length. In 1935 five slight volumes were released, two by Allen Curnow, two by Glover, and Another Argo, which featured a poem from each of the aforementioned poets and one by A.R.D. Fairburn. This latter volume was significant in a number of ways. It was the first produced on the new power platen at the new address of 152 Peterborough Street (Thomson 22), and it contained a frontispiece by future partner Leo Bensemann. Furthermore, despite the seemingly professional appearance of the books to that date, this production served to illustrate the essentially apprentice nature of their printing. In a note on the book in the February 1941 catalogue, Glover (presumably) states, "[t]here were meant to be 150, but only 70 complete copies survived the paper storm around the machine" (Caxton 9); as well they made the classic apprentice error of substituting "0" for "O" on the title page and cover.

Much has been made of Allen Curnow's 1945 anthology (and rightly so), but it is in one of his - and Caxton's - earliest volumes that the origins and aims of this "new" generation of writers is most clearly detailed. Poetry and Language (1935) is nothing short of a Modernist manifesto in its content, tone and presentation. From the outset Curnow makes no apologies for his textbook approach, boldly declaring that he has written it for the benefit of those "'literary' people - professors of English, graduates, editors of newspaper literary columns and their satellites - who have not yet passed the elementary stages of a reasoned understanding of the art of poetry" (3). He then begins his tract: "Writing poetry is an art./ Art (Mr Eric Gill's

5 In light of this attitude, Gormack's comment that The Caxton Press became "a little schoolish, monopolistic and even intellectually overbearing" (Gormack, Nag's Head 23) would seem to be entirely justified.
definition) is skill in the making” (5). Although this definition has links to the Arts and Crafts movement, when combined with Curnow’s distinction between “living” and “dead” languages, it more clearly aligns itself with modernist thinking. A “living” language suggests one that is dynamic and evolving and Pound’s call to “make it new” is echoed in Curnow’s strident declaration: “To each age its own experience./ To each age its own language./ To each age its own literature” (11). There is also implicit in the notion of skill a hierarchy of values (not defined) aiming towards perfection of the expressive medium and, associated with that, an inevitable degree of elitism. This is made even more explicit in the final paragraph when he qualifies his assertions of communicability in poetry: “If an experience can only be entered into by a limited number of people, it is clear that the poem in which it is communicated will find a correspondingly limited audience” (14). This statement would certainly seem to foreshadow an attitude of intellectual elitism, something of which Caxton was often accused.

Correspondingly, when high standards are demanded, those found wanting are quickly discarded, and it was into this category that the Georgian poets were quickly dispatched. In fact, a considerable portion of this manifesto is devoted to a forceful proclamation of the death of Georgianism. However, what is particularly significant about Poetry and Language is the bibliographic statement that it makes - a statement that both affirms Curnow’s modernist aspirations and repudiates Georgianism. Right from the outset, the austerity of the title page and the stark sans-serif type (created by Eric Gill - provider of Curnow’s definition of art - as a typeface appropriate to the machine age) were as much an assertion of a new literary age as anything Curnow wrote. The marked absence of any decorative embellishments is a clear rejection of the “excesses” of Georgianism, and the dominant feature is the distribution of white space. Spacing is all that distinguishes the title from the author (perhaps suggesting the inseparability of the message from the messenger) and the dominant central area of white space draws attention to the publisher’s logotype, that of the Caxton

Fig. 2. Caxton Club Press logotype. See over.
Fig. 3. Title-page of Allen Curnow, Poetry and Language (Christchurch: Caxton Club, 1935).
Club Press. It is interesting to note that this logotype was the least stylised of those adopted by Caxton and squeezed their name between the plates of a bookbinding press. (This image in itself could be taken as a graphic representation of Gropius’s doctrine.) The effect of such a visual strategy is “to involve the reader’s visual encounter with the text, in the arguments which the text is making . . . the physical presentation of pages like this is simultaneously a display of their conceptual content” (McGann, Textual 105).

Such a calculated format betrays Curnow’s disingenuous assessment of the text as simply some offhand “observations on poetry and language” (3). By virtue of language, Curnow explains, “human experience may be fixed in a material form” (6), but it was this generation’s command of the means to fix their own activities in time that gave them such a dominant position in New Zealand’s developing literary canon. The colophon on the last page of Poetry and Language served this function by providing precise details of the book’s production, affirming Jerome McGann’s assertion that “[t]o the interpreter, texts often appear as images of time; to the maker of texts, however, they are the very events of time and history itself” (Textual 186).

This type of austere layout announced serious literature, pregnant with meaning; anything else was occasional versifying or mere entertainment. Even too great a concern with formal elements was considered a distraction from communicating the essence of a poem. Although the formalities of Georgianism were roundly rejected in favour of a more “free” verse, a new typographical structure was not only being put in place but institutionalised in a set of bibliographic codes. This generation of writers had something important to say and they were determined to see it appear in a format comparable to that available in England, and, therefore, not suffer the fate attributed to Mason’s poems. Curnow acknowledged a debt to the Caxton Press, which, he said, “created an audience for verse which formerly might have found none in New Zealand. Some verse they actually called into being because they were at hand to

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6 Curnow, although approving of Mason’s poetry, disdainfully dismissed his publication of The Beggar as “a few diminutive pages, paper-covered” (NZ Verse 1923-45), and he also made a point of relating the chequered publishing history of No New Thing in his introduction to Mason’s Collected Poems (13).
print it”. Whereas prior to the establishment a reliable local infrastructure literature in this country was represented by a small but diverse cross-section of literary endeavours, the Caxton Press pitched its authors as literary pioneers, striking out to claim the nationalist high ground. In this attitude they were the epitome of the modernist myth of the avant-garde, as formulated by the European, but primarily English, models from which they derived their inspiration and their authority. This was a nationalist movement grounded here only by virtue of the heavy cast iron presses that resided at Caxton’s Victoria Street premises. In The Textual Condition, McGann states that “[a]uthorship is a special form of human communicative exchange, and it cannot be carried on without interactions, co-operative and otherwise, with various persons and audiences” (64). It was this desire for an audience, the desire to enter into the textual condition, that marks out this generation of writers as formative of a national literature.

Although the imprint remained the Caxton Club Press until the end of 1935, the move signalled a break with the university, and the establishment of an independent printing and publishing concern. For in the middle of that year, Glover had taken on John Drew as a partner and, with £100 of borrowed capital, they had established what would be known simply, from 1936 onwards, as the Caxton Press. Their first recorded transaction on 10 June 1935 was 500 business cards for a local car dealer, and earned them the princely sum of 22

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7 In his introduction to Glover’s Selected Poems, Curnow admitted this with regards to his own volume Jack without Magic: “Glover had the paper, the typeface, the press; my poems, in this case, were simply the necessary something” (xv-xvi).

8 In the July 1938 issue of New Zealand Railways Magazine, O.N. Gillespie summarised what he described in the title to his article as “The Golden Year for New Zealand Literature”: “In the last year or two literary development in New Zealand has proceeded with amazing speed” (14), and he cited the work of Eileen Duggan, Jane Mander, Iris Wilkinson, Ngaio Marsh, James Cowan and C.R. Allen. “Refreshing in the last year or two has been the work of the vigorous younger men such as R.A.K. Mason, Denis Glover, A.R.D. Fairburn, D’Arcy Cresswell and others” (15).

9 “Modernism is based, of course, on the myth of a romantic advanced guard setting out before the rest of society to conquer new territory, new states of consciousness and social order” (Jencks 32).

10 Drew borrowed this sum from an aunt at an interest rate of five percent. An old crown folio hand-fed platen was bought for £45, along with an electric motor and counter shaft for £10 and £25 of type. An electrician was paid £5 to install it, and they opened a bank account with the remaining £10 (Drew manuscript).
shillings, paid with typical trade promptitude three months later (Caxton ledger). However, John Drew related how, prior to this, they had been even less successful: their first actual job had been 100 calling cards for 7/6, but which, according to Drew, “[t]he customer must have considered exorbitant, because he didn’t pay us” (Drew). On a further 100 calling cards for a different client, they fared little better, this time managing to spell the name of the customer wrong.

Despite the changes that occurred their output of five books represented an impressive effort for a local press publishing local verse; nevertheless, the following year they doubled the number of books published. Nineteen thirty-six also saw the appearance of a few slightly more substantial books, such as *Time and Place* by Ursula Bethell, and the first *Verse Alive* anthology selected from *Tomorrow* by Glover and Winston Rhodes. These were generally issued in editions of 100-150, although the “popular” *Verse Alive* ran to 230 copies. A clue as to how they managed to sustain such an output can perhaps be found in the outward title of the Director’s book of verse, *Six Easy ways of Dodging Debt Collectors*, but more revealing is the actual title page (Figure 4, above): “Several poems . . . called upon the outside, because of the difficulty of
selling verse, Six easy ways, etc."

A possible solution to these difficulties was set out in a brochure that appeared towards the end of 1936, the express aim (boldly set out in the first line) of which was “to encourage New Zealand literature”; it went on, “[l]iterature for which there is no present avenue of publication is being written in this country, and it is with the intention of providing this avenue, and helping our own writers, that the Caxton Club has been formed” (Caxton). Entitled “What are New Zealand Authors Writing?” (see Figure 5) it proposed the re-formation of the Caxton Club as a book club where members would pay a fixed fee (6/6 for a year), in return for which they would receive eight books. This worked out at a very reasonable nine pence per book - considerably cheaper than the price offered to the general public - and was accompanied by the promise to increase the size of books published. Members were also offered the chance to select their own books at a later stage.

In a letter of 23 November 1936, Glover and Drew sought a loan of £250 from J.H. Williams Barristers to upgrade their machinery. They outlined how they had done jobs on the platen that were not economical and how they had been constrained to turn down work, admitting “[f]or the type of machine saturation point appears to have been reached” (Glover). In its place they sought a second-hand motorised flatbed cylinder press and some further “desirable” types. They also justified the twelve pounds of their current balance that had been invested in the Caxton Club scheme, declaring, “[t]his scheme ensures greater success for future publications by guaranteeing a certain definite circulation, with payment in advance.” Before the scheme, the eleven previous publications from the press had cost £23, and returned £24. 15. 8. They concluded:

While our publications, in the aggregate, have not done much more than return costs, they are valuable in gaining us a great deal of good report in all parts of the country, and have led in several cases to important extensions to our commercial activities. With the Club Scheme, we will further be cultivating the better class of New Zealand
What are N.Z. authors writing?

And how can I, at low cost, obtain their work immediately it is published?

This brochure gives you the answer.

Fig. 5. Promotional brochure for Caxton Club, What are N.Z. Authors Writing?, Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury.
literature - a field of specialisation we have made peculiarly our own.

It would seem that, although it took a little longer than a year to publish all eight books, the scheme did get off the ground. "Bulletin No. 1" (Figure 6) introduced J.T. Allen's Parliamentary Portraits as the first publication of the Caxton Club. It also reiterated that "[i]t is our earnest desire to provide a good market for our native literature" (Caxton). The rest of the selection was varied and included verse and artwork (in the unique form of Leo Bensemann's Fantastica), and concluded with a radio play by R.A.K. Mason, Squire Speaks (1938). This latter work, the eighth and final production for the Caxton Club, was fitfully, made with the co-operation of Bob Lowry's Unicorn Press in Auckland, and was accompanied by a card that stated that the scheme was not going to be renewed because it had proved "impossible to offer books at a pre-determined price" (Caxton, In Producing). (Considering that the scheme only attracted about ninety members (Caxton, Publications), this is not particularly surprising.) Here was an important first lesson in publishing - the importance of audience. No doubt with a substantial subscription this sort of operation may have been possible, but this exercise simply served to illustrate the unpredictable nature of commercial book publishing, a factor of which Caxton was becoming all too aware. Nevertheless, this did not seem to hinder the flow of books from the press.

There were a number of books of note published during the period of the revived Caxton Club. Glover's The Arraignment of Paris, dedicated "to back-scratchers and rhubarb-eaters everywhere," was a satire pointedly directed at Charles Marris and the Georgian school of poetry he was seen to represent; it was as much a poetic manifesto in the way that it defined

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11 The accompanying card also noted that the "excellent typography provides a contrast to, and a change from, our own style," and this was certainly true. As evidenced by the even word spacing and unjustified right hand margin, Lowry's style was much more influenced by Eric Gill. Also the typeface chosen was very plain and, by contrast, pointed up the restrained elegance of Caxton design, even at this early stage.

12 A rejection, dated 28 October 1933, from Marris for Glover's poem, "Nuit d'Amour," was perhaps a specific motivation. The response of Marris was more literal than literary, and came in the form of a lawyer's letter. (Inside the cover of the copy of The Arraignment of Paris held at the Hocken Library is the inscription: "D.G. told me that C.A. Marris sent him a lawyer's letter over this pamphlet. P.A. Lawlor 13.8.52.") Such was its impact that author Niel Wright felt compelled to respond to it some twenty-five years later (see chapter three).
FOR MEMBERS OF
THE CAXTON CLUB

Bulletin No. 1

PARLIAMENTARY PORTRAITS
is your first publication as a member of the Caxton Club. The artist, Mr. J. T. Allen, left Canterbury University College only this year for a position on The Christchurch Press. He is 25 years of age. While editor of Canta, the students' association newspaper, he was responsible for a brilliant series of caricatures of members of the academic staff, a series which proved doubly popular when issued in booklet form by The Caxton Press. His Parliamentary Portraits mark a more ambitious step, and have already met with widespread and favourable comment. This book should be of considerable interest when Mr. Allen has, as we are confident he will, earned something of a reputation for his work.

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS
Among other publications to be issued for Club members will be
1 a small miscellany of unpublished verse containing work by Robin Hyde, Allen Curnow, Peter Middleton and others;
2 a collection of Allen Curnow's later (and mostly unpublished) verse;
3 A selection of Dr. R. G. Park's light verse, which has been very popular in Dunedin at least over the past few years; and
4 the annual anthology of verse from Tomorrow, the 1936 volume of which (Verse Alive) roused a good deal of comment.

It is also hoped to publish verse by A. R. D. Fairburn and W. D'A. Cresswell, while in the field of prose it may be possible to give Club members work by Frank Sargeson (whose Conversation with my Uncle and Other Sketches created something of a sensation when issued this year from the Unicorn Press), R. A. K. Mason and Robin Hyde.

CAXTON CLUB MEMBERSHIP
has already attained quite a satisfactory figure. The larger the membership, however, the more ambitious work we will be able to undertake. It is our earnest desire to provide a good market for our native literature, and in this the goodwill and enthusiasm of Club members is of indispensable value.

Please help us by telling your friends of the Caxton Club, and enrolling as many members as possible.

We will gladly send the Club brochure to any address.

The advantages of membership will be obvious when it is realised that Parliamentary Portraits, for which Club members have paid approximately 9d., is 2/- to the general public.

As you know, membership entails the payment of 6/6, in return for which 8 publications will be forwarded post free as soon as issued during the Club year.

The advantage of membership...
what Caxton poets were not. Marris, reviewing it in Art in New Zealand, saw it a little differently and failed to see any humour in the squib: “This lampoon will be remembered, if at all, for its conspicuous lack of good taste and cheap smartness” (231).\(^\text{13}\) A.R.D. Fairburn’s Dominion, described as “certainly the most important single work written by any New Zealand poet” (Caxton, Catalogue 20), appeared in March 1938. Glover immediately sent a copy to Eric Gill for his opinion, noting, “it’s only lino-typed, & I know you won’t like the big headings. But we haven’t the range of types to make our choice as often as we’d like. The poem should interest you, however, quite apart from the typography” (DG-Gill).

However, it is Fantastica\(^\text{14}\) that, even now, captures attention for its uniqueness. Peter Simpson summarised the attraction of this little known book: “Not only is Fantastica a beautifully made book; it is a book which reveals an imagination steeped in the traditions of both literature and book illustration” (“Habitat” 17). It seems entirely appropriate that this book of art should foreground the art of the book, for although it was Glover who laid the typographic groundwork for the Caxton Press, Leo Bensemann’s aesthetic eye was also to have a lasting impression on the design of Caxton books. John Drew detailed in his autobiographical account of the firm’s founding how Bensemann was among Glover’s wide circle of artistic friends, and he recollected how Bensemann had produced a set of woodcuts, which Glover promptly offered to print. In a not unusual occurrence,\(^\text{15}\) Bensemann ended up helping to set it in print and, by all accounts, displayed a natural affinity with type almost straight away. Drew also described how “the most important acquisition to the firm and to printing in New Zealand arrived in the form of renowned artist and typographer Leo Vernon Bensemann . . . He was so expert from the word go that we offered him a partnership. From then on Leo became the backbone of the whole show.” Later, Glover was to confirm that giving Bensemann a third

\(^{13}\) Caxton, however, saw fit to reproduce this assessment in their February 1941 catalogue (Caxton 21).

\(^{14}\) Glover also sent a copy of Fantastica to Eric Gill, which is now held in the William Andrews Clark Library’s Gill collection at UCLA.

\(^{15}\) Dennis Donovan recounted in an interview (1993) how he had gone to the Caxton Club Press to pick up some commercial printing and had ended up doing some of it himself.
share in the press was the "best thing I ever did" (DG-AW 15/776). Also, as a founding member of The Group (see later in this chapter), Bensemann lent credibility to Caxton's growing reputation as a patron of progressive arts.

Bensemann's arrival at the Press in 1937 also coincided with another move, this time to 129 Victoria Street, and, importantly, the arrival of their first cylinder press. The demy-folio stick flyer Wharfedale allowed them to print book pages four-up rather than the laborious two pages at a time that was all the old platen could manage. He also oversaw the installation (and necessary expansion of premises) of the newly imported German fully automatic press, which Caxton was very fortunate to receive before hostilities broke out. Whether or not this owed anything to Bensemann's contacts in Germany is unclear, but his ancestry, in particular his ability to understand German, was crucial when it was discovered that all the instructions for the new press were in German. What is more clear is that this press could not have been bought without the £1000 that John Drew managed to borrow off his godfather (Drew). It was undoubtedly a big boost to their commercial operations and was to stand them in good stead during the difficult war years. 16

A considerable number of other notable pieces - notable both for their content and for their typography - were published in the years leading up to the war, or, more specifically, Denis Glover's departure for active service in Europe in 1941. Glover's own published works included Thirteen Poems, a short story Till the Star Speak, and the satirical Cold Tongue. All these works suggest a certain divided interest, in that the books often tell more about Glover the printer than Glover the author. Thirteen Poems was set up in 12-point Gill Sans Italic

16 Drew claimed that: "it really laid the foundation for the confirmed financial success of the business."

17 "One of the great advantages of owning a printing press or even editing an anthology - a precedent I have observed to be followed by all modern anthologists - is that any editor always includes large slices of himself" (Glover, Hot Water 110).

18 He has certainly suggested that poetry did not hold his undivided attention: "Interested as I am in the techniques of verse construction, I would forsake a poet for the pleasure of listening to a worker from the Cobb Hydro-Electric Scheme" (Hot Water 107).
“purely to gratify experimental curiosity” (Caxton, Catalogue 26) [see Figure 7]. As the edition was one of only thirty bound copies (of which only fifteen were for sale), Glover was quick to point out that “[e]xcept for this reason, the highly private edition is to be deprecated; the business of printing being to put things abroad, private printing is a whim not lightly to be indulged” (Caxton, Catalogue 26). It must be noted (and this is a distinction that Alan Loney has been at pains to make clear some fifty years later [Loney, “Fine Printing”]) that there is really little difference between an edition of verse of thirty and the then standard run of 150, in terms of a percentage of the larger book-buying market. This was, and is still, a genre with a very limited, specialist readership.

In a similarly short run, Till the Star Speak was an experiment in the use of Linotype Garamond, upon which their judgement was that it was inferior to the Monotype version they already possessed (Caxton, Catalogue 26). This would seem to suggest that the purpose of its publication was, again, nothing more nor less than typographical experiment. This preference reflected a general trend in volumes of verse to favour the traditionally more book-quality typefaces, despite their being more laborious to set up and distribute. Nevertheless, Allen Curnow’s Not in Narrow Seas, which was described by E.H. McCormick as one of the “most ambitious poetical works of the decade” (qtd. in Caxton, Catalogue 25), was set in Linotype because of the mixture of prose and poetry. By way of comparison Notes from a Backblock Hospital, published a year previously and one of the few wholly prose works from this period, had to be farmed out to another printing firm, and it was lamented in Caxton’s catalogue that “the absence of a single good local linotype face proved something of a drawback” (Caxton,
Catalogue 25). Curnow's volume, however, was something of a landmark in the way it attacked the colonial mentality. In many respects it was simply a continuation of Glover's rejection of Georgianism, but what differentiated it was the establishment of what Curnow described as his own anti-myth ("Author's Note" xiii). The inclusion of prose then is significant in both these respects, suggesting that there were wider concerns than just poetry and that it was necessary to set them out more formally. The provocative frontispiece by Leo Bensemann is also a sharp indictment of colonial attitudes. Although not as vehement, Charles Brasch's The Land and the People dealt with similar themes.

Caxton's first specimen book of printing types appeared in January 1940. In terms of typography nothing like this had been printed in New Zealand before, but what was also unique was its marriage of form and content, so characteristic of Caxton Press publications: boring lists of alphabets were displaced by entertaining pieces from Edward Lear, Boswell and Alexander Pope. All was not anecdote however, and the booklet began with a statement of typographical intent by Stanley Morison and concluded with a quotation from Eric Gill (Figure 8). These two quotations encapsulated the Caxton "service" approach to printing and publishing, namely the least intrusive suiting of type to text. Yet they also reflect an intimate concern for design: when Morison talks of typography as the "craft of rightly disposing printing material in accordance with specific purpose" [my italics], this is printed to a right-hand justified margin. (A liberty such as this with the principles they espoused would no doubt have been justified by the very nature of a type specimen book.) More obviously, Gill's quotation at the end is printed in his famous Gill Sans-serif typeface. A

19 Peter Simpson, in an article entitled "From Colonial to Provincial: The Evolution of Poetry in Canterbury", sees Not in Narrow Seas as representative of the very creative provincial phase in Canterbury poetry (15).

20 The February 1941 catalogue notes that "it has been our aim to provide enjoyable reading as well as typographic excellence" (30).
Fig. 8. Two pages (no pagination) from *A Specimen Book of Printing Types*.

**The Service Rendered to the World by Printers**

Printers is best talked about by those who are served. The printer had better confine his attention to the well doing of what he wants to do or is asked to do, namely to print. When the servant brags about his services it is probable that he is stealing the spoons.

**Eric Gill**

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**Stanley Morison Says—**

Typography may be defined as the craft of rightly disposing printing material in accordance with specific purpose; of so arranging the letters, distributing the space and controlling the type as to aid to the maximum the reader's comprehension of the text.
further quotation from Gill talks of the necessity of plainness in the “typography of industrialism . . . for printers’ flowers will not spring in such a soil.” Other quotations comment on spacing and choice of paper, and there is a distinctive bookplate design by Leo Bensemann (see Figure 9) along with a new script, Legend, that was to become synonymous with his work. This bookplate is significant in that it stamps Leo Bensemann’s authority on this booklet, as if his brooding, bushy eyebrows keep watch over every detail. According to John Drew, all the texts were chosen by Bensemann himself, and this reflects his increasing dominance in terms of Caxton design. This not only demonstrated their own unbounded enthusiasm for typography, but a desire to stimulate in the general public an interest and appreciation of the variety of design available (the commercial value of which being, no doubt, a consideration).

With the flexibility offered by their new automatic press Caxton was more willing to approach longer works of fiction, although their primary emphasis was still poetry. Sargeson’s A Man and his Wife at 35 000 words was one of the largest works done in-house in the period before the end of the war, (although this decision was no doubt facilitated by E P. Dawson’s offer to meet the printing costs). In a sense this was the next rung up the ladder, both in terms of publishing and in terms of a “national” literature as largely conceived by the Caxton stable of authors. New Zealanders had already succeeded in writing their “own” poetry, and it was now felt (at Caxton Press at least) to be the time to produce the much awaited longer

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21 Michael King provides a fuller account in his biography of Sargeson (see especially page 200).
work of fiction as this extract from their February 1941 catalogue makes clear: "Mr Sargeson has given us the book for which New Zealanders have been waiting so long. The scene is distinctively our own" (33). Yet again their earnest intentions were reflected in the material treatment of the book. Baskerville, "one of the most readable typefaces ever designed" (Specimen), was specifically chosen for its accessibility, especially as the book was printed with narrow margins so as to utilise space more economically (and consequently keep the price down). In this way some sort of balance - probably as much as Caxton's limited resources allowed - was achieved between quality of design and wider availability to the public. The price seems to have been kept deliberately low on this edition, and towards the end of the war two further cheaper editions were issued by the Progressive Publishing Society (but printed by the Caxton Press), such was the demand, as well as their determination to see this book in wider circulation.

It seemed almost inevitable that Caxton, having printed both poetry and fiction, would next tackle criticism, and this they did in no small way by publishing M.H. Holcroft's Centennial prize-winning essay, The Deepening Stream. Glover saw Holcroft as something of a spokesman for their generation, someone "who expressed in lucid careful prose what the whole group of poets ... had been groping their way toward" (Glover, Hot Water 111). This seemed to be some sort of "essential" New Zealand, and in a way The Deepening Stream can be seen as a charter for aspiring writers, providing direction and goals (although it was ostensibly addressed to a wider audience than this). Certainly as far as reviewers were concerned it seems to have been glowingly received, and Holcroft's depiction of the intellectual life of New Zealand accepted as accurate. Further, the aims of

22 Glover, however, baulked at publishing "That Summer" (King 204-5).

23 It is unclear to what extent this kind of saving was a direct result of the effects of war shortages, but this first edition was still printed on antique laid paper.
publishing this book seem to be subtly reiterated in the book’s presentation: the Baskerville type and generous margins allowed for ease of reading and the book certainly seems to have achieved the distinction of “a scholarly piece of typography” (Caxton, Catalogue 35) as Caxton wished.

This period also saw an upsurge in the number of books that could be classified as private press offerings. Some have already been mentioned, but primarily they were those for which typography has not only been the means of publication but the end as well. They appeared in very limited numbers, the main impetus having been the desire to experiment with type. Nastagio and the Obdurate Lady is such an example, running to only twenty-five copies, of which fifteen were for sale. It was hand-printed on hand-made paper and ran to an extravagant two colours, and included another illustration by Bensemann. It was not just caprice or boredom that led Caxton to experiment in such a way, as the benefits were considerable in terms of the constant improvement of general presswork and a growing reputation for quality production. Nor was it a deliberate push into the private press market (which scarcely existed in New Zealand anyway), and this is reflected in the scarcely hard-sell note in Caxton’s catalogue regarding this publication: “This experiment in fine book production has been made to satisfy a private ambition: we need not, therefore, detail what labour and expense we have been at to make it a memorable production . . . but intending buyers are warned that there is not much of it for the money” (Caxton, Catalogue 38). A similar experiment was made with the publication of The Adventures of Chanticleer and Partlet, which employed Gill’s device of a broken right-hand margin to preserve even word-spacing. Although this technique was later denounced by Glover as being too inflexible,24 it serves to demonstrate the press’s interest in typographical theory and development and their willingness to try something new and, thereby, develop their skills.

24 In a letter to Bob Gormack in 1973 Glover wrote: “Gill in ‘The Procrustean Bed’ essay set the then heresy of the ragged right in print; but look at it now! Everything looks like our Newsi verse . . . Gill’s claim was for even word spacing. Even in thick-spaced verse I query it: but Gill was too much of an amateur printer” (21/8/73).
It seems particularly telling that all the actual texts of the ‘private press’ work done by Caxton Press were of English origin, and that, by implication, no New Zealand work merited such treatment. This would seem to indicate the transcendence of the English canon still (especially in terms of a bibliographic culture), despite the vehement proclamations of literary independence; their own rationale for not producing limited edition private press books of New Zealand origin can be seen in this extract from the foreword to their February 1941 catalogue:

[first object] to make available, as widely and therefore as reasonably as possible [my italics], what prose and poetry the directors of the press have considered of interest and value . . . But it seemed to us that the most useful work to be done was to make known any promising work by New Zealanders, and to provide a rallying point lacking which a good deal of it might have suffered dispersion or stagnation. (7)

Although it could be argued that the average Caxton edition of around 200 copies was not exactly conducive to their egalitarian ideals, their efforts, considered in the light of their limited financial resources and the unprofitability of verse in general, were not only successful but miraculously so.27

Their view, expressed in their catalogue, that typography must at all times be subservient to the message and not draw attention to itself ironically resulted in a readily identifiable austerity of style. In the text Bookmaking, the author makes the point that “[a]n entirely neutral design is virtually impossible, as some character will become evident in any work in which so many choices are made” (Lee 359). One reviewer in the Newspaper News described the Cata-

25 See Alan Loney’s article in Landfall 185, entitled “Something of Moment: Caxton Press typography in the 1950s” (137-51).

26 Another possibility is that Bensemann’s tastes were considerably more Eurocentric, especially in terms of literature, and the choice of subject seems to reflect his eclectic tastes.

27 Especially in terms of poetry, it would not seem necessary to have a large print run in order to develop a readership, perhaps because the potential readership is not very large. Another possibility is that because people often like one or two poems but rarely a whole collection, and poems are usually quite short, knowledge of particular poems can spread beyond the simple number of times they are printed. The crux of the issue would seem to be access, with 2-300 books being preferable to none.
logue of Caxton Press publications to February, 1941 as “[n]eatly planned and printed in better-class English bookseller manner” (“Catalogued Romance”) and this gives some indication of the source of many of their design choices. The utilitarian view that the purpose of type was “to aid to the maximum the reader’s comprehension of the text” (Morison qtd. in Glover, “Typography and the Librarian” 227) served to obscure these Anglocentric origins sufficiently to create the illusion of a locally manifested, spontaneous literary movement. By appropriating the cultural infrastructure from which so many writers felt cut off, Caxton assumed the right to determine the canon. Where writers chose to look beyond this narrowly English matrix, as for example Gormack and his Rabelaisian “discursions” or the influence of Chinese culture on Ruth Dallas, they were generally either marginalised or excluded from the canon. Needless to say the same applied to Maori writing.

Again it was their ideals, rather than any kind of pragmatic business sense, that led Caxton to publish Areopagitica. Milton’s classic vindication of the freedom of the press and Caxton’s “finest book,” for which “no pains were spared to make the production worthy” (Caxton, 1941) of its subject matter. These were, however, ideals under threat from the increasingly restrictive war regulations and this book was a subtle but direct response to the closing down of Tomorrow,28 to which both Glover and Bensemman were regular contributors, as well as being admirers. However, with Areopagitica, Glover was in his element, and his irreverent streak was reflected in this gentle gibe that appeared in their catalogue: “The work does not appear generally known in New Zealand, and some in high places may be favoured with a complimentary copy” (Caxton, Catalogue 42); it continued in a similar vein by pointing out that, “[a]s interest in the subject-matter does not appear to be widespread, only 150 copies will be printed.” This was not the only rebellious act performed by the press, for in the early days of the war Glover and Donovan would, late at night, print off pacifist leaflets (Drew).

28 Although Tomorrow was not forcibly closed down, Henderson’s printers were threatened with confiscation of their machinery under emergency regulations and, not surprisingly, they complied by refusing to print the fortnightly.
More than anything else, the publication of *Areopagitica* located Caxton Press within a specifically English tradition. The ethos of Miltonian libertarianism certainly sat more comfort­ably with the publisher and the authors it represented than the socialist ideals that were often attributed to it. Nowhere is this more clearly illustrated than in the different uses to which this text was put by Caxton and, later, the Progressive Publishing Society (see later). Although *Areopagitica* was a prohibited text at this time, its publication by Caxton was as much a gesture of solidarity with Kennaway Henderson as protest against the censorship of his magazine. Theirs was a decision to reprint an historic document - a vindication of the freedom to publish unhindered by state intervention. By invoking the English Private Press tradition in the form of a handset limited edition, Caxton were asserting that *Areopagitica* was a part of their cultural heritage in the same way as the Magna Carta was a part of their legal one. By simply presenting the text in this way and allowing its necessarily small audience to draw its own conclusions, Caxton’s effort could be dismissed as a rather weak gesture of defiance. However, when one considers the care devoted to its production and the utilisation of scarce materials, the protest lay in the form and not the content of Milton’s tract. The return to craft principles in the context of an industrialised war effort, when work was supposed to be confined to essential services, can be seen as a bibliographic revolt similar to that instigated by the Arts and Crafts Movement in England in the late nineteenth century.

Nineteen forty-one was an important year for Caxton: it continued to publish books at a fairly prodigious rate (especially considering international events), including the scholarly *New Zealand Notables* through to the “first cheap edition” (Caxton, 1941) of Sargeson’s *A Man and his Wife* and new poetry from Curnow, Mason, Fairburn and Glover. More importantly this year saw the first edition of *Book*, a miscellany of literature and art, and in many way the prototype of *Landfall*, although it differed markedly in tone. In an article entitled “Typography and the Librarian,” Glover explained the difference:

At the Caxton Press, for instance, we should not care to send out *Landfall* other than in restrained and suitable clothing. It does not lend itself to fancy dress. But the frills
and the furbelows, the flounces and the farthingales can be saved for Book which is a legitimate avenue for experiment (not always successful in retrospect) for virtuous, stylistic, period or even bizarre type. (228)

On a commercial level, it was a showcase for Caxton typography (and, in this respect, showed considerable foresight, considering the plethora of slickly designed, glossy trade brochures now available), but it was this very factor that allowed for the rather marked departure from Caxton's adherence to notions of strict, typographic restraint and provided an "opportunity for spectacular gymnastics, with typography as a trapeze" (Glover, "Typography: Bob" 34).

The difference here, as with their type specimen book, was that where the demonstration of typography was the central aim, liberties with layout were not only tolerated, they were considered more in keeping with Stanley Morison's desire "to aid to the maximum the reader's comprehension of the text"; in this way, as with their other books, form coheres with content.

Book shared few of the formalities of Areopagitica, and yet both self-consciously displayed their making; the difference was that Book located itself much more clearly in the present. The turmoil of world events seemed to have relaxed the grip of traditional design strictures, and opened the way for this extended exploration of the printing medium. The significance of this self-examination seems to have been lost, and it is viewed, at best, as an aberration; however, it was a crucial stage in the establishment of an infrastructure for the development of New Zealand literature. Through this forum for experiment Caxton grew in confidence, and Book can be seen as a flexing of Caxton's typographic muscle, a demonstration of not only its willingness but its technical capability to fulfill the role of cultural forum. The advocacy within its pages of a more critical approach to New Zealand literature backed Caxton's bibliographic claims that the technological infrastructure had developed to such a degree that it was capable of supporting such developments.

By its very title, Book acknowledged the inseparability of literary expression from an infrastructure for its dissemination, and so implicitly placed itself within a bibliographic tradition;
Landfall, however, announced - in its title at least - something quite different. Like “Phoenix,” “Landfall” suggested a fresh start, but one with the solidity of a masthead suitable to the prevalent island imagery. Its “restrained and suitable clothing” (Glover, “Typography and the Librarian” 228) offered little to suggest any connection with its bibliographically stimulating predecessor, and instead projected a more conservative aura of stability and authority. The emergence of a critical strain to complement literary offerings had been encouraged in Book, but its pervasiveness in the new journal extended to much broader social critiques. The impression given was that of a less accommodating and more hierarchised forum. The transition represented by Landfall is confirmation of McGann’s assertion that “the dynamic social relations which always exist in literature production - the dialectic between the historically located individual author and the historically developing institutions of literature production - tend to become obscured in criticism” (Critique 81). Removed from this context, the author’s intentions were increasingly brought into question by critics. A.R. Dunlop, for example, remarked on the increasing acceptance of “the assumption (a frequent part of the stock-in-trade of ‘Landfall’ reviewers) that the writer is significantly revealing himself by what his characters say and that what they say has, as well, some deep social significance” (Review 11/4/53). As a consequence, some of the explanations attributed considerably wider significance to authors than their reception at the time would have suggested.

Book can be seen as something of a turning point in Caxton’s development. Having become somewhat lost in the shadow of its more portentous sibling, Landfall, Book merits closer analysis if for no other reason than the simple fact that it has received so little attention, when it embodies many of the formative ideas of that more well-known journal. Further, in a quirk of time that perhaps only Allen Curnow could appreciate, it was perhaps more suited to being Landfall’s succes-
sor, especially in terms of design and layout, rather than its predecessor. This is not to say that *Landfall* was inappropriate to its time, for it definitely filled an intellectual space, but it did not seem to recognise when its guiding principles, essentially formulated pre-war, had become anachronistic. This was precisely the reason why authors such as Alan Loney were forced to their own resources in order to obtain an outlet for their work.

The first and subsequent editions rightly deserved the sub-title “A Miscellany”; *Book 1* ranges from a shaggy-dog story entitled “The Telegram” (which utilised different typefaces for both the title and the punchline - a telling addition) to a much more serious piece, “A Job for Poetry: Notes on an Impulse” by Allen Curnow (which appears much more considered than the title would suggest). The latter is predominantly a prescription for poetry as “imaginative rehabilitation,” but it also manages to provide excellent publicity for Curnow’s forthcoming book of poetry *Island and Time*. The ideas are not far removed from those expressed in his original manifesto, *Poetry and Language*, where he stated that “[p]oetry must have its feet on the familiar earth of plain speech” (9) (cf. the necessity for the poet to remain faithful “to the real order, to the ‘practical’ prospect and to real Time” [Curnow, *Island* 8]). A further article reinforced these ideas and provides a valuable link with typography and art in general. “Craftsmanship and the Machine” describes Francis Meynell’s Nonesuch Press, a private press that openly acknowledged, and utilised, the advances of the machine age; therefore, although the production was machine modern, it still retained a high standard of quality. The implication was that poetry still required “skill in the making,” but it, too, had a job to stay modern. This issue also included extracts from Sargeson’s “Conversation with my Uncle” in the centre pages, and another from Holcroft’s “The Deepening Stream,” putting forward the case for closer attention to critical writings.

Almost in answer to Holcroft’s call, Curnow produced a piece on “The Poetry of R.A.K.

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29 Issues One through Four and Eight were not paginated, and so quotations and articles referred to are not sourced individually in the bibliography; however, full details for the nine issues of *Book* are provided.
Mason” in the second volume, which appeared in May of that same year. Curnow saw in Mason’s poetry “something of the isolated despair of a life wrenched from roots in the world’s past”; he went on to rate him with Yeats and Eliot, while at the same time affirming the “distinctly native-born character of Mason’s poetry.” These themes not only recur in Curnow’s writing, but in writing about Curnow, as this extract from a review by Holcroft of Island and Time, which was reprinted in Book 2, clearly demonstrates: “[this is] a view of New Zealand as a slender land mass separated by wide oceans from the theatres of history, and as a psychological complex amid the currents of time.” This rather cosmic view of things was always mediated - and, to some extent, contradicted - in Book by the variety of other offerings, both written and visual, but one becomes increasingly aware of a concerted approach to literature, and to poetry in particular.

Two more issues appeared in August and September and they continued to offer a wide variety of material. Among the items contained in Book 3 was a rather telling “Ode to the Caxton Press.” This was prefaced by the inscription “The poet Horace being in hospital and unable to pay his account to the patrician printing house of the Caxtons sends this ode,” and this seemed to represent the contribution of literature to Caxton’s coffers. Book 4 included a rather caustic appraisal of book reviewing, sweepingly entitled “A New Order for Book Reviewing,” which advocated writers reviewing their own books because a writer at least had “the inestimable advantage that he has read the book from cover to cover.” It also, somewhat naively, questioned the impartiality of some journals that relied heavily on publishers’ advertisements, and made a point of noting that there were no such advertisements in Book. Although this was typical of the independent, individual approach that characterised this journal (and inevitably leads to comparisons with the fortnightly Tomorrow), it is more than a little ironic when one considers that the whole of Book was really one large advertisement for Caxton products. However, as far as reviewing was concerned, they were scrupulous (not to mention democratic), going so far as to have the same book reviewed by two different people.
“A Few Harsh Words on Areopagitica as Printed” also reflected the democratic principle in action. In this article J.C. Beaglehole gave a particularly critical analysis of the work in question, and although much of what he said may have seemed like pedantries, his contention was that such was the nature of what they were doing: “printing is in more ways than one, all small points.” And this was certainly true for the Caxton Press, which was trying so hard to distance itself from the “rough-enough” ethos common in the printing trade. This was, in turn, reflected in their jobbing printing sales, which largely consisted of ecclesiastical and professional clients. However, in a letter to the Timaru architect and book collector Percy Watts Rule, Glover acknowledged the potential detriment of Beaglehole’s article: “It may be bad publicity from a sales view, but I feel we can, & ought, to take it”; he continued, “[o]ur whole business has been built on the frankest internal and external criticism” (2/9/41). This willingness to accept criticism seems to reflect a genuine desire to maintain, and improve, typographical standards, that is everywhere evident in their publications.

One of the more interesting criticisms that Beaglehole made was that of “restlessness” in Areopagitica; by this he meant that the setting was such that it created the impression of there being too much white space. His justification was that “[p]rinting, like architecture, is the just disposal of space,” but his attitude reveals a slightly more dated view of typography than that demonstrated - and presumably held - by the Caxton Press at this time. What he saw as “restless” was nothing more than an example of the “movement” - the utilisation of white spaces in the overall appearance of the text - advocated by the Bauhaus-derived New Typography. This is not to say that Caxton was an exponent of avant-garde typography (in fact, by this stage this style had mostly been absorbed into the printing mainstream), for they were still very much influenced by restrained English private press design, but they were at least aware of these influences. It would seem that this applied particularly to Leo Bensemann, who, more than Glover, was aware of more European-centred artistic developments.30

30 In a letter to the author, the Director of the Manawatu Art Gallery, Julie Catchpole, noted that some pre-war German-Jewish immigrants to New Zealand had reasonably avant-garde German paintings and catalogues of exhibitions.
Two more issues appeared in 1942, and the first, Book 5, noted inside the front cover that by the time this issue had appeared, Denis Glover would have arrived in England for military service (although not all Glover's time was spent on matters military, and details of the printing contacts he made while there will be detailed later). It went on to represent Book as “a recurring expression of the constructive aims of the Caxton Press . . . the usefulness of [which] . . . may be increased, not diminished, at a time when such aims are easily overlooked.” The loss of Glover did not seem to affect the outward appearance of the journal, but it is not clear to what extent the hiatus after Book 6 until the end of the war is attributable to wartime conditions or Glover's absence. The former seems to be the more likely explanation, as by this time Bensemann was an equal, if not a better, of Glover at printing, and the shortage of supplies, especially paper, for “non-essential” work was acute. It did not help Bensemann's position that he was a conscientious objector and of German descent; nevertheless, with John Drew seconded to military duties, Bensemann was left to run the press virtually by himself, although Noel Hoggard, among others, helped out (DG-LB 16/1/42). (Bensemann also managed to serve as a member of the Christchurch Co-operative Book Society management board from 1942-46 [Barrowman 100].) Considering these obstacles he managed extraordinarily well, and considering Caxton's base was not exactly solid before the war, he did a creditable job, not only keeping the press afloat but eliminating its debts (something more difficult to achieve under Glover's profligate hand).

In terms of figures the war years were particularly hard. By the beginning of 1943 accounts showed that turnover had halved (although the traditional post-Christmas lull must be taken into account here), but by the middle of the year turnover had matched healthy pre-war standards. Perhaps a factor that could have contributed to Caxton's financial stabilisation, despite these fluctuations, was that their Publications Department had gone into abeyance from November 1941, and did not figure again in the company's books until January 1945 (Caxton, Ledger). Although this coincided with Glover's departure overseas, an important
external factor was the setting up of the Progressive Publishing Society in 1941. For three years it assumed the liability for a number of books that would, under normal circumstances, have appeared under the Caxton imprint, instead of just being printed by them. The result was particularly telling: in July 1945 the society went into liquidation with debts of £2482, but a grandiose total of 65 publications to its credit (Barrowman 139).

The Progressive Publishing Society makes for a revealing comparison with the Caxton Press. Rachel Barrowman describes the Society as "a practical experiment in cultural democracy" (144), and, to a certain degree, it was successful in this respect - unfortunately, to the detriment of its long-term financial viability. Admirably (and in this respect like the Caxton Press) their criterion for publishing was worth and not profit, but this, too, ultimately had its price. The Caxton Press initially became involved in negotiations with Progressive Books in April 1941, and it was proposed that a New Zealand Publishing Society be set up, involving the Caxton Press, Paul's Book Arcade and the three co-operative book societies. Shortly thereafter Caxton, among others, contributed fifty pounds in shares, and towards the end of that year the Society was producing pamphlets. However, in 1943 there came a name change, to the Progressive Publishing Society, and a decision was made to include only co-operative booksellers, thereby excluding Caxton and Paul's (Barrowman). This did not prevent the "new" society from quoting from Areopagitica in the preface to their promotional booklet "Freedom to Publish. Evidence in a Case for Appeal." (Although this work was by no means the property of the Caxton Press, it was certainly associated with them by its earlier impressive publication.)

For the Progressive Publishing Society, the text of Areopagitica was less of a cultural icon and more a source of evidence in support of its more egalitarian ideals. Their very broad goal was to try to provide open access to the print medium, and consequently they had little time for

31 Rachel Barrowman devotes a whole chapter (Five) of her book to this organisation.
32 Again see Barrowman for a fuller investigation of this.
the subtleties of craft printing. Worthy as their ambitions were, their actual efforts vividly demonstrated the disparity between ideals and the capital-intensive world of publishing, and the inevitable result was the publication of material for which there was no real market. This was certainly a salutary lesson for Caxton, but it also illustrates the extent to which they had come to terms with the limits of the technology that was available to them. The Progressive Publishing Society, then, had failed to recognise that, as Glover put it, “[p]rinting is a social art, and in this respect is like architecture. It is design not only to a purpose but to a cost” (Glover, “Typography and the Librarian” 229).

Most tellingly the Society’s move from “glorified ‘pamphleteer’” (Barrowman 165) to book production late in 1944 was followed closely by its collapse. Rachel Barrowman cites an “excess of enthusiasm and a lack of management expertise” (145), as well as gross undercapitalisation (meaning that it was not able to carry the necessarily large quantities of stock) as reasons for its demise. This undercapitalisation was a result of the Society having no financial base independent of publishing, unlike the Caxton Press with its relatively lucrative printing business, which could, and often did, offset publication losses. Furthermore, although the “workmanlike” design of their books was, as Rachel Barrowman points out (168), more suitable to Wool Marketing or Slums of Auckland than Caxton’s restrained elegance, their choice did not take account of the publishing reality that book production was inherently more expensive than pamphlets; consequently, they sold at a higher price and had a resultantly smaller market. By contrast, Caxton’s design choice was virtually tailored to their target market of a small, “bookish” literary elite. In essence, it would seem that the Progressive Publishing Society never achieved, or even attempted to achieve, a balance of idealism and financial realism. Whereas it was in this delicate balancing act that Caxton’s success lay, and it was a balancing act. It would be totally unfair to say that Caxton was too realistic or too mercenary, because, had the activities of Caxton been entirely dictated by economics, it seems unlikely that it would ever have moved beyond a “mere ticket printing concern” (Hot Water 85). Some good was certainly to come of this experiment, however, in that two of Caxton’s most signifi-
cant post-war books were initiated by the Society: Sargeson’s *Speaking for Ourselves* anthology and Curnow’s *A Book of New Zealand Verse*.

As mentioned earlier, Glover’s time in England during the war benefited the Caxton Press as well as the Royal New Zealand Navy. In his letters to Leo Bensemann he was very enthusiastic about the cornucopia of printing information that was available to him in England from places such as the St. Brides Typographical Library (this research obviously making a welcome change from dreary military training) and the Monotype Corporation. He spent time visiting papermakers, foundries and “the all-important cloth manufacturers” (Glover-Bensemann 12/7/42), and establishing a number of important contacts; among them were John Lehmann, Dr. John Johnson at the Oxford University Press, Stanley Morison and Oliver Simon of the Curwen Press. He also corresponded with H.E. Waite, who provided “informative and helpful typographical letters” (DG-LB 12/7/42). In the same letter, he also mentioned staying with Charles Brasch, and it was probably there that the first discussions regarding *Landfall* took place.

Early upon his arrival in England, Glover arranged for copies of Caxton books to be sent to Johnson at Oxford, who reciprocated by posting *Hart’s Rules for Compositors and Readers at the University Press, Oxford* to Caxton (DG-LB 14/2/43). As well as receiving copies himself, Glover continued this practice throughout the war, commenting to Bensemann that “[i]t may well be important to us” (24/4/44). He obtained copies of various typographical books, as well as some copies of the periodical *Signature*, and also managed to find time to arrange distribution with some booksellers in London. Time spent at the Curwen Press proved to be particu-

33 These are all to be found in the Leo Bensemann ms. 3983-7 at the Turnbull Library, Wellington.
34 In a letter dated 10 May 1943 and pasted inside Glover’s copy of Stanley Morison’s *First Principles of Typography*, the Monotype Corporation added Caxton Press to the *Recorder* list, commenting, “we shall be glad to see it in such good hands as yours” (Monotype).
35 Alex Cowan & Sons (NZ) Ltd. wrote to John Drew in August 1942, informing him that Glover had just looked over their English paper mill.
larly inspiring. He found the Stephenson Blake foundry type used in their specimen book interesting and was taken by some exclusive borders by Edward Bowden. He was similarly enthralled with the array of available papers and bookcloths, and went as far as pricing coloured Curwen Press covers. His enthusiasm for Fell types and his toying with the idea of specimen collecting suggest a wholehearted engagement with the English book culture matrix he had been exposed to.

This did not mean that he had lost interest in events in New Zealand. He encouraged Bensemann to keep in touch with Peggy Souter at the Co-operative Publishing Society and to maintain their reputation: “Bill S. represents us, & would welcome your presence or suggestions. As would Modern Books & J.C.B. Our name is very high in Wellington and must be propped up” (16/1/42). He also reminded Bensemann that Sargeson had been promised a royalty of three or four pence (he was not sure which) on the second edition of A Man and his Wife (28/2/43). It is clear that Glover’s strength had been to establish a broad public profile for the press. Bensemann, for his part, did an extraordinary job maintaining links with the Co-operative Publishing Society and reducing the company’s debt, not to mention paying Glover’s wife a weekly sum throughout the war (Donovan, Interview 1993). Glover was aware, mainly through Curnow, of Bensemann’s herculean efforts, and, on hearing of John Drew’s departure at the beginning of 1943, sympathised: “I don’t doubt that one could write music on your forehead lines, from the complexities you are dealing in” (28/2/43).

As already mentioned, Glover avidly requested copies of most publications, and acknowledged copies of Book 5 and 6, Spike, Rostrum, Gilbert, Hervey, Whim-wham and G.M.

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36 Their pattern book for litho cover papers offered 126 choices. Other names mentioned were those of J. Barcham Green and Grosvenor Charter, as well as Dickinson’s bookcloths (DG-LB 9/5/43).

37 Glover wrote to Bensemann: “it occurs to me that New Zealand printing must be a Victorian paradise second to none, pure and unalloyed because of the lack of other tradition and material” (28/2/43).

38 Glover acknowledged that “[p]laying off Vicky was good work” (DG-LB 24/4/44).
Smith. In October, 1942 he received a copy of Sinclaire’s essays, with which he was particularly pleased: “The imposition is about our finest yet and the format is not only most delicate, but scholarly as well” (DG-LB 17/10/42); he also admired the “distinction” of the Garamond Italic running heads, “quite different from that of Caslon and rather lighter”. Despite the inclusive “our,” Bensemann’s skills were obviously developing rapidly, and even Glover acknowledged some surprise: “your skill astonishes me curiously” (28/2/43). However, he did not reserve similar praise for Beaglehole’s efforts, and despite describing the frontispiece of the Tasman book as “a technical miracle,” he was dismissive of the overall design: “J.C.B. has gone haywire if he thinks the Tasman effort is any good. Nor has anybody over here got any time or taste for that private style of printing” (13/6/43).

He modestly declared in one letter to Bensemann that “[m]y typographical knowledge is increasing very widely I find: I grow in wisdom daily” (9/5/43). In January 1942, he had written, promising to “track down some of the real materials we’ve been looking for so long” (16/1/42), which included a good Perpetua typeface. Implicit in this statement is an acknowledgement of the remarkable degree of improvisation on Caxton’s part prior to the war, and consequently their output can be seen as doubly impressive. However, his increasing knowledge of printing and newfound enthusiasm were tempered by an awareness of Caxton’s limitations. (It could probably be argued that his initial ignorance of these limitations was exactly what allowed Caxton to print to such a high standard with such limited resources.) Glover identified the restricted range of mechanical typefaces possessed by Caxton as a major weakness, adding “11-point Baskerville can’t do everything” (13/6/43). Ultimately, Glover was still optimistic: “I think muchly of what little we have done together and doubt not that we shall do more and better. But contact with the limitless resources of England makes our few broken types look rather pathetic. Onward and upward” (31/7/44).

Unfortunately, Glover’s enthusiasm was tempered by his war experiences, and he returned to New Zealand deeply unsettled. To counter his despondency, he seems to have thrown himself
somewhat desperately into an extravagant publishing programme, which included a great deal of his own work. On account of this frenzied activity, Caxton published (in some cases co-published) an astounding nine books in 1945. Included in this array were Curnow’s *A Book of New Zealand Verse*, *Beyond the Palisade* by James K. Baxter, the short novel *When the Wind Blows* and a collection of short stories edited by Sargeson, *Timeless World* by M.H. Holcroft, music by Lilburn and, seemingly inevitably, a private press version of *Hero & Leander* (the choice of text suggests the influence of Bensemann). In this astonishing collection they had covered fiction, poetry, criticism and music; they filled the remaining gap the following year by publishing Ngaio Marsh’s exposition on play production, *A Play Toward*.

Towards the end of 1945 Glover wrote to Brasch to reassure him that he had not forgotten their earlier discussions in England: “I still devote random thoughts to your periodical, but doubt if it can be formulated until you’ve had a look round out here” (21/10/45); in the same letter he also outlined the material difficulties facing the press: “In printing and publishing they are as bad as they could be, with shortage of men and an utterly insufficient binding capacity. Our own Caxton problems hinge on lack of plant and room. We could use premises four times as big.” Building was therefore necessary, but expensive, and although there seemed to be no shortage of jobbing work, the publishing side suffered with exasperating results for Glover: “I have half-a-dozen quite worthwhile mss. I can’t get near” (21/10/45). Nevertheless, since March of 1945, monthly publication sales (Caxton, Ledger) had topped £100 from a low of eighteen shillings during the war (although this by no means translated into actual profits), and so Glover was optimistic for the future: “I am expecting big results from our Xmas list, which includes seventeen titles; and if I don’t get them will revert to less ambitious and therefore less exciting programmes” (21/10/45). His assessment of the Curnow
anthology was somewhat more cautious:

I don't know if the Anthology is any good. Certainly the essay is. But the verse, and of course it is the best of the last 25 years, isn't good enough. Only Mason and bits of Curnow seem to have any real value. I think Miss Bethell not an Anthology poet. She must be considered in her whole works. But that is still delayed. (21/10/45)

Brasch's criticism of the volume was confined to typographic detail, expressing concern about the footnote type and the fact that it was not page-width. Glover willingly concurred, admitting "[w]e get too much ignorant praise and not enough useful criticism" (21/10/45). This was a telling acknowledgement of the absence within New Zealand of a fine printing tradition by which to judge their efforts, but, at the same time, it was a measure of the success of the Caxton Press in creating an audience for its publications and, on a wider scale, establishing an indigenous book culture.

Bethell's book was not the only one of Glover's ambitious undertakings to be delayed, as he admitted in a letter to Brasch that their limited resources meant that "[a]nything we do must be so largely opportunist" (29/7/46). Meanwhile, he continued to accept new manuscripts, including two for John Lehmann in England.39 By August, to meet the demand for more space, they had begun encroaching on the plumber next door. Despite this expansion the capital situation was precarious, as at the same time Glover announced to Brasch: "From now on we undertake no new major printing until all our arrears are disposed of. The position has become fantastic" (26/8/46). Somewhat contradictorily, two months later he was sending Brasch the costings for Landfall, suggesting a publication date of March the following year and informing him of the receipt of a consignment of new types.40

One typeface that Glover had earlier been successful in tracking down was Perpetua, as it was

39 These were The Bloom of Candles: Verse from a poet's year by Laurie Lee and The Shadow of Cain by Edith Sitwell.

40 Glover wrote to Brasch: "have some pleasant new types that I daren't add to the confusion by unpacking" (18/10/46).
used freely in publications that appeared after his return. Their enthusiasm for this acquisition was amply expressed in Hero & Leander, in which the ampersand was employed frequently “because in Perpetua it seemed too beautiful to overlook” (Caxton, Books Nov. 1946). A relaxation in the austere standards of typographical design was also evident in the increased use of printer’s flowers, usually tactfully on the title page, but in the case of his own book, Summer Flowers (the title to some extent giving licence), on the cover as well. Similarly, the November 1946 booklist was contained within floral borders and the “prettier” italic used freely. All this would seem to suggest a more English approach, more private press in orientation, which served to date Caxton’s list. This slight change in style can be attributed, at least in some part, to the exposure Glover had to private press models and originators while in England, and this influence perhaps overshadowed Bensemann’s obvious talent for restrained design.

This by no means meant that local publication was neglected, and, in fact, such was the success of Caxton’s literary programme that there seemed to be increasing pressures on local authors to appear in print. The emphasis on publication is perhaps best evoked by Ruth Dallas, who, while sympathetic to and welcoming of41 the Caxton Press, was, by virtue of her physical location, literary interests and gender, always somewhat at the periphery of the movement, such that it was. In her autobiography, Curved Horizon, she recalled talks she attended by Denis Glover and Frank Sargeson. The title of Glover’s talk was “the limited market for creative writers in New Zealand and the difficulty of getting work published” (114), and her description of her encounter with Sargeson demonstrates the significance which they attributed to publication:

One of the remarks he made was that if writers did not see their work published they would not write, as it was publication that gave them satisfaction; when asked to concur I disagreed, saying that, for me, satisfaction came, not from seeing my work

41 See quotation from her autobiography on page 65 of this thesis.
published, but from overcoming a difficult problem, and that I found it hard to take an interest in it when it was finished. He met that with disbelief. (115)

Dallas here reveals herself to be something of a formalist in her approach: poems were an arena in which to work out various technical problems. In terms of Curnow's definition (via Gill) of poetry, this would seem to be an exemplary method, but Sargeson's astonished reaction can perhaps be explained in terms of his modernist outlook: too excessive an interest in formalism bore the taint of formal Georgian mannerliness. More importantly, when the prime function of poetry was considered to be a communicative one, publication meant an audience for the message, and the message, in the case of writing in this period, was primarily one of literary nationalism. For her part, Dallas admitted in her autobiography to looking at other, less Eurocentric models: "I did not see why I should be confined to the study of European literature only, or follow paths taken by my contemporaries, or why I should bypass countries that lay nearer home geographically and whose people had not only survived in millions but had inherited long-established civilisations of their own" (120). (Similarly, much of Bob Gormack's satire was directed at the overweening attitude engendered by narrow literary Anglocentrism.) By looking in a different direction for their influences, Dallas (and Gormack) effectively ruled themselves out from a major part (or in Gormack's case, any part) in the developing literary canon of New Zealand. The implication is that the efforts of Caxton and Curnow were driven as much by a desire to take their place in the English literary canon as by any express nationalist aspirations.

A similar contradiction marks the muted championing of Ursula Bethell by Allen Curnow in his 1945 anthology. With technical prowess combined with an unmannered and direct poetic voice, Bethell would seem to have been a shining example of the poetic prescription proposed by Curnow. However, his compliments are modified by a more unremitting critical attention than that directed at the other poets surveyed. Although, in his introduction, he seems to affirm Cresswell's summation of her as "the most original and the most significant" (21) of New Zealand poets, the overall feeling is that hers is a troubling poetic presence, the square
peg in his round nationalist hole. Bethell's poetry was intimate, offering the literary alternative of printmaking to the more public, declarative painting style advocated by Curnow et al. Whereas, at one point in the introduction, Curnow wrote disparagingly of it as “a published correspondence,” (49) another, more recent commentator regarded this as a positive attribute, concluding that women were more apt “to speak to someone rather than address the world at large, or the empty air” (Needham 40). It would seem that in the rush to establish a national literature, such intimacy was declared inappropriate. In the eyes of those at the Caxton Press, the intended audience was larger and the message more esoteric than mere “correspondence” would suggest. In the case of Bethell, Curnow simply evaded the problem by declaring that “poetry will not remain private speech, while it aims towards perfection” (49).

The rejection of personal private poetry by Curnow in favour of a more public approach in his 1945 anthology was also the culmination of Caxton's publication of New Zealand poets. Its impact was significant, as Ruth Dallas later made clear in her autobiography:

Another book that I rejoiced to find was Allen Curnow's *A Book of New Zealand Verse 1923-45*, first edition, published by the Caxton Press, Christchurch, which was not only of interest to me in itself, but provided me with a list of New Zealand poets and their publications. Some later critics of that early anthology appeared to be unaware of the aridity of the desert from which that saltbush sprung. New Zealand poetry was very difficult to find before 1945. (104)

For Curnow, the anthology represented an opportunity to restate the case for poetry in New Zealand, where “misconceptions of the natures and uses of poetry” ranked alongside other “national failings” (15). He acknowledged a debt to Holcroft, whose work he felt had helped to establish poets as “irreducible realities in New Zealand life” (17). This achieved (or, at least, taken for granted), Curnow sought to extend the the social role of the poet along similar lines. The assumption seems to have been that a level of professionalism and skill had been achieved and he wished to place more emphasis on verse as “purposive, a real expression of what the New Zealander is, and a part of what he may become” (14-15). This definition clearly goes
beyond the merely mimetic and Curnow placed particular emphasis on the
prophet-like role of the poet: “There is to be inferred the existence of some hun-
ger of the spirit to which the poet is as the nerve to the body of his race” (46). As
well as setting the stage for Baxter, this seems to suggest a shift in emphasis from
the poet as simply useful to an essential part of a developing national character.
This romantic notion of the spiritual nature of the poet did much to elevate
poetry to its paramount literary status and continues, even today, to inform liter-
ary discussion in this country.

The specific reference to the “first edition” of Curnow’s anthology by Dallas sug-
gests an increasing awareness of a particular bibliographic culture, and reviewers
seemed to confirm the emergence of a certain printing style, particularly for po-
etry, via the Caxton Press, as this example demonstrates: “It meets the standards
which the Caxton Press has taught us to expect” (McCormick). These bibli-
ographic standards were determined in a large part by a concerted effort on the
part of Caxton Press to obtain the necessary technology to improve production
standards. Niel Wright, however, differed in his assessment of this particular vol-
ume: “In Aotearoa the death of art was in fact signalled by an Anthology, Curnow’s
of 1946” (Last Makers 9). As an avowed Marxist, he viewed it as symptomatic of
“the technology that favoured capital intensive monopolisation of the publishing
world” (Brilliantly Wright 79), and a more exclusive literature. Although it is
undoubtedly true that publishing was becoming increasingly capital intensive, it
must be noted that Caxton’s efforts were primarily labour intensive, as the new
technology was increasingly geared for much larger production runs than their
small operation could ever hope to achieve.

There appeared three more issues of Book, two in 1946, and the final issue in
1947 overlapping with the first issue of Landfall. Book continued to present an

“Those who count the number of poets in the anthology who have been
sponsored at some time or other by the Caxton Press
and who pause to examine
the technical excellence of
the book which now
brings them together will
find it easier to believe that
Denis Glover and his as-
sociates have worked faith-
fully for New Zealand po-
etry” (Holcroft, “Poetry” 17).

“The Caxton Press which
knows how poetry should
be presented” (Alexander).

“Pioneers in typographical
experimentation, the
Caxton Press has, in the
short time of its existence,
done more to encourage
new writing in the Domin-
on than any other such or-
ganisation” (Palette).
interesting mixture of literary and artistic offerings, but, in its usual light-hearted tone, it acknowledged its own impermanence in a “Note to Subscribers”: “BOOK will continue to appear irregularly, like the comet it is intended to be (rather than a punctual planet). But until the predictions are more favourable we are unwilling to add to the number of subscribers by accepting any new ones. Money in advance is a millstone round the necks of the conscientious” (Book 7 46). Although this seems to reflect a very casual approach, this rather unusual stance is perhaps understandable when one considers that the partners were still running a very busy printing business, and as with their other publishing ventures, this sort of thing, Glover explained in a letter to Percy Watts Rule, was “to remain a preoccupation rather than an occupation” (4/11/46). Experience with the Caxton Club scheme and the Progressive Publishing Society had no doubt made them aware of the importance of flexibility in timing the release of such marginal publications.

Book 8, no doubt under the influence of Leo Bensemann, was a special wood engraving issue, featuring woodcuts by Mervyn Taylor and Bensemann himself, as well as an article on “Woodcuts and Engraving” by Arthur Hipwell. This article traced the tradition of woodcuts and their long association with books, referring especially to their renaissance with the advent of the private presses. The author pointed out how the craft printers had “exercised a profound influence on book production in general by raising the standard of public taste.” Although “public taste” is a somewhat dubious concept, Caxton can certainly be said to have set a new standard for what was expected of a literary text (and, to a certain degree, for the elitism associated with that form of book). There was also an advertisement for Fairburn’s How to Ride a Bicycle in Seventeen Lovely Colours, as well as a four-page insert by Bob Lowry’s Pelorus Press which included “some colour combinations never before taken seriously” and a jibe at Glover. Glover’s contribution was, for a change, more serious: an article entitled “Typography: Bob Lowry’s Books.” In it, he passed a critical but usually admiring eye over Lowry’s “hot house tropical” typography, very different as it was from that of Caxton: “Lowry has not cared greatly for restraint. If he wishes to out-Herod Herod, he will do it with a capital H the
His comments about Lowry’s work reveal much about his own attitude to printing. When Glover writes, “He is apt to turn a text into a pretext, into an opportunity for spectacular gymnastics, with type as a trapeze. The danger is that his work may speak for itself rather than for the writer who briefs it, in spirited defiance of the edict that typography is a subsidiary art,” he signals his approval of such a typographical edict that erases any traces of an intermediary process. It is interesting to compare this view with Peter and Dianne Beaton’s proposition that “art must pass down a long industrial chain with a complex division of labour. It has to cross many thresholds, be scrutinised by all-powerful gatekeepers and be subject to a number of administrative, financial and technological operations over which artists have little or no control” (161). By perpetuating the notion of typography as a subsidiary art that merely conveyed the message of author to the reader, Caxton obscured the power of its own position while affirming the significance of the artist. Of course, the result of the rejection of “type that may speak for itself” finds its clearest expression in the title of Sargeson’s collection of short stories, Speaking for Ourselves.

It is clear that although Glover may have considered typography a subsidiary art, he felt that it was definitely one that required considerable attention and could not be taken for granted by its exponents. Book 9, then, was a suitable finale for this fiery comet of a literary magazine, which included “LUNA park and incidental effects by the Caxton Press Psychological Warfare Department” (49-54), “Luna Park” being a colourful and playful response to Lowry’s efforts. It also marks the transition from “comet” to “punctual planet” (Book 7 46) with an advertisement, inside the front
cover, for the first issue of Landfall. Appropriately enough, the final words of Book were “Cheer up, Chum! New Zealand is too glum” (54).

In a letter of October 1947, Glover informed Brasch that he had just turned down a play by James Courage, admitting that he was not willing to lose money on drama, or add to Caxton’s worsening financial situation: “Our publishing account is in a parlous state at present, owing to heavy expenditure on things that may well be flops” (31/10/47). There was now an ever-present tension between the pressure to do more “valuable” publishing and the demands of commercial printing. If Glover was to follow through on his commitments to existing authors such as Bethell, as well as to undertake the much-needed expansion onto the next-door site, increased income from printing was crucial. This meant that acceptance of any new manuscripts simply set back existing projects. As a somewhat extravagant expedient, Glover chose to farm out some of their printing for publishing. He outlined his desperate reasoning in a letter to Brasch: “We have so many irons in the fire, so many uncompleted jobs lying around, so many big outstanding accounts (Lehmann still adrift with £200, damn him), that if we wait till we’re in funds it may be indefinite postponement” (28/1/48).

42 Although Landfall can be considered an essential part of Caxton’s publications, I have decided to deal with it only briefly because it has been dealt with comprehensively in theses by David Anido and more specifically by John Geraets. Also I feel that the very specific editorial involvement of Charles Brasch for the first twenty years distances it somewhat from the Caxton Press, which was responsible primarily for its inception, design and appearance - not wholly insignificant factors, I hope to have shown. In fact I hope that by my extensive examination of Book, I have demonstrated that in many respects Landfall was a departure for Canon, or certainly Caxton under Glover. Without the extensive financial support of Caxton, Landfall could not have continued, but with its ‘return’ to what could be described as its spiritual home in Dunedin, the birthplace of Brasch, I leave it to someone else to do a comprehensive survey of its corpus/corpus.

43 Unless otherwise indicated, all subsequent date citations in brackets refer to letters sent by Denis Glover to Charles Brasch. Full details can be found in the letters section of my list of works cited.

44 Glover wrote to Brasch: “At any rate I have decided that there is going to be far less commercial work done here ... Of course, our staff here is a bit on the weak side typographically, but somehow we’ve got to pull our socks up and do more valuable work” (31/10/47).

45 Three books - Bethell’s The Life and Times of Sir Julius Vogel, and Currie’s A Centennial Treasury of Otago Verse - were printed at the Herald Printing Works in Timaru. Brasch also provided £50 towards the cost of Bethell’s collected poetry (12/7/48). Donovan was unequivocal about what he described as “his folly in handing out work to other printers - work which we were gasping to do in our own plant” (Thomson letter). This was compounded by the fact that Caxton was not able to sight proofs and so they could not maintain as strict a standard of editorial control.
The situation was complicated by the difficulty of obtaining paper: a major source was cut off in 1948 when no Canadian licences were issued, and they had to have recourse to newsprint. Nevertheless, if the reaction of reviewers was anything to go by, such constraints often seemed to have an unexpectedly positive impact: "Paper shortages overseas may have restricted the flow of books into the country, but it has in no way interfered with the quality of the reading matter. If anything, the standard of book recently received here has been exceptionally high, due, doubtless, to the fact that there is just not paper to put trash on" (C). They did, however, receive five bales of Landfall paper in that year, but had few spare funds to pay for it (3/2/48). Despite his enthusiasm, Glover admitted: "Doing Landfall at all places a great deal of extra stress on our potty organisation" (14/4/48). It was not, therefore, particularly surprising that Caxton had to do without a much-needed travelling salesman (26/4/48) to publicise Landfall (although, to some extent, Brasch fulfilled this role).

Although production slowed after the initial, furious post-war burst of energy, Caxton still published an impressive array of literature in the later years of the forties. As well as farewelling Book and launching Landfall, Caxton extended its reputation for typography and literary publications with two limited editions - The Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens and Captain Marion, a translated history - the remarkable second specimen book of printing types, and the start of the Caxton Poets series in 1948. The new Printing Types was more substantial than its forebear, appearing as a hardcover of some eighty pages at the not inconsiderable price of fifteen shillings. Within, quotations about typography were again interspersed with excerpts from a wide range of European literary texts. Its introduction on the dust-jacket stated, "[t]his specimen BOOK is an anthology of agreeable quotations just as much as a parade of printing types . . . It has been designed to make good reading and at the same time to show a wide range of type faces, each in an appropriate setting." It therefore had a double appeal and carried through, par excellence, the craft objectives of typography already outlined. (Its impact in typographical circles was not confined to New Zealand: some six years later, Bob Gormack wrote to Glover telling him how he had spent the afternoon with Beatrice Warde of the
Monotype Corporation, and they had spent most of their time discussing the Caxton type books [see chapter four]. In keeping with the strong association developed between typography and engraving, Caxton also published in 1948 *Engravings on Wood* by Rona Dyer (Glover would later produce a similar book of engravings for Mervyn Taylor at his Catspaw Press in Wellington), and both this and the type book bear the distinctive stamp of Bensemann.

The Caxton Poets series numbered seven in total, amounting to an ambitious three per year for 1948 and 1949, and retailed for the "altruistically cheap" (12/7/48) price of six shillings. Four thousand circulars were also printed to give them every opportunity of a wide circulation (3/2/48). The books all had a very Canterbury feel to them - Basil Dowling's book (number six in the series) was called *Canterbury and other Poems* - and seemed in keeping with the regionalist trend in the arts at that time. (The influence of The Group will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.) Significantly, the second volume in the series was by one James K. Baxter, a younger poet who, Bob Gormack noted, appeared "trailing such clouds of glory... [and] was welcomed into the Caxton fold with great alacrity" (Interview 1993). Although, outwardly, the Caxton Poets series conveyed the impression of a thriving and committed publishing concern, Glover was already expressing some disillusionment: "If we don't get a wider sales market I shall chuck publishing, and only go in for a few odd highly limited editions. I'm sick of carrying the baby; and people who write things are the most odious in the world to deal with" (12/7/48).

It was perhaps not a coincidence that Caxton's general list was beginning to expand and now included more histories, a verse play by Allen Curnow (which Baxter was to single out three

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46 "The belief in the importance of printing both type and illustration in the same operation was one of the factors in the wood engraving revival" (Lewis 158). Eric Gill (in a letter to Herbert Furst) also stated that "the letterpress surface and the engraving surface are of the same nature and therefore give the printer a straightforward and homogenous job - in fact the engraving is part of the typography" (416). In this way, by contrasting absolute blacks and whites (and consequently making the best use of the white space on the page), the printer maintained a crisp unity of page, uncluttered by ornament or distraction.

47 Glover was at least realistic about their returns: "I suspect this 6/- series will involve us in nothing but loss" (29/6/48).
years later in Recent Trends in New Zealand Poetry as part of a significant change of direction in New Zealand literature [8]), and authors other than Sargeson in the fiction. The latter generally did not sell very well, but as J.E.P. Thomson pointed out, "[i]maginative prose remained a [technical] problem, even with the larger machinery" (27). Caxton was still running a busy jobbing printing business and publishing was still a spare-time activity, as Glover explained to Brasch: "too heavy an investment in publications, without adequate means of publicising them, or even stapling them, is impossible except by a policy of inevitable gradualism" (31/10/47). Nevertheless, publishing served a useful function in preventing machinery lying idle, and providing something to carry on with in the lean periods.

One of the ways around the problems alluded to by Glover was a brief co-publishing venture with Reed and Harris of Melbourne (Speaking for Ourselves and When the Wind Blows, neither of which sold very well [King 264]); similarly, I Saw in My Dream was published by John Lehmann in England (mainly due to a lack of enthusiasm by Glover [King 290-91]). It became evident that if Caxton were to "publish a prose series similar to that of 'The Caxton Poets,' it would have to be in paper covers and with page elegance sacrificed to a maximum area of text" (Thomson 28). They had been able to enjoy this luxury with their poetry books because the editions and actual number of pages were so small, but it became plain that Caxton was not really equipped to publish on this scale, and it would seem that there were not the corresponding number of interested readers at this stage to make it economic. This is evident in Glover’s rather bleak assessment at the end of 1948:

Frankly, our present lack of facilities for publishing have [sic] driven us very broke indeed. Books everywhere, not sold; if indeed they are saleable. We have been too ambitious. If I can't go on publishing I shall turn printing in for lack of interest. But it is now certainly necessary to lay off for a long spell and see if we can get a reserve behind us. I have been altogether too kind and simple in this silly publishing - and the odd thing is that public interest is on the wane. Booksellers' orders have fallen off in all categories. I shall make another drive to quit the heavy stocks of everything we hold
and after that there will be, there must be, a Long Silence. (6/12/48)

The fall-off in trade was borne out by the £850 loss (Thomson 28) recorded by the publishing department in 1949 (although it is not clear to what extent this shortfall was due to actual losses or Glover's mismanagement, as he was by this stage drinking heavily), and this was almost enough to silence the press.

The creation of the Literary Fund in 1947 was something of a turning point for the struggling artist as well as the infrastructure that supported them: assistance of a limited kind was finally available (even though the concept that an artist must struggle to produce work persisted, especially amongst those who opposed state control of the arts, such as Fairburn and Glover [Beatson 114]). M.H. Holcroft, who had advocated such a state fund in The Waiting Hills (1943), devoted a chapter (three) of his 1948 publication, Creative Problems in New Zealand, to the writer and the state. In this he countered arguments about the potential conservativeness of a state-run Literary Fund, and argued that with grants to publishers, more outlets for writers would open up. This, like his suggestions in 1943, proved to be almost prophetic. Ironically, Glover argued against such state patronage, perhaps realising that the existence of the fund would lead to a devolution of the virtual monopoly that Caxton had on the New Zealand literary scene. Less cynically, Holcroft paid tribute to Caxton’s contribution: “Today, admittedly, we have the Caxton Press, without which the advance in poetry within the last fifteen years could not have been made” (34); however, he went on to say,

…it will, however, be a stimulus to authorship if writers know that they are not dependent on one or two over-worked presses in private hands for the publication of good books…a deeper stream of writing will come from our publishing houses…

After all, a literature is not based on a handful of masterpieces: it is based on solid masonry. (35)

Here, Holcroft definitely seems to be suggesting that control of literary production had been concentrated in the hands of a few and it was now time to introduce some competition to help solidify the requisite “masonry.” It is interesting to extrapolate further and propose two
ways of reading this: either Caxton published a number of great works, or works were great simply by virtue of being published by the Caxton Press.

With pressures mounting, Leo Bensemann was forced to take what appeared to have been sick leave from the press early in 1949. Although Glover was still in constant contact regarding layout and design, his absence would have been a serious blow as well as a reminder of the dangers of over-commitment. They had succeeded in getting out the Caxton Poets, but Glover considered sales for the first three "pretty mediocre" (12/4/49): Disputed Ground had sold 264 copies, Baxter 273 and Hart-Smith a surprising 354 (which included 100 for Australia). It seemed that, while few readers would quarrel with Caxton's worthy aim of increasing the availability of poetry, many were less willing to accept the necessarily cheaper production, and this was exemplified by the review of the series by A.R. Dunlop:

The page is dull and lifeless, the type-face unimpressive and the general air about it unattractive. The poet, of course, is greater than his page, but good printing lends to the written word an authority which it can acquire no other way, and, in New Zealand, where good verse is so rare and interest in it rarer still, its presentation is most important. (31/12/49)

The concern expressed here for an authoritative appearance is typical of this generation's awareness - to the point of self-consciousness - of their part in establishing a tradition. The assertion that the poet is greater than his page is not absolutely convincing when one considers the emphasis placed on 'good printing' by the reviewer. Such unrealistic expectations seem to have their origins in the application of a craft ethic to the product of capital-intensive technologies. In this respect, Caxton's efforts to raise awareness of printing matters were double-

48 Glover noted in a letter to Brasch that "it has been trying without Leo" (25/3/49). In an interview for the Turnbull art archives, he told Marian Minson that he suffered from bad peptic ulcers.

49 Initial projections suggested that 400 of each volume were to be printed, with the exception of Brasch's volume, for which there were to be 500 copies (3/2/48).

50 In a review of the second issue of Landfall, Peter Alcock made particular note of the manifestation of this trait: "For Charles Brasch appears to utilise the great principle that tradition is neither there nor there, but here; tradition is us, we make it."
edged, especially when, as here, they attempted to expand their audience. Their achievement, however, parallels that of Bodley Head in England: "Printing runs were small as the books were being offered to a special audience. Indeed, the press succeeded in no small part because it helped to consolidate such an audience. To be a Bodley Head [read Caxton] author, or reader, defined you as a certain type of person - aesthetic and very modern" (McGann, Black 78). Clearly, the aesthetic of the physical book assumed considerable importance, which was due in a large part to its being an iconic representation of high culture.

By the middle of the year, presumably with the return of Bensemann, the outlook was somewhat more positive. With the departure of two staff, they had also acquired two new compositors experienced with Monotype, and Glover was encouraged that “[i]f we don’t fizzle out before the effect of their presence is felt, we should be a very much more efficient firm in a few months” (17/5/49). This enthusiasm was not long lived, as this extract from a letter at the end of the year confirms: “No longer do I care about poets, or poetry, or publishing. It is all a pathetic waste of time. The real thing is to get on with taking money off people in a big way. This takes time and effort of a creative nature”; and he concluded, “once we divert our energies from this ridiculous and rather adolescent enthusiasm for publishing, things may look up” (9/12/49).

The punctual planet

In many ways the 1950s can be seen as a watershed decade for the Caxton Press in that it marks the decline of their dominance in literary publication: Denis Glover was essentially fired from the press he had helped to create (and apparently now wanted to destroy51), and there appeared competition - mostly friendly - in the form of Pegasus Press in Christchurch.

51 Dennis Donovan, in a letter to Elizabeth Alley, wrote how, after the war, Glover “plundered the firm to the very brink of bankruptcy and Bensemann had to appeal to me for help.” He then told of how Glover’s bills were paid for him, and concluded rather emphatically, “Denis Glover, my pre-war hero, turned out to be the most ruthlessly selfish ratbag it has ever been my misfortune to be involved with!”
and Paul's Book Arcade in Hamilton. There was also the acquisition of a second fully automatic press in August 1950, and a move to new premises at 119 Victoria Street, complete with large factory space at the rear. Two factors in particular - one an event and one a comparison - serve to illustrate this break: the 1951 Writers’ Conference in Christchurch and the parallel activities of The Group.

The Writers’ Conference (see appendix for reproduction of programme), which saw the coming together of the majority of New Zealand's leading writers, appears to have been successful, and at least one session - when Pat Lawlor spoke on little reviews - was mildly controversial. Over the four days the novel, poetry, criticism, Maori literature, publishing, and the question of national identity were all dealt with. The convening of a session entitled “A Country in Search of Itself” would suggest a certain comfort with such an issue and the overall tone of the Conference seems to have been one of summary and a degree of self-congratulation.52 There was also a sense of relief that their achievement could be documented in a booklist, impressive both for its length and the overall quality of design and production represented. These attitudes were epitomised by James K. Baxter’s talk, “Recent Trends in New Zealand Poetry,” which, unsurprisingly, was published by Caxton the following year.

In this talk Baxter spoke of the birth of a new direction for writers in New Zealand: “The new movement began in the Universities, almost without parentage. It gathered force through the works of Denis Glover, A.R.D. Fairburn, Allen Curnow and others, with amateur printing presses as midwives” (6). In a sense he was paying homage to a previous generation of authors, but there is implicit in his speech a recognition of change, which manifests itself at various points as the change from mountains to marriage,53 or from landscape (and therefore nation-

52 Compare this with the 1993 Booksellers and Publishers Conference, where Nigel Cox complained: “Although no one asks that the booktrade commit hara-kiri in the interest of ‘print as art’, to those who read with discrimination, the conference showed an astonishing disinclination to spend much time discussing what was usually referred to as ‘the product’ (books) or the needs of ‘the market’ (readers)” (“Booting” 55).

53 “[W]e have tended to write more readily of mountains than of marriage” (Baxter 7).
alist themes) to more personal/spiritual themes (see also my comments on The Group). Baxter took Alistair Campbell as his example of this breakaway from traditional themes. This was a powerful choice as Campbell had just had *Mine Eyes Dazzle* published, most successfully, by the recently established Pegasus Press. He then went on to list five events which he felt justified his assertion of a change in poetry - four of the five "events" were published by the Caxton Press (and the fifth by Pegasus); included were the publication of *Landfall* and the Christchurch performance of Allen Curnow's verse play, *The Axe*. He stated as regards *Landfall* that "the cross-fertilising effect of this rapid communication cannot be measured, but must be considerable... *Landfall* has not been an arena for experiment: its mood has been one of sober critical liberalism" (8). *Landfall*, then, was the "punctual planet" that succeeded the "comet" of *Book*, sacrificing innovation and spontaneity in favour of reliability, and it was precisely this stability that marked the tone of the conference - in sharp contrast to the national crisis on the waterfront that occupied the minds of most of the rest of the country at that time.

This was not to say that there was an absence of rebellion in the air, for Baxter saw one of the functions of the artist in a community to be the ability "to provide a healthy and permanent element of rebellion, not to become a species of civil servant" (15). (This last remark was also presumably directed at the Literary Fund, which Baxter often disparagingly referred to as "the gravy train.") For Baxter, however, literary "rebellion" (in the same sense that the Caxton group of poets rebelled against an earlier generation) was centred in Wellington, and he seemed to regard literary activity there as a reaction to the literary hegemony that had developed in Christchurch; as it turned out, this was a very astute observation and confirms Baxter's status

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54 This somewhat more political poem by Baxter was printed on the Writers' Conference Broadsheet (see chapter three for reproduction of entire document):

Honest Syd Holland is no man to stickle
When wharfies raise the hammer and sickle
He'll use against them though Jock Barnes may clamour
The Farmers' sickle, the Police State's hammer
-You'd better wipe that. (Pegasus)
of being ideally poised between two generations, a position he was soon to relinquish.

The topography of typography

In the sense that the Writers' Conference was something of a "retrospective," it introduces a useful comparison with The Group, which held its own retrospective exhibition in 1947. This was just one of a number of parallel milestones and achievements between these two contemporaneous groups, linked together by Leo Bensemann's importance to both. A comparison is useful here not only because of the similarities it demonstrates between these two groups and the extent to which there was an interchange of ideas, but also for illuminating Caxton's change of direction, stemming in part from the pervasive influence of Brasch as editor of Landfall, and, more importantly, the departure of Glover.

In the 1930s, the Depression had engendered a mood of intellectual rebellion against a previous generation, who had brought about such a catastrophic material collapse. In New Zealand (as in England), the debate pitted art against commerce, and, in both the art and literature of this time, the rebellion was ostensibly directed at a previous generation who were considered to be out-moded. In the case of The Group it was the art societies: "Art societies do not create - they receive and reject. They save the people from viewing what is artistically ungrammatical" (Hipkins, Review); similarly, the Caxton poets rejected the prevalent Georgian strain of poetry, which they thought was just as dogmatic in enforcing its poetic "grammar." The Group, however, seemed to have no manifesto, other than a desire to get their works exhibited in the most sympathetic manner (a reception not expected from the Canterbury Society of the Arts). In this, initially at least, they differed little from Caxton, which was primarily con-

55 Pat Lawlor's copy of Blow, Wind of Fruitfulness, which is now held in the Hocken Library, was signed on the endpaper by Baxter, who wrote: "For Pat Lawlor - in memory of the 1951 Conference where two generations joined hands."

56 "We are a group flying no standard, we have no plank or platform, nor do we make one of having none," as one member emphatically stated the position in Art in New Zealand (Baverstock 63).
cerned with getting things printed and published, but, with help from the likes of M.H. Holcroft and Allen Curnow, Caxton was to become more defined as a group - or a focus for a group - while the ironically named Group seemed to become less so.

Despite professed aims neither group ever enjoyed a broad base of popular support. In her thesis on The Group, Julie Catchpole quotes Bill Sutton who recalled that the Group “received support mainly from the intellectuals of Christchurch, but their verbal generosity did not extend to their chequebooks, and the Group was not known for its booming sales”; Catchpole added that “an artist could expect psychological support rather than financial reward from membership in the Group” (32). The same was no doubt true of Caxton’s publications. However, there was an exception common to both groups in the form of Charles Brasch. His editorial contribution to Landfall was mammoth and has been well documented, but his financial contributions were less well recognised. It has been estimated, rather conservatively it would seem, that Brasch “invested” £500 directly into Landfall, which does not take account of the poetry (1953) and fiction (1956) prizes he put up (CB-DD 30/3/52), let alone his huge correspondence and personal labour. Likewise, he was something of a patron of the Group, an unofficial “friend” from the start, who bought a considerable number of paintings.

A further common denominator was Eric Gill, whose ideas on art as craft seem to have been common currency in the intellectual milieu of Christchurch. Certainly, as detailed earlier, these ideas were evident in Allen Curnow’s terse Poetry and Language, published in 1935. In

57 Regarding his pre-war publishing experience, Glover simply stated: “I was on the whole rather interested in printing, editing and getting things done” (Hot Water 96). When one considers the prodigious output and typographical achievements of Caxton in the light of their limited resources, it is rather hard to deny his claim (although the same cannot perhaps be said for his post-war record).

58 John Geraets put the figure in excess of £500 (61), but Dennis Donovan maintained that this figure is closer to the mark, the majority being absorbed by Caxton (Interview 1993); nonetheless, both agree that Brasch’s effort in terms of time and travel was considerable indeed.

59 Ann Elias, in her thesis on Rata Lovell-Smith, comments that “[m]any of these discussions from the thirties ... echo in particular the writings of Eric Gill, whose book, Art and a Changing Civilisation, must have been familiar to many New Zealanders connected with the arts” (19).
it, Curnow affirmed Gill's maxim as "[a] reasonable definition of the art of poetry: The skilful making of things with language, things which will please and stimulate the mind" (5). This explicit definition goes at least some of the way towards explaining the vocational seriousness with which this generation took their poetry and the importance of printing and typography to them. Similarly, distinctions between craft and "fine" art had occupied the art scene, the latter being the criterion for acceptance of work at the Canterbury Society of Arts. To the young members of the Group, imbued with Gill's view of the artist as simple worker—60—that is, without any special status—this was simply unjustified elitism. As F.A. Shurrock put it at the time, "[s]urely it's either art, or no, "fine" implying all sorts of gradations . . . Craft is not necessarily art but art - good art is only effective by good craft" (Review). From these theories can be derived the artists' empathy with the worker, even if, as many critics have pointed out, their support did not really lie with the 'common man.' Ironically, in literature, these very theories were used to create a new elitism, when the control of the printing craft was in the hands of a few.

Leo Bensemann, who was integral to keeping the line between art and literature fluid, joined the Group in 1936 and Caxton Press the following year. He along with Colin McCahon, Rita Angus, Doris Lusk, Olivia Spencer-Bower and Toss Woollaston formed a core of painters who consistently exhibited with The Group until its voluntary disbandment in 1977.61 (By remarkable coincidence, he retired from the Caxton Press in 1977, having spent 40 years with each.) Despite his involvement with Caxton, he maintained his contact with The Group (and, in fact, shared a studio with Rita Angus from 1937 onwards), continuing to exhibit regularly. Although he was not as prodigious as he later showed he could be, he made a remarkable job

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60 Such an ideal was epitomised (and to some extent cultivated) in New Zealand by the "struggling artist" figures of Toss Woollaston and, in literature, Frank Sargeson. See also Holcroft's comments (Creative 33) on the indispensability of adversity to the creative process.

61 Despite its title, The Group was not a simple homogenous clique of artists and, although in retrospect certain regionalist (for want of a better word) trends can be seen to have developed, overall its members had a highly individual approach and none more so than Leo Bensemann. In fact, Peter Simpson, in an address given to the National Library in Wellington in September 1992, outlined how Bensemann's paintings actually ran counter to the regionalist trends.
of balancing the demands of a busy commercial printing firm, publishing fine books and remaining artistically active. The most obvious direct link between these two major components in his life was the catalogues for the Group Shows. These he designed in the weeks before the exhibition, and then, along with the other Group members, he took part in the semi-ritual of hanging the pictures the night before the opening; however, unlike the other members, he would then "retire" to the Caxton Press to print the catalogue (Bensemann, Moffitt interview). Olivia Spencer-Bower described how "the catalogues were a definite feature... These are collectors' items in their own right. Always the same shape, very careful and accurate; they showed all the skill of the printer-artist" (qtd. in Muir and Robinson 6). [See Figure 12.] In recognition of its special achievements, the Caxton Press even exhibited as a guest member of the 1940 Group show.

The Group then, like the Caxton Press, provided a unique opportunity for young, enthusiastic talent to gain public exposure, where previously there had been little or none, except for established - not to mention conservative - artists. Bensemann himself described the result:

our efforts to build lively exhibitions which, with our system of carefully choosing guest exhibitors, provided an opportunity for work to be seen that would never have been acceptable in more conservative exhibitions. So, I think, we created and stimulated a lively audience to an appreciation of modern New Zealand works. (qtd. in Muir and Robinson 11)

And it is this creation of an audience that is so important to both these groups: The Group paintings, by exhibiting modernist tendencies and confronting the distinctive local landscape, challenged the relevance of the Art Society infrastructure and offered a dynamic alternative. Similarly, the Caxton Press injected life into a stagnating literary scene, delivering (to borrow a metaphor from Baxter) a literature screaming into the small world of New Zealand, that would develop and stimulate healthy diversification, having established locally the means of material continuity. Where the two groups differ is in the nature of the infrastructure each created. The considerable capital involved in publication necessitated the intervention of edi-
Fig. 12. Cover of catalogue for 1955 Group show designed and printed by Leo Bensemann, Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury.
tors and publishers, who functioned, in McGann's words, "as the means by which a text's interaction with its audience(s) is first objectively hypothesized and tested" (Textual 64). The exhibition of individual artworks could, while consensus prevailed, be undertaken in a more co-operative fashion, and this was the case until the rise of dealer galleries in the 1970s.

On a more individual level, these attempts at increased exposure provided a sense of community for a small group of artists, writers and musicians, who all, it seemed, derived support and inspiration from their close association. At no time was this more evident than during the war. New Zealand was to a certain extent cut off from the rest of the world, and the artistic community was isolated more than most. Many artists in this period opposed the war on moral grounds, and pacifist leanings were viewed, at best, with suspicion. Among those who opposed the war were Leo Bensemann and initially (and most surprisingly) Denis Glover. (Glover wryly noted that the blocks for the "No More Troops For The War" flyers, which were illicitly printed at Caxton by night, re-surfaced later in the war in support of the war effort - a change that was effected simply by blocking out the "No" in the title [Hot Water 105-06].) Artistically, they were cut off from (mainly European) artistic influences, and consequently forced back on their own resources, a not unfortuitous occurrence as it turned out. With the loss of the Empire loan collections (an important point of actual contact with European art) from 1940 onwards, a change of mood was noted, as this extract from the Press demonstrated: "As New Zealand must rely on itself for artistic stimulation, the energy and versatility of this group of some of the younger Canterbury painters . . . are particularly commendable" (Grignon, Review). So, far from their activities being curtailed by this lack of contact, they seized the opportunity to concentrate on their own environment, with more than encouraging results.

Writing in the Press in 1937, Professor James Shelley declared that the Group artists "were getting at the essentials, the architecture of reality," and another review in the same paper spoke of a quality "which seems to consist in a removal of the romantic mists which used to
obscure mountains and the Canterbury countryside generally. The light is now clear and hard” (Conrad). This cleansing of English landscape conventions by Group artists seemed to allow them to pay more attention to representing their own landscape in a way more appropriate to their time and place. Looking back, Bensemann concluded that “[s]omething was beginning to happen in a New Zealand way. . . . the native scene was emerging with a force and impact of its own” (qtd. in Muir and Robinson 9). Of course, this was a similar concern - about some kind of essential, uniquely New Zealand truth - to that expressed by various writers of the period, but there seems to have been an essential difference in their respective outlooks. This can perhaps best be explained by labelling The Group’s outlook as “regional” and Caxton’s as “provincial,”62 and then applying these terms to specific works.

In her thesis, Julie Catchpole considers Juliet Peters’s painting Geraldine to be the essence of the successful regional statement: “Her image, in this case a small town, ceases to be confined to a specific location” (106) and is, instead, typical of hundreds of small rural communities in New Zealand. By contrast Glover’s poem “Home Thoughts,” although it too speaks of Geraldine, talks of what “may yet be seen” there, and contrasts it, despite the disclaimer, with the Sussex Downs.63 It seems quite evident that, although writers were prepared to deal with the local, it was always with a longing eye to English or European models. The contrast is perhaps made clearer by John Summers (who for a number of years ran a well-known book-

62 I am using “provincial” in the sense used by Peter Simpson in the article “From Colonial to Provincial: The Evolution of Poetry in Canterbury 1850-1950.” There it “is used to refer to a set of cultural values predominant in New Zealand especially in the thirties and forties, and especially among the intelligentsia who produced most of the ‘high’ culture in which these attitudes are manifested. The provincial writer feels himself to be remote from the metropolitan centre from which he derives his values and attitudes . . . The provincial outlook is Anglocentric, or more generally Eurocentric. This affects his relationship with his own country. He accepts himself as a New Zealander, in the conviction that there is no alternative . . . but he thinks of himself as living in the provinces. His elitism tends to further alienate him from his countrymen. This double separation from the metropolitan centre and from the life around him tends to produce a brooding, solitary melancholy as the characteristic provincial frame of mind” (14).

Julie Catchpole defines “regional” as a movement where “artists sought to capture in paint the essence of places and record permanent values” (Thesis 99).

63 I quote here from line four of this poem as it appears in his Selected Poems. Compare this with the considerably longer versions that appeared in Thirteen Poems (1939) and The Wind and the Sand (1945).
shop in Christchurch and so was familiar with both the arts and literary scene) when he described a Group exhibition in *Landfall*:

They have begun to live in New Zealand as painters, neither self-consciously stressing the fact by putting in the obvious and typical detail, nor on the other hand, painting in some no-man's land of the spirit, as if New Zealand was totally irrelevant to their purposes. It does exist for them, quietly and naturally. (63)

The same could not quite be said for the poetry of the thirties and forties; rather it tended towards the "spiritual no-man's land," cut adrift, and using the landscape more as a way of making a point than simply inhabiting and examining it. Nowhere is this more clear than in Allen Curnow's rather dogmatic approach. So it seemed that while authors wrote loftily of what "may yet be seen," artists were doing their best actually to see what lay before them, actively incorporating overseas developments in the arts to help them in their endeavours.

While literature became increasingly more formalised and arranged on ideological lines, The Group became less so. In fact, for such a durable association its organisation was remarkably relaxed and led Bensemman to remark that "The Group could fairly claim one (perhaps unenviable) distinction - it was surely one of the most casually run organisations ever to deal with 50 years of successful art exhibitions" (qtd. in Muir and Robinson 11). (One suspects that he was not altogether unhappy at being able to claim this, as it was "a matter of some pride" (qtd. in Muir and Robinson 12) that he had ended the tradition of Guest Speakers at the opening of Group exhibitions.) Also, one of the major factors that differentiated The Group from the Canterbury Society of Arts was that, once they were members, there was no selection committee and artists were at liberty to choose which works they wished to exhibit. In this way each artist was able to present more works and to give a fuller representation of their work, in much the same way that a volume of poetry gave a better overall view of a poet's vision than isolated poems printed in a newspaper. Again Bensemann's comments are pertinent:

at no time during the course of the Group's activities can I remember any attempt to define aims and objects or to issue portentous manifestos to shake and reform the
foundations of painting in New Zealand. Had any of us been foolish enough to try, it would have been impossible to achieve any uniformity of opinion or intent in view of the widely and wildly different personalities comprising The Group. (qtd. in Muir and Robinson 11)

As much as this was possible then, the artists worked as individuals, without any curatorial presence comparable to that displayed by Curnow in his 1945 A Book of New Zealand Verse. The Group, then, presented a less homogeneous and more experimental face, which in turn suggested an exuberance and vitality, reflected in the "rather heady, carnival atmosphere" (Bensemann qtd. in Muir and Robinson 13) that prevailed at their shows. This seemed to allow them to be more flexible and able to adapt to change better than was the case on the literary scene.

Toss Woolaston, explaining the influence of Cézanne, described how pictures are full of a new kind of space . . . created in terms of the two dimensions of the picture-plane itself . . . the lines you did it with, far from merely imitating the outline of objects, had to be so disposed in contrast to flattening repeated verticals and horizontals as to create movement and tension. (qtd. in Catchpole 96-7)

The distribution of space\textsuperscript{64} came to assume increasing importance as modern influences in art became apparent in the works of Canterbury painters. Combined with their concern for the rather unique Canterbury landscape and weather conditions, there emerged a distinctive, yet dynamic, regional style, evident in the likes of Rita Angus, Juliet Peters, R.N. Field, and Christopher Perkins. Julie Catchpole singles out Perkins's Silverstream Brickworks [Figure 13] as a work which consolidated many of the concerns which were emerging in the work of some Canterbury painters; concerns such as the depiction of motifs hitherto ignored as possible subject matter; the impression of strong even light created through the clear distribution of white space.

\textsuperscript{64} Similar considerations occupied the minds of typographers. The two paragraphs presented here follow Gill's insistence on left alignment for text (Essay 98) in an attempt to highlight the considerable impact of the redistribution of white space.
definition and demarcation of all elements in the composition; and the reduction of unnecessary detail in favour of simpler shapes. (91)

Fig. 13. Silverstream Brickworks. Oil-painting by Christopher Perkins; rpt. in Art in New Zealand 4-5 (1931): 8.

There is, in this painting, a distinctly modernist arrangement of elements which acknowledges the two-dimensionality of the picture-plane, which can be seen in the vertical lines of the chimney stack which run parallel to the side of the picture frame and contrast with the rounded hills behind. The vertical axis of the printed page and the block of printed text have similar properties, and a primary concern for Caxton had always been to achieve a clean simplicity of line in order to avoid any kind of decorativeness and to create a distinctive space to depict subjects they, too, considered had been ignored by a previous generation.

Another painter of this period, Rata Lovell-Smith, received criticism for painting what were described at the time as "poster-like" works (Catchpole 57), criticism derived from the premise that her works were somewhat stylised and "flattened out," and also, no doubt, that this sort of representation was not "fine" art. Historically, Catchpole's description seems more accurate: "She was practically a pioneer in this way of seeing" (58-9) - a "way of seeing" that was as applicable to the printed word as to painting. For the same concern
expressed by Toss Woollaston with space occurred in the tenets of New Typography, where geometric principles and simplicity of design were favoured, and juxtaposition of verticals and horizontals and the resulting re-distribution of white space gave the effect of the all-important “motion.” Although the more extreme variants of these principles were sublimated in Caxton’s more Anglophile approach to typography, modernist concerns were still very much in evidence in their publications. For example, when one author writes that Modern Typography “must speak its piece in a simple, straightforward manner, with fine pronunciation and in clear-cut conversation” (Ehrlich 106), it is difficult not to make an association with the work (and words) of Frank Sargeson. In terms of reception, too, the criticism levelled at Lovell-Smith is remarkably similar to that directed at Sargeson.

In a broad sense then, modernism in art was a movement away from representation towards a more elemental design, and this was reflected in a more austere typographical format oriented towards the communication of a distilled essence. For Leo Bensemann, the “strange outlandish fowl”65 imbued with a powerful sense of his European heritage as well as a keen awareness of that heritage’s frequent incompatibility with his new environment,66 such a development was of great interest. The composition of his own environment - typographically, artistically and musically - seemed to offer a constant challenge, and he seemed willingly to embrace the “new horizon of bibliographic and institutional possibilities” (McGann, Black 23) offered by modernism. Ideas about art and literature freely intermingled in his work, in much the same way that, in the thirties and forties at least, Christchurch produced a particularly lively and independent arts scene through a similarly creative interchange between artists, writers and musicians.

65 Peter Simpson observed that “among New Zealand artists Leo Bensemann was something of a ‘strange outlandish fowl’ (to quote the title of one of his wood engravings), whose practice is difficult to assimilate to any generalisations one might want to make about New Zealand art” (Address 4).

66 His frontispiece for Curnow’s Not in Narrow Seas is an excellent example. The tension engendered by Bensemann’s sensitivity to the contradictions of his new environment often manifested itself in a surreal world of black humour.
Obviously, as change and a healthy diversity of influences began to intercede in the arts scene, Christchurch no longer remained the centre of activity. The Group, however, exerted an increasingly strong influence in art circles, especially with the increased recognition accorded to Colin McCahon’s works; but it was McCahon who vehemently criticised it, describing how, in the 1950s and 1960s, “the rot started . . . The Group began as a worker-orientated gathering of artists and became top heavy - a true art society” (qtd. in Muir and Robinson 13). This criticism was perhaps a little harsh, as by all other accounts The Group’s organisation was still relatively relaxed, but its increasing success forced it to be more accountable. In its twilight years exhibitions failed to attract the same excitement, but this was more an indication that other opportunities now existed for these artists in the form of dealer galleries. McCahon also stated that “The Group wasn’t made by a revolution, but it did become revolutionary; and died as respectability forced the doors” (qtd. in Muir and Robinson 14). Nevertheless, The Group itself recognised its own anachronism, and it was a measure of its independent nature that it chose to cease to exist in 1977, rather than dragging on indefinitely (as it no doubt could have done, but with a resulting loss of relevance and credibility). Similarly, the power base of Caxton began to break up in the 1950s, with competition, in Christchurch, from Pegasus Press, and further northwards from Blackwood and Janet Paul. Unlike The Group, however, Caxton, especially with Brasch at the helm of Landfall, was less adept at recognising and adapting to literary change. It, too, had become “top heavy,” and was destined - and perhaps more than a little relieved - to be released from the obligation of being New Zealand’s sole literary publisher.

sings Denis . . .

Ever since visiting England during the war and having contact with the “limitless resources” (DG-LB 31/7/44) there, Glover was only too aware of Caxton’s deficiencies. He wrote to

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67 Leo Bensemann drew attention to the marked difference between the 1949 and 1972 Group shows: the former resulted in a loss and a consequent levy on members, whereas the latter resulted in a substantial profit both for the individual artists and for The Group as recipients of the commission (Muir and Robinson 10).
Bensemann on 13 June 1943: “we must get more mechanical faces somehow, as that’s our chief weakness ... 11pt Baskerville can’t do everything.” Despite his enthusiasm for change, his attempts, on his return, to remedy this situation were often frustrating. In a letter to Brasch in October 1947, he was less than exulted at the arrival of over £100 of Caslon from England: “(half the order, blast them, at double the ordered price) but that there isn’t a type case in the country or space to put up a rack if there were any. So that it lies at my feet like a dead dog” (31/10/47). Attempts to source type elsewhere were really only stopgap measures until Glover had in place his desired solution: “Things will be different when we get this monotype in. There will be infinity sizes of type, and it won’t be like trying to play a violin with one string” (2/2/48).

By the end of 1948, Glover had interested Butch Steele in setting up Monoset, a Monotype-setting operation, in premises close to Caxton. The availability of Monotype faces (which had been selected by Glover and Bensemann) offered substantial benefits, but it was not a cost saving. Linotype was still the fastest and least expensive means for uncomplicated composition. Monotype, however, was more practical for setting complicated material, because it was simpler to set a mixture of typefaces or styles on a single line, it had more spacing options and it could be corrected by hand. Also its typefaces were better designed and the metal was harder than that used for Linotype. All these attributes were particularly advantageous in the setting of the irregular lines of poetry, but the demand for such services could not have been high. Although the provision of Monotype services should have been the culmination of Glover’s efforts to emulate the paragon he had encountered in England, it was to prove a bathetic swansong.

By the beginning of 1951, Steele’s plant was for sale. Glover was determined not to relinquish the asset he had striven to facilitate and was unequivocal as regards its importance to Caxton’s

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68 After a delay in the Monotype setting of Landfall, Glover informed Brasch in 1950 of his decision to revert to Linotype after the December issue “(a) to give Butch a shake-up (b) a tenner cheaper to set (c) quicker and therefore cheaper in the make-up” (11/10/50).
operation: “Between us and Pegasus we are doing our best to take it all over . . . Yet without that plant we are back in 1938” (23/1/51). The maintenance of its services was clearly pivotal to the future of the press, but it also proved pivotal in his own future. Part way through these negotiations with Pegasus, Glover was fired from Caxton by Dennis Donovan, only to make his re-appearance at Pegasus some months later (see chapter three). Donovan, who had been an active partner in Caxton Press before the war, had moved his family to the North Island before departing for war service (Donovan, Letter to Thomson). He returned to Caxton in April 1951, apparently at the request of Bensemann, to re-organise the accounts. According to Donovan,69

I took over his Caxton shares (many of which I had given him in the first place70) and personally supervised the payment of his personal debts. It was then agreed that I would return to live in Christchurch and help restore the business to prosperity. Glover was to work on a salaried basis with the objective, it was agreed, of eventually regaining his shareholding.

Bensemann and I kept our part of the bargain, but as Glover failed in his he had to be put on an hourly rate of pay - and finally, in desperation (and not without considerable regret) I had to fire him. (Letter to Thomson)

This was not quite as providential as Glover's outward insouciance at the time might have suggested. A closer intimation of the effect of these events on him can perhaps be supplied by this poem from a letter to Brasch:

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69 Glover's own account of his dismissal, although somewhat bitter, does not appear to differ markedly: "when we were down the drain a bit, and I had overdrawn my personal earnings by a mere 100 or 2, he moved in and took my majority holding into temporary custody. Hal Short of selling up my brainchild, I decided, not without spiritual anguish, to acquiesce" (Letter to Dally). He does, however, neglect to mention his helping Albion Wright to establish the Pegasus Press.

70 When the firm was incorporated as a limited company, Donovan automatically became a shareholder, and, according to him, "at Glover's request I transferred to him - free, gratis and for nothing - a considerable part of my shareholding because (as he wrote me) in order to manage the business effectively he had to have absolute majority control" (letter to Thomson). Glover confirmed that Donovan guaranteed Caxton's overdraft, and increased the guarantee when they moved into the new building (Letter to Dally).
Glover was not the only one to realise the importance of Monoset - Dennis Donovan continued negotiations with Pegasus, who had earmarked £1000 to retain its services.71 The idea was to interest an existing local Linotype operator in adding it to its facilities - or risk losing Caxton's and Pegasus's business. Late in December of 1951, Express Typesetting was convinced of the merits of this proposition, and agreed to shift their plant (consisting of two Linotype machines) into the old Monoset building, as well as accepting responsibility for a new Monotype machine that was to arrive in March of the following year. To facilitate this move, Caxton and Pegasus agreed to lend £1000 each to finance the necessary expansion. For its part, Express was to find the not inconsiderable balance of £4000 and pay off the loans at the rate of £500 per year. This seems a considerably more business-like arrangement than previous ad hoc solutions, and Donovan seemed pleased with the result: “This seems to me a good arrangement for us. We have all our typesetting facilities right next door which is a considerable advantage over Pegasus.” (Letter to Brasch, 19/12/51).

This new professionalism was also extended to Caxton's internal organisation. In the months September through November they succeeded in achieving an average turnover of over £1000 per month (Bensemann-Brasch, undated 1951). As an interim measure, Brasch provided a cheque for £500 to meet the wages bill and clear most of the paper merchants72 before Christmas, and then Brasch and Donovan were each to inject £1000 capital (Donovan's to go to Monoset).

71 Donovan wrote to Brasch: “Monoset: AW & I have had many discussions over this. Mainly as to ways and means of raising the necessary finance. Pegasus Press increased its capital recently and Alb said they earmarked £1000 for Monoset” (13/12/51).

72 In a letter to Brasch, Donovan described as "a near calamity" the move by the paper merchants Cowans to draw on Caxton for £355. Fortunately, their biggest debtor paid a two-month-old account of £300 at the same time (13/12/51).
in “the new Caxton Press”\textsuperscript{73} for an April 1 expansion. This resulted in the more solid foundation of £5000 capital, with £2000 in stock and £1500 in debtors’ accounts. Combined with the success of Acland’s \textit{Canterbury Runs}, for which Whitcombe and Tombs was to pay £500, and a large government job, the future showed at least some promise (Donovan-Brasch, 19/12/51). The new Printomatic would be paid for early in the following year, and, after some delay, the new Monotype machine arrived on 17 April 1952, almost in time for the company’s reorganisation of capital. The new list was as follows:

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<th>Ordinary Shares</th>
<th>Preferential Shares</th>
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<tr>
<td>Leo Bensemann</td>
<td>1355</td>
<td>750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Bensemann</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Brasch</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis Donovan</td>
<td>1395</td>
<td>500</td>
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</tbody>
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Other housekeeping undertaken in 1952 was an unsuccessful application to the Literary Fund to increase the grant for \textit{Landfall} (Donovan). It was evident that this was not paying for itself, either on the printing or publishing side\textsuperscript{75} (see appendix), but there appeared to be no suggestion that it should cease publication. In fact, Donovan considered taking over the \textit{Arts Yearbook} from Tombs as a supplement to \textit{Landfall}, but, in something of a reversal of roles, this was roundly rejected as impractical by Brasch.\textsuperscript{76} The long-delayed Robin Hyde book was made first priority on the new Monotype machine, with Brasch designated Honorary Editor to correspond with Gloria Rawlinson (Donovan-Brasch, 22/1/52). There was also a general reorganisation of the many manuscripts that had accumulated under Glover’s increasingly

\textsuperscript{73} Donovan somewhat cavalierly reassured Brasch: “I have not lost sight of the very desirable policy of Caxton spewing forth books from time to time” (19/12/51).

\textsuperscript{74} The previous situation stood as:

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<tr>
<td>Mrs Bensemann</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dennis Donovan</td>
<td>895</td>
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These details were provided to Brasch in a letter from Donovan on 15 April 1952.

\textsuperscript{75} In February 1952, Donovan informed Brasch that \textit{Landfall}'s debt to Caxton now exceeded £200, with no hope of repayment (4/2/52).

\textsuperscript{76} Donovan put this proposal to Brasch in a letter of 22 January 1952, and Brasch’s reply of 27 January was curt: “Take over Arts Yearbook? It’s been too much for Tombs, who’s got more plant than Caxton, so what show would you have.”
profligate tenure (see appendix), the majority of which Caxton did their best to publish over the next five years. This obligation to fulfil prior commitments provides some explanation for the somewhat conservative appearance of their publishing list during the 1950s.

One of the many manuscripts that never achieved publication because its topicality was questionable was the Hella Hoffman Symposium on Frank Sargeson (Brasch-Donovan, 24/7/52). Caxton had, however, acceded to Sargeson’s request for the type of “I For One” (from Landfall) to be retained for separate publication, although, in the interests of economy, it was instead printed and stored in sheets for later release. A further manuscript to fall through the cracks, much to Brasch’s dismay,77 was a collection of stories by Bruce Mason. Despite Bensemann’s agreement on its merits, it could not be contemplated with their extant commitments (Bensemann-Brasch, 17/4/52). Of the two books that Caxton did dear from its list, Bensemann admitted that they had had to keep costs down on Hyde’s volume and as a result he was not particularly satisfied with the appearance of the contents and introduction. Fairburn’s Strange Rendezvous, by contrast, Bensemann considered “the best thing I have done for a long time” (Letter to Brasch, 9/12/52).

Another factor that marks off the 1950s as a period of transition is the appearance of two collections, one of verse and one of criticism: Curnow’s revised Book of New Zealand Verse and the collection of Holcroft’s essays, Discovered Isles,78 can be seen as summaries of a particularly dynamic and fertile period. Both authors were held in high regard by Glover and he considered Curnow’s A Book of New Zealand Verse and Holcroft’s Discovered Isles as “the twin peaks of a somewhat rugged publishing career” (Hot Water 178). (They also coincided with his own departure from Caxton Press. See below.) The Curnow book reads like a who’s who of Caxton poets, with only five of the eighteen contributors not having been published

77 Brasch wrote to Donovan: “He seems to me perhaps the most gifted of the younger writers ... I don’t want to see Pegasus snap him up” (12/4/52).

78 Glover later admitted that he had misread the proofs and the title should have been Discovered Islands (Hot Water 178).

However, by far the biggest coup of this period was the crucial publication of *The Lagoon* in 1951. The following year this collection of short stories won the Hubert Church Memorial Prize for prose, as well as glowing reviews in the *Times Literary Supplement* ("NZ Quality"). It seems that without any regard to the cost or the market for such a book, it was agreed (even by Donovan who was more than anything the financial adviser at Caxton) that this particular book was something of a cultural imperative. As has been pointed out, not least by Frame herself, the publication of this book was crucial to her physical as well as her mental well-being. However, most unfortunately for Caxton, the publication of *The Lagoon* was not to have a happy sequel. At the same time that Frame had sent in the manuscript of this volume, she had also sent in a collection of her verse; on her behalf, Frank Sargeson wrote requesting its return, only to discover that the manuscript had been lost, presumably by Glover (Donovan, Interview 1993). Not surprisingly, she took her next books to Pegasus for publication.

Some further comments seem necessary on Glover's departure from Caxton in 1951. Glover stated in his autobiography, *Hot Water Sailor*, that, after the war, "I threw myself into reorganising my printing and publishing activities, but it was always with a slightly weary taste" (178). The excitement that he expressed in his earlier letters from England about the Press's activities was obviously dissipated by his later war experiences, the effect of which manifested itself most evidently in his drinking. Manuscripts began to be neglected, he managed to crash

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79 A more conventional commercial publisher's approach is epitomised by this statement by David Bateman: "There's far too much of this soul-searching writing about people who have nervous breakdowns and all this sort of thing and this is not what people want to read. People read fiction to escape" (Recording).

80 "Myself! I am bursting with energy and information about printing" calligraphed Glover on 13 June 1943 in one of a series of excited letters to Bensemann that burst with news of his new typographical contacts; they also included pleas for news of Caxton's activities and extravagant plans for the future of their press.
the firm's car, his personal drawings from the firm’s account became larger and he stayed away from the Press for increasingly longer periods of up to a week for drinking binges (Donovan, Interview 1993; Drew). Leo Bensemann was not well with the stress of trying to cope with a printing and publishing business by himself (he had even had to enlist the help of his friends Laurence Baigent and Antony Alpers with printing), and finally had to call in Dennis Donovan for help (Drew). Donovan was unequivocal in a letter to Elizabeth Alley: Glover “plundered the firm to the very brink of bankruptcy” and when he set out for Christchurch from Havelock North,

Glover knew I was coming and it took me a week to smoke him out of his hideaway - the Heathcote Arms as it was then. So we managed to sort a few things out. I kept Glover out of the civil courts by paying all his (not inconsiderable) bills, and we managed to dissuade Bensemann’s lawyer from more serious prosecutions! (Letter to Elizabeth Alley)

This, however, was not the end of the matter, since at least as early as 1950 Glover had been helping his good friend, and a major, original client of Caxton,81 to set up a rival publishing company. It seems that the Press that Glover had struggled to found and which had meant so much to him before the war had lost its meaning, and he had done his best to destroy it. Perhaps the last words on the subject should be Glover’s, written with little rancour and perhaps a little regret some years later to Leo Bensemann: “You kept the fire well stoked when I extinguished myself from war reaction and personal complexities” (Undated 1978). Fittingly, the last piece that Glover worked on for Caxton was arguably his best collection of poems, Sings Harry, which seems to convey something of the wistful regret and disillusionment that one could easily attribute to Glover at this time, but which rarely appeared through the boisterous facade he maintained.

81 Albion Wright’s advertising agency had sent all its not inconsiderable printing work through Caxton Press, virtually since the latter’s inception (their first appearance in the Caxton ledger book was on 9 July 1935), and continued to be a major customer until its formation as a publishing company in its own right.
The input of Donovan at the Caxton Press was significant. He brought an increasingly business-like attitude to the press and it is perhaps for this very reason that Caxton began to devote more attention to printing than publishing. It was he who was responsible for obtaining the rights to print the Capping Magazine, usually worth over £100 to Caxton (Interview 1993). This did not mean that he was uninterested in literature, as he was one of the people determined to see Janet Frame's collection of short stories, *The Lagoon*, into print. He could, therefore, be said to have maintained Caxton's initial rationale "to make available ... what prose and poetry the directors of the press have considered of interest and value" (Caxton, *Catalogue*, Feb. '41 7).

There were perhaps other reasons for the decline of Caxton's publications (in number though never in quality). In a letter to Bensemann in 1953, Charles Brasch had questioned the price of Baxter's *The Fallen House*, which retailed at 15 shillings, stating, "[y]ou can sell Baxter, Fairburn and Denis at that sort of price, but not other poetry" (11/4/53). He then went on to compare it to equivalent prices for English poets (not a particularly fair comparison considering respective resources and markets), and, more importantly, the 3/6 asked for the Pegasus poets. Competition in Canterbury had clearly arrived. He suggested for the likes of Hervey, Dallas and Oliver that ten shillings should be the ceiling price for their volumes of verse, and that it would therefore be necessary to apply - "like Pegasus" - to the Literary Fund for a grant.

In another letter in 1955, Brasch chided and warned Leo Bensemann about the dangers of becoming too lax with publishing:

I only wish that you could bring out books with the same dispatch that you bring out LF. I am getting really worried about your publishing habits. I foresee that you will be offered fewer and fewer mss in future, and none of the ones you would most like to publish ... there's a general impression that you're no longer interested in publishing, that you're so slow that you don't care. (9/12/55)

Brasch pointed to the success of Pegasus in bringing out Janet Frame and the competition
offered by Blackwood and Janet Paul and even Bob Lowry (although the latter's sporadic efforts were never a serious challenge). He also considered justified Baxter's and Hervey's disgruntlement (presumably regarding *The Fallen House* (1953) and *She Was My Spring* (1954) respectively) at delays of more than two years in publication. Finally, he made abundantly plain the reason he saw for these delays: "It's an absurd position that the whole work of reading and considering mss, corresponding with the author, planning and designing the book, setting it up, reading the proofs, setting title pages etc., and printing, should have to be done in your spare time" (9/12/55). When it is realised that all this work fell to Bensemann as well as commercial printing, it is more incredible that the books appeared at all. Brasch expected a professional commitment to literature where its return did not justify it, and so publication remained a preoccupation rather than an occupation.

However, with this kind of almost superhuman activity, it does lend some credence to Bensemann's statement to Trevor Moffitt some years later: "If Denis had bloody well played the game, we could have beaten the world" (Interview). After Glover's departure, it seemed that there had been some improvement, in that Brasch suggested, in the same letter (9/12/55), that Bensemann would now be able to concentrate his energies on the next two manuscripts in hand. Both Oliver's *Fire without Phoenix* and Brasch's *The Estate* appeared just over a year later, in early 1957, but it was inevitable that Bensemann would not be able to maintain this level of activity and that publications, of a literary nature (and consequently of little or no return) at least, would drop off.

Although one could say that there had been a change in the balance of power as regards the publishing of New Zealand literature, Caxton Press was far from a spent force going into the 1950s and 1960s; but, by the same token, it was no longer the dominant literary focus it once was. With the departure of Glover, Bensemann's influence came to the fore, and it would seem that he was responsible for a certain amount of diversification in their subsequent booklists. In a literal adaption of the title, Rewi Alley's *Leaves from a Sandan Notebook* appeared in a
limited, signed edition with Chinese hand-made paper in 1950, and 1954 saw the release of Margaret Garland's *Journey to New China*.

Also, if any doubt ever existed as to Bensemann's typographic ability and design skill, one need only look to the three fine books he produced in the 1950s. The first of these, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1952), was printed in an edition of 275 copies in 16-point Poliphilus with glosses in 12-point Blado Italic on F.J. Head (Hayle Mill) hand-made paper, with a frontispiece, titling and initial letter by him. Five hundred copies were printed, but Bensemann had trouble filling the initial subscription list of 250, and so a remainder of 225 was preserved in sheets (on different paper) to be bound, much later (1968), into a second edition. As well as being a showcase for his impressive talent for calligraphy, the story seems particularly suited to Bensemann's predilection for the bizarre and grotesque and the result is a particularly evocative set of drawings. In a rare review for a limited edition book, *The Listener* commented, "[t]his beautiful book . . . is proof that printing has come of age in New Zealand" ("Printer's Art"). At £3/3/- it was not cheap and the relatively high number of copies - for a limited edition - suggested that there was now more of a market for fine books, a market for which Caxton was in a large part responsible. Nevertheless, such a book would never repay its labour, and *The Listener* seems justified in writing, "[i]t has been worked on with devotion - love, perhaps, is the word that should be used; and the result is a prize for collectors" ("Printer's Art"). In the same year in which this was published appeared Bensemann's own unique book, the full title of which gives a fairly accurate guide to its contents: *A Second Book of Leo Bensemann's Work Exemplified in Twenty Drawings, in Pen and Pencil Together With Six Engravings on Wood, and Specimens of Calligraphy and Typography With a Grand Piece of German Text, and Other Select Pieces Never Before Engraved*. It contains a number of striking drawings, some with a strong surrealist influence and some reproduced from previous books, all demonstrating the breadth of Bensemann's talent.

Johnathan Swift's *A Letter to a Very Young Lady on her Marriage* was published in 1954 and
was again hand-set, this time in 14-point Caslon (Caxton's original face), on hand-made paper, the drawing and design being more traditional and restrained on this occasion. However, in 1958 Bensemann produced his typographical tour de force, The Ballad of Reading Gaol by Oscar Wilde. This is something of a masterpiece of the type of restrained typography with which Caxton made its name, along with a few distinctively Bensemann flourishes. Set entirely in Baskerville, the ballad begins with a brooding headpiece in black, incorporating a skull, a rope and some Aubrey Beardsley-like flowers; the only remaining decoration is a small, hand-drawn noose motif, in red ink, that recurs at the top of each page. The titles were also printed in red, a hallmark of most Caxton title pages of the 1950s, the colour creating the illusion of depth, and a feature used to startling effect by many of the Canterbury regionalist painters. Only 75 copies of this work were printed and they presumably sold out quickly, as there was no mention of it in any of Caxton's subsequent booklists.

What is perhaps most striking about this selection of fine books is that, unlike the majority of Caxton's list, they were not by New Zealand authors or about New Zealand subjects. Although they appeared in the 1964 Caxton Book List under the title of "Printer's pleasure," their origins were clearly announced in a set of bibliographic codes that clearly corresponded with a set of codes operating in England, which had arisen out of the Renaissance of Printing there in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. More particularly, they correspond with the recollective visual design of the Kelmscott Press, which favoured two-colour printing and the use of decorative capitals. Rather than a rejection of the Bodley Head model and the modernist principles that informed most of Caxton designs, these books can be read as simply a more explicit acknowledgement of Caxton's literary and bibliographic heritage.

Alan Loney goes further and suggests that "[t]he Caxton types, and the ways in which they

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82 D'Arcy Cresswell's The Voyage of the Hurunui, published in 1956, serves as an excellent example of elegant Caxton typography carried through into a commercial book (in the sense that it was not a "fine" reproduction), the major function of which was the display of typographical skill.

83 See Alan Loney's article in Landfall 185, "Something of Moment: Caxton Press typography in the 1950s."

84 See McGann's Black Riders for a discussion of the impact of the Renaissance of Printing.
were used in Caxton books during the 1940s and 1950s, are signs of an intense interest in and commitment to a book culture of which the type-casting programmes of the Monotype Corporation in England and American Type Founders in the United States were themselves a sign" ("'Something of Moment'" 147). Such fine books also serve to demonstrate that the book is as much a creative opportunity for the visual imagination (in this case Bensemann's) as the literary one.

Other books of literary note that appeared under the Caxton imprint in that decade were *Houses by the Sea* (1952), the long-awaited collection of Robin Hyde's poetry, as well as poetry by Fairburn (1952), Ruth Dallas (1953), Keith Sinclair (1954), J.R. Hervey (1954) and Paul Henderson [Ruth France] (1955). Frank Sargeson's *I For One* was reprinted straight from *Landfall* in 1954, but with reduced margins and a very small - 8/10 point - face to keep the price down (which it did, selling for only six shillings).

Another item of note that developed out of *Landfall* was a poetry competition to mark the first five years of the journal. The four not insubstantial prizes of 25 guineas each (of which only two were given in the event) were for a long poem or group of shorter poems, the money for the prize being put up by Brasch himself (Brasch, Letter to Donovan 30/3/52). On the entry form which accompanied *The Caxton Press Book List 1952* there was a brief review of *Landfall*’s achievements, which noted that the country's only two regular literary prizes went to works which had both appeared in *Landfall*.85 and declared that it now ranked “as a journal which can be judged by the highest standards both for range of interest and for literary distinction” (Appendix). It then went on to make a plea for regular subscribers to support the journal, as it was felt that it was not prudent to raise the price. Of particular interest is the following statement: "Nor do we propose to lower our standard of printing; from the start it was intended that *Landfall* should be printed as well as possible, and its appearance helps to

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85 In 1950 the Jessie Mackay Award for poetry went to James K. Baxter and the Hubert Church Award for prose went to Frank Sargeson.
give it a distinction and authority which we believe it is important to maintain”. This, of course, was true of all Caxton books and contributed in no small way to the perception, resolutely advocated by Brasch, that what Caxton published was the “best.”

The conferral of authority by the well-printed book cannot be underestimated, and it does not seem to have been so at the Caxton Press. This is reflected in the breadth of Caxton’s unique type specimen book, which was enlarged in 1956 to include types acquired since its previous publication in 1948. These, along with detailed descriptive notes at the back of the book, amounted to sixteen extra pages (see Figure 14), and demonstrated the extent to which Bensemann had gone in order to keep Caxton well stocked with a variety of typefaces. These included examples from major Dutch, American and English type foundries, as well as types designed by Gill, Morison and Dutch artist, designer and calligrapher J. van Krimpen.

The major task of the 1950s had clearly been that of re-establishing a firm financial base for the press, and, fittingly, the final financial report for the decade (1959-60) recorded their success in this endeavour. With a capital reserve of almost £2000, assets exceeded liabilities for the first time,86 and the report concluded: “These figures reflect the growth of the business and show much improved trading results for the year ended 31st March, 1960” (Caxton, Accounts). In order to stabilise their position in this way, there was a very much reduced

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86 Compare this to the previous year where assets were only enough to meet half the claims against them (Caxton, Accounts).
workload in 1958, such that no publication was undertaken. In fact, the amount spent on publications had been steadily declining since 1953 while printing correspondingly increased (see Appendix, Table 1). During this period they had acquired Gormack Graph Papers (1955), but, in a less successful venture, had established a subsidiary company in Wellington, Wellington Caxton Press Limited, with the backing of 200 one-pound shares (Caxton, Accounts). This latter effort was written off in 1960 to the tune of £1000, as was Denis Glover's debt of £290. Consolidation of Caxton's position was completed by a capital reconstruction, which involved a capital increase from £5000 to £8000, Donovan providing the bulk of the new capital (see Appendix, Table 2).

The following year's report confirmed a more positive outlook for the press, with a dividend of £525 and the purchase of a second Heidelberg for £900. Increased investment in publications was also noticeable, but, even with their new streamlined operation, publications contributed only £74 to the gross profit as compared to £5509 for printing. Clearly, with the increased capital investment, the pressure to reduce unprofitable publications was much more intense than in the previous decade (Caxton, Accounts).

Commenting on Bensemann's output as a painter, Peter Simpson noted a marked revival in the 1960s in contrast with the 1950s when "[h]is energies seem to have been almost fully absorbed by the demands of the Caxton Press" (Address 10). It seems relatively safe to surmise, then, that this meant a correspondingly lighter workload, as far as the press was concerned, in the 1960s. Although verse continued to appear from Caxton, its publishing activities were becoming increasingly commercial. They turned their special typographical talents towards local histories, for which they were entirely appropriate, but which, more importantly, made more money than verse. Publishing was no longer a spare time activity; it was now, by necessity, a competitive commercial operation. Fine book production may have ceased, but only to the advantage of Bensemann's reputation as a painter.

87 These were histories of colonists, and a printing style that recollected the cultural heritage of their point of departure seemed most apt.
This change is most apparent in the introduction to their 1964 Book List, which I have reproduced in full:

BOOK PUBLISHING in New Zealand has undergone great and rapid changes in the last ten years - or less. These changes Caxton's list reflects, and will continue to reflect. Our last list of books in print, put forth in 1957, was a modest affair, a list in the main of slender volumes, verse predominating. Today, in common with other houses [my italics], we publish confidently for a larger public, in a widening field. We hope that we do so still with that distinction - founded upon an awareness of what is good New Zealand writing and how it should be printed - that has made the Caxton imprint stand for what it does. (Caxton)

This was further expressed in the actual design of the list, which included photographic reproductions (including, as if to prove their claim of moving beyond "slender volumes," a photograph of a selection of books, some displaying their obviously thick spines) and began with the general, more popular books accompanied by enthusiastic reviews,88 while poetry was relegated to near the end. Also in another breakaway from tradition, they included a list of books printed but not published by Caxton Press. This was in sharp contrast to Glover's grudging provision of such details to friend and bibliophile (and a collector of 'Caxtonalia') Percy Watts Rule, because Glover had wished to dissociate himself from works that did not bear the Caxton imprint.89 This form of jobbing printing, however, provided guaranteed income, and so, far from concealing the fact that it was done, they were obviously using it to solicit further work of this nature. (One such job was the AUMLA journal, which was something of a technical typographical feat with its inclusion of various foreign languages.) An-

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88 Although this was, and is, standard publishing practice, it reflects a more commercial approach than when they were simply publishing their own self-critical comments, or, in the case of Areopagitica, tough critical comment by their peers.

89 Glover's correspondence with Rule is held by the Turnbull Library, and Glover's position is perhaps best outlined in a letter of 25 February 1941: "You will understand that we have printed many books and booklets we would hesitate to lend our name to. If the title page says 'The Caxton Press' it is as good as the papal seal; if it says 'printed at the Caxton Press' you may take that as a definitive statement of our liability . . . Believe me, I am not doctrinaire in what we are prepared to publish. But it is obvious that our name can only gain authority and trustworthiness if it is rather jealously preserved."
other point of interest in this catalogue is the note that Caxton books were available in Great Britain through Whitcombe and Tombs New Zealand House Bookshop, as this prefigured the internationalisation of the marketing of Caxton's books in the 1970s. It is obvious that this was more of an advertising brochure to be glanced through (utilising photo-offset for maximum visual effect), rather than the more detailed text information in the largely non-illustrative March 1957 list.

Caxton's publications in the 1960s tended to represent a broader appeal than those that had previously been offered. *White Water* (1963) by Joyce Hamilton took a New Zealand subject and success story - the Hamilton jet boat - and combined it with a record-breaking American adventure up the Colorado River and through the Grand Canyon. This was the stuff of which publishers' dreams are made. At 259 pages, it most certainly could not be described as "slim," and marked something of a transition for Caxton to the world of serious (but still relatively minor) commercial publishing. Another book of a similar size, *Rock Garden Plants of the Southern Alps* (1962), represented a further sound commercial proposition, in that it was a specialist book, illustrated, and with a definite and receptive market that was not limited to New Zealand. Likewise, *Susu, the Siamese Kitten* was a foray into the lucrative children's book market, a market in which New Zealand has developed a strong reputation both locally and internationally.

Errol Braithwaite's two novels, *Long Way Home* and *Fear in the Night*, were both thrillers that had a more general, less 'literary' appeal, although another book by the same author, *An Affair of Men*, won the *Otago Daily Times* centennial prize for the best New Zealand novel of 1961. Of more interest, though, is that it was subsequently published in England, America and several European countries. This would suggest that people overseas were interested in New Zealand books, and that consequently the market had become that much larger. The days were now over when Caxton could publish a book in an edition of 200, because that was the size (or larger) of the New Zealand market, no one else would do it, and it filled in time
between commercial printing orders; increasingly, they had to face a widening market but with increasing competition.

This was not to say that Caxton had moved right out of literary publishing: in 1961 they reprinted Janet Frame’s *The Lagoon and Other Stories*, which, with Frame’s growing international reputation, served to maintain Caxton’s literary prestige, and the fact that Caxton had published her first book was certainly a matter of some pride at the press. Certainly, in the context of commercial publishing in New Zealand, Caxton’s patronage was unique, and for its origins one has only to look to Glover’s words, written twenty years earlier:

> we do not mind admitting that over some of our publications we have lost more money than we care to be reminded of. There is no merit in this: and a good deal of snobbery is often involved in producing books the public can later be accused of being too unintelligent to want. It is our hope to publish books that will repay our labour, and that of the author as well. But there are some things that any publisher should be willing to do even in the face of probable loss, and think it no unusual thing. (Caxton, *Catalogue Feb. ’41 8*)

What other companies may have seen simply as a commercial liability was, to Caxton, a sort of moral duty or obligation that attached to publishing. The problems associated with this type of stance were nowhere better illustrated than in the figure of Charles Brasch. His very substantial - 492 pages - *Landfall Country* appeared in 1962 and was, for him, an accumulation of the best work that had appeared in *Landfall*, and by extension, in New Zealand literature. Some critics were less enthusiastic: “We take ourselves too seriously” said the N.Z.B.C. reviewer, and the *Hawke’s Bay Herald-Tribune* summed this tome up as “[g]rey, forbidding, grim . . . [it] has the air of a carefully tended museum with only a few bars of sunlight filtering through the leadlights” (qtd. in Caxton, *Book List 64*).90 These are not descriptions upon which blockbusters are made, and the figures for this particular book bear this out: of the

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90 Compare these descriptions with Bensemann’s assessment of its reception: “The chorus of praise rises slowly but surely around Landfall Country and it all does you much honour” (Letter to Brasch 21/12/62).
3000 copies printed in 1962, only 1370 had sold by August 1963; in other words of the £2300 paid out on the book, sales returned £1800. Yet Caxton continued to publish volumes of verse by the likes of Alan Mulgan, Charles Brasch, Gordon Challis and Ruth Dallas.

It also continued, of course, to publish Landfall, much to the amazement (and even amusement\(^{92}\)) of many. Even with Brasch foregoing any remuneration as editor and contributing a substantial sum, Caxton absorbed considerable losses of £3000 over the first twenty years of its existence, averaging out at £150 per year (Donovan-Brasch 26/1/66). Landfall was published at considerably lower than normal rates, and at least half the Literary Fund grant was usually used to pay contributors. Ironically, the year (1965) that they increased the price - the first increase since its inception - saw increased sales and their first ever surplus (Donovan-Brasch 20/1/66). While over-pricing the journal would almost certainly have discouraged readership, a retail price that more accurately reflected its actual cost was not unreasonable and may well have lightened the load carried by Caxton. It would seem that the ethos of patronage that informed the establishment of Landfall was somewhat self-perpetuating, in that it induced a sense of complacency and the journal was, as a result, less responsive to its constituency. A further example was provided by Brasch’s resistance to Caxton divesting itself of backcopies of Landfall (Brasch-Donovan 3/2/61). Donovan was equally adamant in his reply that if readers could get back numbers easily they were less likely to subscribe, and so he maintained that only a few copies of recent issues should be retained: “This is how it should be if we are to be publishers and not book collectors” (5/2/61).

Brasch’s input at the press was not wholly confined to Landfall, and he willingly assumed the role of de facto editor. He was often consulted by Bensemann, and they co-operated on the selection for Landfall Country, which was pushed through to early publication because of a rumoured book of New Zealand stories to be published by Fabers (Brasch-Bensemann 17/1/91).

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\(^{91}\) Figures are from a letter from Donovan to Brasch (6/8/63).

\(^{92}\) See comments made by Leigh Davis and Alan Loney in the latter’s interview in And.
They were careful, however, not to include work if it was represented in other anthologies. "Riley's Handbook" proved especially problematic in that Brasch felt that it might turn buyers off. The likelihood that the book would be used as a text for students involved other considerations, such as whether to include a further Duggan story. The Otago University lecturer E.A. Horsman had indicated that if it was published by June, he would include it on the reading list for the second half of the year, which would account for the guaranteed sale of an extra 100-120 copies (Brasch-Bensemann 9/1/62). However, as galley proofs reached Brasch only in mid-April, this proved impossible. Also a dispute over the timing of the proofs provoked the following tempestuous rebuke from Brasch: "This is all part of your general attitude - that you do everyone a favour by printing their work, that you owe them nothing, that you tell them nothing, that everything must serve your convenience. You seem to forget that not only Landfall, but every poet whose work you print, contributes to your bread and butter" (Brasch-Bensemann 16/4/62). Not surprisingly, Bensemann took offence at what he described as Brasch's "housemaster homily" (17/4/62). Considering Brasch's intimate knowledge of Caxton's benevolence, the suggestion that Caxton made money from literature, let alone that it was its "bread and butter," was quite remarkable. Such petulance seems to have been born out of a sense of being taken for granted, which was no doubt justified but also somewhat inevitable considering the high level of mutual patronage.93

Distribution agreements with companies outside New Zealand were sought for Landfall Country, but initial interest from Deutsch and Hutchinsons came to nothing. (Similarly, nothing came of the request by Mellin Press for a quote for 500 copies of Landfall Country in sheets

93 In a letter to Donovan the following year, Brasch launched a similar tirade regarding the non-payment of contributors (they had been paid - £5 a story/article, £3 a poem, and £1 per plate [Donovan-Brasch 6/8/63]): "No wonder Caxton now has a thoroughly bad name among writers, due to its slowness in publishing, its slowness in paying, and its general offhandedness in dealing with writers" (31/7/63). Although there was obviously cause for such a perception, the expectation of a strictly contractual arrangement in the absence of any tangible reward for the publisher was unrealistic.
with their imprint.) The failure to secure alternative distribution probably contributed to the hefty price tag of 45 shillings (despite advice from John Griffin, who optimistically forecasted that 3000 copies could be sold if the price was held under two pounds [Brasch-Bensemann 10/10/62]). At about the same time, Brasch suggested that Caxton publish Sargeson's play “A Time for Sowing” as most of his work was out of print (Brasch-Bensemann 28/6/61). Despite Bensemann's initial reluctance, this was eventually published in 1964 with another play under the title Wrestling with the Angel.

Nineteen sixty-three proved a particularly busy year in terms of Caxton's commercial printing, which was complicated by the addition of a new machinist and compositor (Bensemann-Brasch 17/4/63). Bensemann, however, oversaw the printing of Ambulando, although he again earned a slight reprimand from Brasch for a turnover that did not conform to Stanley Morison's rules of typography (25/4/63). Despite this minor quibble, Brasch was particularly pleased with the overall result: “You've printed Ambulando beautifully . . . This will be quite the finest book I've had and I'm grateful for the care you've given it” (19/4/64). He was, however, less pleased with the appearance of the June 1963 Landfall, which had been set by the Star-Sun, and his response was categorical: “I don't want to edit a journal that looks like that” (17/7/63).

The arrival, at the end of 1963, of Antony Alpers in the editorial department of Caxton Press alleviated the demands made upon Brasch's time for advice beyond the scope of Landfall. This would have freed Bensemann, too, of some of the editorial duties he had somewhat reluctantly assumed, although, with new building underway in July of 1964, there were clearly other things to occupy his time. Alpers's tenure lasted only until July 1966, at which time Barbara Brooke was added to the staff, and Bensemann again found himself dealing with poetry (Donovan-Brasch 29/4/66). Although Bensemann was widely read in European litera-

94 This information was conveyed in Brasch's letters to Donovan on 7 December 1962, 24 April 1963 and 25 June 1963.

95 At this time, Brasch contributed a further £500 in the form of one pound shares to assist in the expansion, commenting in a letter to Donovan that the annual statements “look pretty healthy” (22/9/64).
ture, he was less well versed in, and not particularly sympathetic to local, contemporary developments. This had the effect of weakening Caxton's credibility as a promoter of contemporary New Zealand literature, a reputation it had retained primarily by virtue of its past record and Brasch's efforts to create the expectation (if not always the realisation) of a professional climate for literature. Nevertheless, it was Bensemann who accepted Hubert Witheford's A Native Perhaps Beautiful for publication, despite finding the foreword "a trifle owlish" (Bensemann-Brasch 11/7/66). This choice reflects the more conservative approach adopted by Caxton, as the publication of literature was subordinated to the wider concerns of remaining a commercially competitive printer.

Caxton Press's decision to republish Washday at the Pa (1964) is particularly revealing of a then prevalent view of the relationship between an artist and his or her environment. Caxton felt that the furore surrounding the withdrawal of the School Bulletin "was the first time the New Zealand public had concerned itself, at any rate so widely and so keenly, with a question of principle touching a New Zealand book" (Caxton, Washday 1). Although the element of protest at censorship recalled their earlier publication of Areopagitica, the accompanying Publisher's Note made it clear that this was not the sole reason for its republication. Instead, it provided a relatively even-handed account of the complex events that surrounded its initial release and recall by the Ministry of Education, and purported to offer an opportunity to re-evaluate the controversy. Unlike the limited edition of Areopagitica, there was clearly a degree of opportunism in the face of intense public interest, but the breadth of the debate and the fact that it dealt with specifically New Zealand subject matter suggests a more mature, and less provincial outlook.

However, the Publisher's Note concluded with a defence of "artistic truth" derived from the artist's insight and perception, and made a point of distinguishing this concept from "objective fact" (8). Art was conceived here as something separate from the moment of experience, "[a] tune beyond us, yet ourselves" (sec. I, line 8) as Wallace Stevens would have it in "The
Man with the Blue Guitar." After going to such lengths to canvass the issues involved, this conferral of an inviolable status on the artist seems a peculiarly simplistic assertion, and, given the context, the disavowal of any political motive appears, in retrospect, more than a little naive. Caxton's decision to reproduce the book minus the state house that the family was to have moved to suggests a concept of art unsullied by politics, but, as the strong responses to its withdrawal attested, it was this very notion of supposedly disinterested art that was increasingly to come into question over the next decade and beyond.

Considering the poor financial performance of Landfall, it was not surprising that Caxton was unable to support a visual arts magazine as well. In 1965 (the same year in which Caxton published the last of its Caxton Prints series96), the Arts Council had written to Caxton, stating the necessity for an arts journal, but unsure as to how it should be done and what it should contain. As Bensemann put it in an interview with Trevor Moffitt, "[i]n other words, they asked us to do all their thinking for them." Like Book before it, Caxton's proposal was ahead of its time, but the Arts Council was reluctant to face up to the cost.97 The first edition of Ascent appeared in November 1967, edited by Bensemann and Barbara Brooke, and ran to five issues, the last being a special Frances Hodgkins commemorative issue. It presented a very generous selection of reproductions from a wide range of New Zealand artists, including expensive colour plates (which were usually sponsored). Aside from any other difficulties, this was the major difference from a literary magazine: photographic plates and the necessary high quality paper made this a much more expensive undertaking. It retailed for $1-50, and one has to suspect that this, too, was artificially low. Two thousand copies were printed, but, as Bensemann pointed out to Moffitt, such a journal really needed to sell 5000 copies to be viable. He also commented that the same was true of Landfall.

96 These included reproductions of paintings by Eric Lee-Johnson and Doris Lusk (both 1958), Bill Sutton (1959) and Don Binney (1965).

97 In the Arts Council vote of 28 June 1966, it was decided that it would not undertake sponsoring an arts journal project, but a sum was earmarked for reserve (Donovan-Brasch 18/7/66).
Nevertheless, *Ascent* still compares very favourably with its modern counterpart, *Art New Zealand*, in that it was probably more representative of its time, and certainly less cluttered by advertisements (itself a graphic representation of the cost of such a journal). *Ascent* was a valiant effort, largely made possible by Leo Bensemann’s close involvement with the arts, but it serves to demonstrate the importance of both institutional support (and the necessary will to maintain this) and the availability of a sustainable technology. In the case of the photographic plates, particularly colour ones, necessary to reproduce artworks, the cost proved to be prohibitive, and the arts scene had to wait over a decade for a viable alternative. In the absence of a defining, canonical journal for the arts, its evolution in New Zealand seems to be less marked by the kind of tendentious rhetoric and oppositional posturing that has been a feature of literary development.

Unprofitability was not confined to art magazines, however, as Caxton demonstrated in 1965. Christchurch Caxton Magazines Limited was set up to produce *This New Zealand*. The result was a $5000 publishing loss in 1967, which, when combined with a $4000 investment in Printset Processes (see chapter three), resulted in their first net loss for a decade. Although these losses were exceptional, Caxton’s growth had really peaked in 196398 and their position could be taken as indicative of a general tightening of the book market (Caxton, Accounts). As a result, Caxton’s book lists in the 1960s and 1970s recorded the publication of increasing numbers of local histories. Again, these books were characterised by a solid, known market, that was perhaps even more marked in Canterbury than other centres due to its strongly parochial outlook. There also appeared a number of books with Maori themes. One further book of interest from this period, and one in Caxton’s anti-authoritarian tradition,99 was *We Will Not Cease*. This was the story of Archibald Baxter’s experiences as a conscientious objector during World War One, and was deliberately re-released in 1968 to coincide with Viet-

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98 As slow or non-payment of debts is common in printing, recorded profits for a company did not necessarily reflect its actual financial state. In 1962 for example, Donovan complained to Brash that, because of the extent of the debts owed to them, they were virtually paying taxes on non-existent profit (15/1/62).

99 This would also have been in accordance with Bensemann’s pacifist views.
Although this thesis has avoided dealing with *Landfall* in anything but a cursory way for reasons outlined, mention should be made of the succession of editors after Brasch retired in 1966. For the purposes of this thesis Robin Dudding is the most interesting of these in that he was appointed publishing editor of the Caxton Press, his duties including the editing of *Landfall*. However, in the Brasch tradition (Brasch was in the unique position of making *Landfall* a full-time occupation), Dudding devoted more and more of his time to the literary journal rather than the general publishing activities, and consequently this led to conflict with Donovan. This was compounded by Dudding's relatively inclusive style of editing, which meant that issues often exceeded the budgeted - that is, budgeted to minimise losses - eighty pages (with a maximum of 96 pages). The cumulative effect of these actions was that, when an issue failed to appear on time in 1972, Dudding was dismissed (Donovan, Interview 1993). He was then succeeded by Leo Bensemann who, with Philip Temple as Associate Editor, minded *Landfall* for three years. Bensemann was certainly well read and perhaps as well qualified as anyone to edit the journal, but his ideas were perhaps too Euro-centred at a time when the tide was turning and American influences were beginning to predominate. Bensemann was certainly not unaware of these movements and a brief examination of *Landfall* under him reveals a relatively broad-minded approach, but he was really much more interested in the visual arts and, as Peter Simpson has pointed out, his own painting was undergoing something of a revival during this period (Address). He was also still a director of the press and it is not surprising that he could not devote his full attention to *Landfall*. The result was something of a slump for *Landfall*, a fact that Dudding capitalised on (with the help of *Landfall*'s subscription lists, it would seem) with his own journal, *Islands*. With the support of Brasch and old ally Glover, this was the journal on which, as Dennis McEldowney put it, “the apostolic succession had visibly settled” (“Publishing” 588).

The 1970s were essentially the end of the old Caxton dynasty, with the retirement of Bensemann.
in 1978 and the selling out to New Zealand printing giant Bascands Limited in the same year. It also prefigured the remarkably rapid changes that overtook the industry in the 1980s, when the Caxton approach would have been considered something of a commercial dinosaur. The pace of development was extremely rapid and this destroyed many companies that were unable to compete for the dwindling discretionary dollar, or were swallowed up by larger companies; consequently, this was a period when profit and loss dominated more than ever. The idea that there were “things that any publisher should be willing to do even in the face of probable loss, and think it no unusual thing” (Caxton, Catalogue Feb. '41 8), particularly of a literary nature, was sacrilege and would have entailed a visit to the Unemployment Office for even the most senior of editors. Nevertheless, Caxton continued to add to their literary list throughout the 1970s and 1980s, even if it was in something of a piecemeal fashion.

In the early seventies, a flurry of short story collections issued from New Zealand literature publishers (see chapter three). Caxton, too, produced a uniform series of three collections, two of which (O’Leary’s Orchard and other stories [1970] by Maurice Duggan and Sargeson's Man of England Now [1972]) were more nearly collections of novellas as they contained only three stories each. A third book, Such Separate Creatures (1973), was a collection of fifteen stories by James Courage (six of which had first been published in Landfall), selected and with a preface by Charles Brasch.

At about the same time, Caxton published what could be considered its last private press book, Tales of Mystery and Imagination by Edgar Allen Poe. Although this was not produced to as high a standard as previous such books, it was definitely a substantial tome, having 384 pages and 24 full-page plates. (Another illustrated limited edition had been produced of this collection by the American Limited Edition Club.) This particular edition was illustrated by

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100 In a public talk in Christchurch in June 1991, entitled “Big was Beautiful - Publishing in New Zealand in the 1980s and 1990s,” Mike Bradstock (currently editor of the Canterbury University Press) spoke from personal experience of the precarious position of editors in the 1980s.
Harry Clarke, and had originally been published in 1919. The fact that it was a straight reproduction of a 1919 version explains its somewhat archaic design and the absence of any Bensemann flourishes (although Clarke's illustrations are distinctly influenced by Beardsley; a factor that would have perhaps influenced Bensemann).

This volume seems to reflect the winding down generally of Caxton's adventurous literary and typographical activities, not least in the fact that it was published in conjunction with the Minerva Press in England. This sort of joint publication had been a feature of New Zealand publishing since the 1960s (and was put to especially good use by Pegasus Press), but was new to Caxton at this stage, and relatively rarely used subsequently. A final irony was that Caxton was offered the choice of two books by Minerva: this one and one on herbs. The herb book sold out, while the "prestige" literary book gathered dust on Caxton's shelves (Donovan, Interview 1993).

What Caxton offered was no longer unique and, increasingly, it was simply trading on its literary reputation, going through the motions of publication in order to fulfil some sort of historical literary obligation. Poets such as Peter Bland and Owen Leeming could scarcely be considered avant-garde, and Kevin Ireland and Rob Jackaman were the only "new" poets to be introduced by Caxton in these later years; in fact, more common on their lists in the 1970s were names of a previous generation like M.H. Holcroft and Ruth Dallas. Essentially, Caxton had lost its direction as (and perhaps its willingness to be) a publisher of literature - or had been deprived of it by other, newer publishers. With the departure of Dudding, there was no one either willing or able to direct the press in the vigorous way that either Glover or Bensemann had in their prime, and thereby re-establish a solid claim for its actual existence as a publisher of New Zealand literature. Moreover, as I have tried to demonstrate, the publishing industry itself was undergoing massive changes: more and more printing was going offshore to Asian countries where labour costs were cheaper. Consequently, the Caxton breed of the printer/publisher was in demise and, more and more, large international companies, with sharehold-
ers and capital overseas, came to dominate the New Zealand publishing scene. The "New Zealand List," far from being a raison d'être of a publishing house, became simply an inducement (mainly to booksellers) to buy from the international lists.

It seems, then, something of a fitting finale that the last book that both Bensemann and Donovan co-operated on was the Wattie Award Winner for 1978. *Sovereign Chief, A Biography of Baron De Thierry* by J.D. Raeside was a solid book of 360 pages, but, most importantly, it was the epitome of Caxton scholarly restraint. It utilised the traditional red title and a small, centred fleuron combination on the title page, and in all other respects exuded an air of venerable authority. In a way it could be seen to reflect the qualities that the press represented - high production standards, a rigorous editorial policy and an austere, almost learned, dignity - and the character of those who ran it, who were essentially the last of the 'gentlemen publishers.' The demise of this approach is perhaps best summarised by Diane and Peter Beatson: "While lip service is still paid to notions such as personal enrichment, community development and spirituality, all forms of social activity, including the arts, are scrutinised in terms of economic performance. The central question has changed from 'What is the good of art?' to 'How much money can art make?'" (246).

It could also be said that the qualities displayed by this book were a result of an outmoded technology that placed its emphasis on the printed word rather than visual images, and thereby signalled Caxton's continued commitment to a book culture which it had played a significant part in revitalising in New Zealand. In this, they followed a pattern outlined by Jerome McGann: "The Renaissance of Printing also encouraged freedom and innovation in the publishing and distribution of texts - moves that . . . might ultimately be managed for the creation and consolidation of an audience of readers" (Black 21). Having achieved an audience, they maintained the unembellished style of printing which had helped to preserve the notion of the essential, functional nature of Caxton's books, and which had served them so well in their promotion of poetic activity. This seemed particularly appropriate for a history, especially as
the history being recorded was presented in a format which located itself in the historic past. It also demonstrated that the Caxton Press was clearly no longer in the forefront of bibliographic or linguistic innovation. The movement from creative literature to history marked the end of what had been a remarkably productive partnership, a partnership that had basically changed the way people viewed literature in New Zealand.

The Caxton Press had not only set a new standard of typography and design for the printing trade in this country, it had challenged the New Zealand book-buying public to "see" better - better printing, better writing, better literature. It established what could be done with fine quality printing and then proceeded to apply this knowledge to a fledgling literature in order to establish the matrix for a book culture. The result was the publication of books, for which formerly there had been few or no outlets, that now proclaimed, in both content and appearance, a new literary canon, a canon that was not seriously challenged until the 1970s, when, aptly enough, it was attacked at its typographical foundations.

The historical approach I have taken to Caxton's development serves, I think, to reveal the historical necessity of certain aspects of their operation. In order for literature to be taken seriously in a young country which placed a multitude of demands before its inhabitants, not the least of which was the fallout from a worldwide Depression, it was necessary to produce something that not only appeared worthwhile but something that suggested permanence. Type, or those 'twenty-six soldiers of lead,' offered an appropriate means while providing a solid basis for an assault on New Zealand's literary sensibilities. The result was that the Caxton Press found itself the focus for a generation of writers. Most importantly, however, they harnessed the remarkable creative energy that seemed to be centred on Christchurch during that period, and did not allow it to simply dissipate, as so many other movements had before and since, for want of exposure to, and encouragement from artistically like-minded individuals. In this way they were an invaluable literary communication hub, providing a psychological entry into literature and a physical exit out (and abroad) as Literature published.
It is really outside the scope of this thesis to look at Caxton, with the resources of Bascands Ltd. behind it, and its diversification into many areas of commercial printing in the 1980s. Nevertheless, it seems necessary, to bring this study up to date, to comment on some of the more recent literary developments at Caxton. These included the new Caxton Poets series, similar to that issued in the late 1940s, and *The Caxton Press Anthology: New Zealand Poetry 1972-86*, edited by Mark Williams to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the press. While the original Caxton Poets series claimed to be “the work of our best poets” (Caxton, Book List 1950), the contemporary version made no such claim; in fact, it seemed to make very few claims for itself at all, and, rather, was characterised by a lack of any kind of overall statement as to its purpose. Something of a striking anomaly was the inclusion of two volumes by the same author, Hugh Lauder, which suggested that this was not as challenging a series as it might have been. One would be hard pressed to pick a name from the poets represented that would go on to achieve the kind of literary dominance that was achieved by, say, Allen Curnow or Baxter. Nevertheless, this probably suggests a healthy state of affairs and seems to bear out, to an extent, the following statement by Mark Williams:

> In the 1950s Charles Brasch and Caxton Press made New Zealand ‘Landfall Country.’

> In the 1980s New Zealand seems to have become anthology country . . . Instead of a hierarchically organised and homogeneous literary culture, we have a democratic plurality . . . The movement from a single high culture grouped around a few eminences - Brasch, Curnow, Sargeson - to a dispersed and heterogeneous literary scene in which authorities, canons and hierarchies are out of favour seems almost complete. (“New Zealand” 132)

Fittingly, Mark Williams's contribution to ‘Caxtonalia’ was to add an anthology to join the pile already accumulating in the early 1980s, although he perhaps had more historical justification (with Caxton's fiftieth anniversary) in contributing to this most recent outbreak of literary hydatids. The Caxton Press anthology was an attempt to sum up this “democratic plurality” represented in the period 1972-86. Williams did this by choosing only poets who
had had a volume of poetry published during that period, and the names range from the well-known like Allen Curnow and Hone Tuwhare to the lesser known like John Newton and Iain Sharp. Williams explained that 1972 was determined as the cut-off because it was the year of Baxter’s death, the year of the first issue of Islands and the appearance on the literary scene of the “lively crowd” (Stead) of young poets, who were to be anthologised themselves in 1973 by Arthur Baysting (Introduction 13-14). Of these factors, the latter seems to be the driving force of the anthology, and again this was reflected in the appearance of the book, with its bright, lively Gregory O’Brien cover and pink title.

The painting used on the cover, New Zealand Landscape with 1957 Chrysler, despite its rural half, is distinctly urban/cosmopolitan and, more particularly, boom-time Auckland in the mid-80s, complete with literary in-jokes. The painting neatly illustrates what Peter and Dianne Beatson have described as the “shift from use to exchange criteria for assessing the social function of art” (246). Reflecting a changing market, the book itself was the epitome of the literary publishing style of the eighties and certainly the nineties: slick, compact and glossy. It has little of the affectations of fine printing, and nor should it in the context of the sort of poetry it represents; however, it was a very well presented collection and, interestingly, the headline for the Christchurch Star review was “Quality is the keynote in Caxton work” (Crean). Although this is a reference to its appearance, the obvious inference to be made is that the poetry contained within must also be of the same “quality.”

Of particular note in respect of this thesis is the absence from the Caxton anthology of Alan

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101 A truck drives by with the inscription, “Stamp out Bare Feet! BAXTER SHOES,” and one of the buildings is owned by “Davis Corp.,” presumably a reference to Leigh Davis. The Chrysler, too, is a reference to Allen Curnow.

102 “This shift from use to exchange criteria for assessing the social function of art has obliged artists and art workers to adopt new practices and new legitimising rhetoric. To gain investment finance from public funding bodies and corporate sponsors, they have had to learn the language of the managerial revolution and perform in accordance with its ethos. Vague appeals to humanist values are replaced by hard-nosed calculations of cost-benefits. Artists have to negotiate not on their own terms but on those laid down by the guardians of the enterprise state and its coffers” (Beatson 246).
Loney, especially as he was mentioned no less than four times in Mark Williams's introduction and published books, through his Hawk Press, for four of the other authors represented. The answer appears to be relatively simple: Loney was asked but did not wish to contribute. However, his reasons for declining are more interesting; he stated in a letter to the editor: "Personally, I require a specific post-modern context for any publication of my work," and he prefaced this by saying, "I can't ever see my wishing to choose where I am published changing." This resoluteness on Loney's part marks the drawing up of theoretical and critical battle lines that look certain to dominate in any healthy future discussions of poetics, but more than this it makes clear Loney's reasons for the establishment of his own press. In order for him to have control over the context of his own work, or more basically, to see his own work into publication, it was necessary that he control the means of production. This, of course, is a familiar scenario: in defiance of a previous tradition, Denis Glover took his poetical manifesto (such that it was) to New Zealand via, initially at least, a single, small treadle platen. He then turned it into the dominant poetic discourse in New Zealand in the 1950s and even 1960s, as well as helping to establish the Caxton Press as the dominant literary publishing house and standard-setter for typographical design.

The discontinuation of Landfall (as a Caxton publication at least) seems to have been met with a collective sigh of relief from the literary community. Despite attempts to revivify it in recent years with more dynamic editorial boards, Landfall was increasingly viewed, both within and without Caxton, as a burden of tradition. The continuity represented by this "punctual planet" was considered important, but Caxton's commitment had exceeded all bounds of reasonableness, and the very unreasonableness of their position seemed to be the basis for Landfall's apparent lack of purpose. D.S. Long encapsulates this situation: "When you become large, substantial, prestigious or whatever, you lose something never to be regained until you go back to 600 copies an issue and setting the contents by hand. No one spends that much time on a poem unless they truly love it" (25). Initially, Caxton contained such dynamic individuals in Denis Glover and Leo Bensemann, as well as providing a focus of atten-
tion for those committed to the arts, and the fruits of their pre-war efforts were indeed remarkable. After the war, their contribution consisted of establishing a pattern of patronage that continues to operate to the present day. In this sense, Caxton can be said to be part of a much larger historical movement that was interested in and committed to the development of a book culture.

Perhaps the final indication of Caxton's withdrawal from book publishing was its dispensing of the services of a full-time book editor at the end of 1995. Such services would in future be contracted out, although on the evidence of their sparse publishing list, it would not be a frequent occurrence. What few books they do publish are confined to international joint publications (such as *Creating Original Hand-knitted Lace*, published in England, the United States, Australia and New Zealand) or what are essentially agreements for vanity publishing (to which there were no longer any reservations about adding their imprint). Bruce Bascand offered the approximate estimate that Caxton's work consisted of ninety-five percent printing and five percent books (about $150,000 out of a total $3 million revenue), noting that the shelf life of a book was now considered to be about three months, compared to eighteen months some ten years earlier. He also somewhat wistfully observed that the mystique of typography had dissipated (presumably with the advent of accessible computer software), a telling admission from a company that had actively cultivated such an aura around its books (Bascand). Both these remarks seem to support the comparable dissipation of a dominant book culture of which Caxton was so much a part.

Alan Loney draws attention to Caxton's "clear participation in a not entirely determinate set of historical events, much of which had nothing to do with who did what at The Caxton Press" ("Something of Moment" 139), and concurs that this is evidenced in its bibliographic codes. In many ways, these codes were the source of the oft-cited 'authoritative' nature of their texts, and so it is little surprise that subsequent presses defined themselves by the extent to which they conformed to, or reacted against the Caxton Press matrix. Although the virtual
withdrawal of Caxton from the publication of New Zealand literature was gloatingly welcomed in some quarters, any corresponding failure to acknowledge Caxton's contribution to the establishment of a publishing infrastructure for New Zealand literature can only be considered spiteful. More specifically, it ensured the evolution of a tradition of publishing indigenous to Christchurch and committed to the promotion of New Zealand literary expression.
THEY BLOW OUR TRUMPET

THE CHRISTCHURCH PRESS: Three excellently produced books . . . The Caxton Press is to be congratulated upon a beautiful piece of work [Hero and Leander].

In appearance and production the book deserves more than the customary last-sentence tribute. It meets the standards which The Caxton Press has taught us to expect [A Book of New Zealand Verse].

The bold and clear printing of The Caxton Press adds greatly to the attractiveness of the book, and moreover sets a high standard in music publication [Four Preludes for Piano].

THE OUTLOOK: Some future day, we prophesy, books printed in New Zealand by The Caxton Press will be eagerly sought by bibliophiles as examples of printing as it ought to be . . . all bear the stamp of a craftsmanship which stands beside the world's best.

THE LISTENER: . . . a format of unobtrusive elegance which, I need hardly say, is a product of The Caxton Press [New Zealand Notables Series One].

. . . . I have admired the work of The Caxton Press and am delighted to see that they make as good a job of their first printing of music as they have done with volumes of prose and verse [Four Preludes for Piano].

The Caxton Press has in a very short time made a name for itself for its very fresh and intelligent work in book production and 'jobbing'.

THE DOMINION: The poems have been beautifully printed by that fine enterprise, The Caxton Press [J. R. Hervey's New Poems].

THE SOUTHLAND TIMES (review by W. Downie Stewart): The printing and make-up of the book reflect great credit on The Caxton Press [Timeless World].

. . . . noted and welcomed by those who have learned to identify the Caxton imprint with high literary and technical standards.

THE OTAGO DAILY TIMES: The Caxton Press, of Christchurch, is undertaking in New Zealand, in producing such refined editions as Milton's Areopagitica and now Marlowe's Hero and Leander, a service that is usually left to the private presses of much more populous countries.

Fig. 15. Promotional flyer for the Caxton Press, Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury.
The whole place is ancient and decrepit, you know. Nineteen-thirties, they tell me. Architectural bedrock in New Zealand. Anyway, printing survives in an atmosphere of decadence. Look at all these modern factories with everything planned to the last detail. Really lavish. And look at the shoddy, uninspired, mediocre, ill-designed, completely nauseating printing that results from it all." (Muir, *Word* 21)

[W]e've only got one thing to sell in this place and that's quality. Any bloody backyard printer in town can undercut us and the big boys can do the work for nothing if they want to get after us, but the day they can turn out a better job than us we've had it." (Muir, *Word* 41)
“a very small fish in a very small pond”

THE PEGASUS PRESS:
from publishing house to public house

Not least among the factors that lead me to view the 1950s as a watershed period for the Caxton Press was the arrival of competition - local competition - in the form of Pegasus Press. In the main this was to consist of a friendly rivalry and even a certain degree of co-operation, but Pegasus, along with Blackwood Paul in the North Island, certainly seemed to curtail Caxton’s dominance in the “small pond” (Muir, Interview) of literary publishing. Correspondingly, other literary centres began to emerge - most notably Wellington - but for the most part, and especially with verse, they still received the assistance of Christchurch publishers. The latter’s attraction probably lay first and foremost in the fact that they would actually publish literature, but the situation as outlined in the epigraph to this chapter seemed to extend beyond the fictional boundaries of Pegasus editor Robin Muir’s novel about publishing, Word for Word. Like Caxton, Pegasus was a printer/publisher, where the former underwrote the latter; however, where Pegasus differed from Caxton was in its approach to publishing: no longer was it viewed simply as some sort of moral/cultural obligation. Instead, it was accorded a degree of professionalism that saw a broadening out of publishing opportunities, and in particular gave authors access to a wider, more international market for their books. In this respect Pegasus can be seen to have responded to worldwide changes in the publishing industry, in contrast to the air of the gentleman publisher thriving in an atmosphere of decadence which still reigned to a large degree in New Zealand.

Although he clearly valued the arts, Albion Wright possessed a less evangelistic attitude than that displayed by previous patrons of the arts, and was concerned with a more worldly return on his investment. He was, therefore, less inclined to indulge the conceits that Gormack, in particular, had highlighted in his lampoons of Caxton Press. “Leaflets, licences, literature,
letterheads, ledger-cards, labels, leaders, legislation, laundry and lottery tickets. It's all printing, isn't it?” (Muir, Word 285). This meditation by Robin Muir's fictional editor seems best to sum up the change in attitude brought about by the availability of Literary Fund monies and the rapidly developing technology that were features in the emergence of Pegasus. Although it is clear that Pegasus was operating in a tradition established by Caxton, their less ambitious literary programme reflects the existence of this more established infrastructure, where publication was less of a cultural imperative.

As has been mentioned, much of this relaxation can be attributed to the establishment of the State Literary Fund in 1946. While Charles Brasch had the luxury of choosing not to apply for funds for the initial issues of Landfall, Albion Wright had no such reservations and Literary Fund subsidies were, from the outset, an integral part of costing calculations and, ultimately, the decision to publish. Considering that Caxton, through Book, had strongly advocated the establishment of some form of State assistance, their reluctance was soon overcome, and, between the two Christchurch publishers, they accounted for thirty percent of the total grants made by the Fund between 1946 and 1970. In light of the Fund's policy change to assist authors more directly, this figure is even more telling (NZ Lit. Fund).

Albion Wright Advertising had been a major client of the Caxton Press almost from its inception,¹ an association no doubt stemming from Albion Wright's close friendship with Denis Glover. By all accounts his advertising agency, allied to the South Island Publicity Association, was a successful venture; however, it would seem that Wright had also long held an ambition² to run a publishing house in order to indulge his own literary interests. This he finally did - with a little help from Glover - issuing an invitation on 20 June 1947, "to assist the very young

¹ Albion Wright's first transaction with the Caxton Press was recorded in their ledgers on 9 July 1935 (Caxton).
² Bob Gormack notes in The Nag's Head Press: An Outline History and Descriptive Checklist of Publications to June 1992: “Had he [Albion Wright] not, in his great determination to rival his friend Glover as a publisher/printer, offered us at some stage to buy us out at the Raven Press?” (28). Robin Muir also recalled that the possibility of joining Caxton and expanding its printing plant had been discussed (Interview).
Pegasus prepare for his first flight in the typographical air” (Pegasus). The press, Robin Muir later elaborated, was named after Pegasus Bay and the Canterbury survey ship of the same name, as well as for its alliteration (Interview). Glover, never one to miss an opportunity for word play, dubbed Wright “Poseidon,” not only because of its nautical associations (Glover and Wright used to sail together in the yacht Pastime), but also because Poseidon was said to be the father of Pegasus (DG-AW 14/6/76). As mentioned above, Glover’s involvement in the establishment of Pegasus Press was not confined to bestowing soubriquets; he provided valuable typographical advice, made all the more so by the fact that he was still working for what was, technically, the opposition. As Dennis Donovan pointedly put it: “Alb was accepting that ... knowing damn well that he was gaining and we were losing” (Interview 24/8). Eventually, when Glover was fired from Caxton in 1951, he was officially taken on board at Pegasus as typographical adviser, until Wright, too, was forced to fire his friend.

Glover doubtless added considerable colour to Pegasus’s début and the company benefited from his experience, but, on its own account, Pegasus Press had a most promising start. Their first coup was the publication of the Canterbury Centennial Programme in 1950, which was obtained through the Junior Chamber of Commerce, following a similar book Albion Wright Advertising produced for Otago in 1948 (Muir, Letter 5/1/96). Robin Muir recalled that this sold out two editions of 20 000 in a matter of weeks - a publisher’s dream, even by today’s standards - and with the proceeds from this remarkable success, two second-hand printing machines were bought. As regards the impact of these events, Muir was unequivocal: “[i]t was really from the success of the Centenary that made it possible for us to get Pegasus going” (Interview). The new machines were then housed in the original site of the press in Oxford Terrace, near St. Michael’s church. Robert Gormack, who joined Pegasus in 1949 as a compositor, pro-

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3 Nevertheless, Albion Wright Advertising continued to operate in order “to pay the rent” (Muir, Interview), the printing of publicity brochures providing a steadier income than publishing ever would.
vides a lively description of this building (in which he also managed to publish the second and third volumes of his parody, *Bookie* - see chapter four):

The factory plan was uncomplicated - machines downstairs, type frames and cases upstairs. There were two machines, both virtually new, a Furnival cylinder and a British-made Thompson platen. With the stone upstairs, formes had to be hoisted up and down the old angled stairway . . . . For the outfit as a whole the major consideration was that there was no on-site manager. Personal and group responsibility was by no means ignored but printers throughout history have not always been slaves to the 'boss's time'. Of a morning we might find ourselves, machinists and all, warming up with a few overs of pingpong-ball cricket, the bat a length of wooden em-rule or furniture - a watch being kept for Albion Wright's car, as he sometimes called in at an executive hour on his way to Hereford Street. Albion, a keen sailor and ex-navy man, believed in running 'a happy ship' and the team really respected him accordingly, i.e. the work still got done. (Nag's 29-30)

Not only does this seem to confirm the fictional observations made in the epigraph to this chapter, but also the perception of Albion Wright, initially at least, as something of a gentleman publisher.

This is not to suggest that Albion Wright was some sort of aloof patron of the arts, unwilling to get his hands dirty in the production process. Rather, as has already been mentioned, he ran a successful advertising agency for over a decade before embarking on his publishing venture, and during that time developed considerable skills in commercial layout and design. (This was attested to by Bob Gormack, who related that he had learnt many of his editorial skills from Wright and that they had proved particularly invaluable in his later employment with Whitcombe and Tombs [Interview 1/2].) Needless to say, his introduction to printing came through his old friend Denis Glover's own Caxton Press, which, whether one was interested in printing or not, was reputed to be a most convivial meeting place (a factor not overlooked in Gormack's parody, *Bookie*). However, John Drew, Glover's early partner in the Caxton Press,
recalled showing Wright (and other customers, it would seem) how to feed the platen press:

"Albion was naturally a highly able man and we really taught him to be a printer to the extent that he soon set up his own printing and publishing firm under the style of the Pegasus Press." Whatever fundamentals were learnt at Caxton, it is clear that technical knowledge was scarce and much, if not most, of their expertise - as was the case with Caxton - was acquired as they went along, through trial and error.

Robin Muir, Albion Wright's partner from the first in Pegasus Press, was familiar with the world of printing: his family involvement with newspapers dated back to 1840, and he also knew Leo Bensemann, John Drew and Dennis Donovan and others associated with the Caxton Press from his student days at Canterbury University. It was in fact Donovan who introduced Muir to Albion Wright, and this led to a job with Wright's advertising agency before both left for war service (Wright in the Navy and Muir the Air Force). After the war, lacking capital but considering their mutual friendships, they discussed the possibility of joining forces with Caxton, but, ultimately, this idea came to nothing.

Although Pegasus was initially started without outside capital, Wright and Muir eventually had to seek necessary venture capital through shareholders. This was not as difficult as one might have expected, as Muir explained: "Fortunately there were people interested in books and good printing and they weren't madly worried if they didn't get any great profit. In some years we paid good profits, but on the whole we didn't try to" (Interview). This would suggest that Pegasus's financial backers consisted more of bibliophiles than bankers, and that the venture was seen more as a literary than a financial investment. This was in turn reflected

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4 Muir received his Diploma of Journalism, as well as graduating B.A. in English and History, from Canterbury University. Muir recalled that, upon starting work at The Press, Allen Curnow commented to him: "Oh, you're one of those Muirs who wants to cover himself in printer's ink" (Muir, Interview). (This is something of a telling remark and gives some indication of a supercilious attitude common among poets of this period, as well as demonstrating a virtual disregard for the technicalities and complexity of typography and the other associated processes of printing.)

5 Muir had been editor of the capping magazine, which was printed at the Caxton Press (Muir, Interview).
in the modestly stated objective of the press: “The policy of the Pegasus Press is to publish New Zealand authors in a format and design, which in E.H. McCormick’s words are ‘not a reproach to their country of origin.’” This statement is in marked contrast to similar releases from the Caxton Press, which were generally more assertive, and freely employed superlatives. Although this was in some part due to Glover’s extravagant personality, it could also be attributed to the continuity of the demanding “Brasch” approach to literature, in which uncompromisingly, and perhaps unrealistically high standards were simply expected, with scant regard for economic viability.

By contrast the objectives of Pegasus were positively unassuming, although this is not to suggest that Pegasus publications were simply utilitarian. Their familiarity with Caxton’s approach no doubt taught them the importance of high quality presentation, both in terms of packaging for an exclusive market (as well as opening up the tiny poetry market to bibliophiles), and its ability to attract business for the truly utilitarian side of the business - printing. However, maintaining a prestige standard of book work carried with it an obligation, and printing, too, was not without its standards, as Robin Muir explained: “I suppose we were a bit . . . [sic] of intellectual snobbery or something, but we used to be quite arrogant and say ‘that’s just not good enough.’ People used to get cross about these things, but there again we found it very difficult to shake off responsibility” (Interview). Perhaps another way in which this responsibility manifested itself was in the encouragement offered by Wright and Muir to Butch Steele to set up a Monotype typesetting company - a venture supported by Caxton Press and other printers in Christchurch - as well as encouraging the local Linotype operators to buy book faces. Although MonoSet was later swallowed up by Whitcombe and Tombs, its availability was not only of benefit to Pegasus Press but would have contributed to a climate of

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6 This quotation is from a typed summary of the press’s achievements and objectives, written, presumably at the Pegasus Press, about 1951 (Pegasus, Press).

7 Muir put it simply: “Good printing is good advertising” (Personal Interview).

8 Glover always lamented the lack of quality Monotype book faces, especially after having seen what was available in England during the war (see chapter two).
greater awareness of typographical possibilities and to an increase in the overall standard of printing in the region. *Mine Eyes Dazzle*\(^9\) was to prove a testament to the efficacy of their investment, but it also ensured the continuation of a certain printing style, particularly for poetry, that had emerged via the Caxton Press.

The first book proper (the photography book *Dunedin from the Air* had been printed for them by Caxton) to appear under the Pegasus imprint was one of many historical works that the publishing house would produce. Douglas Cresswell's *Early New Zealand Families* appeared in September 1949, in an edition of 800 copies (of which 750 were for sale). Sales were so good that it was sold out by 1951, necessitating a second, revised edition in 1952. Somewhat unusually for a New Zealand publisher, their second book was a dramatic work,\(^10\) simply entitled *Four Plays*, by Claude Evans. However, it was a small volume of poetry that was dated the same year as Evans's collection that drew the most attention in literary circles. Alistair Campbell's first book of poetry, *Mine Eyes Dazzle*, appeared in an elegant octavo volume set in Poliphilus and Blado Italic, printed on hand-made paper and bound in dark blue buckram. Containing what are arguably some of Campbell’s best poems, the volume achieved a refined mellifluence, which was masterfully reflected in its limited edition presentation. This apparently seamless concordance of form and content was also the epitome of the modernist concerns heralded by Caxton. However, as both a flagship for its quality book production and as evidence of the sincerity of Pegasus's intention to become involved in the publication of New Zealand literature, *Mine Eyes Dazzle* could not have been more well chosen.

To accord a first-time author such strikingly attractive presentation was a particularly bold step, but enthusiastic reviews like that of Louis Johnson in *The Dominion* justified their faith in Campbell (and in their own publishing skills): “At a time when poetry neither pays the writer nor profits the publisher, the appearance of this book is more than a brave publishing

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\(^9\) Gormack recalled Glover making special mention of the Poliphilus type matrices (which were a feature of *Mine Eyes Dazzle*), which ended up in the hands of Whitcombe and Tombs (Nag’s 61).

\(^10\) Plays required more complicated, and therefore more time-consuming typesetting.
venture. It's something of a minor miracle. May both Campbell and the Pegasus Press flourish and their works abound!” Gratifyingly for Pegasus, Johnson's enthusiasm was shared by the book-buying public and the limited edition of 300 numbered and dated copies of Mine Eyes Dazzle sold out “in a surprisingly short time” (Pegasus, Press summary), to be followed by the publication of a further two - albeit less exclusive - editions. No doubt a factor in its favourable sales reception was the regional content of the verse, centring as it did on the Otago landscape, but another commentator - Allen Curnow in a review for the Press - focussed on the regional significance of the physical book itself: “It is worth noting that a second small publishing house opens its list with this volume. Christchurch is the one New Zealand centre where small well-established firms have produced such books in a format and design which - in E.H. McCormick's words - are not a reproach to their country of origin.” Curnow's comments suggest the recognition of the emergence of a tradition of quality publishing in Canterbury, and far from being a reproach, Mine Eyes Dazzle was in fact a credit to New Zealand, comparing very favourably with its English counterparts.

Basil Dowling, by contrast, expressed reservations about elitism in a review of Mine Eyes Dazzle in Landfall: “I cannot help wondering whether a limited edition, at fifteen shillings a copy, was justified with a first collection of verse by a writer almost unknown, who needs most to be read as widely as possible” (244). Although a cheaper edition followed, answering this criticism, Dowling's comments seem to echo to a remarkable degree Caxton's early stated objectives, and it would suggest that print quality was not the only thing Caxton had “taught us to expect” (McCormick, Review). Aside from the fact that Pegasus's limited edition of 300 was at least double the number of copies of many of the early Caxton publications, Dowling reveals a commonly held but simplistic belief in the publisher's duty to act as evangelist for New Zealand literature. The assumption that the presumed benefit of the literature should outweigh all other considerations is indicative of the extent to which art was perceived as

11 These were “to make available, as widely and therefore as reasonably as possible, what prose and poetry the directors of the press have considered of interest and value” (Caxton, Catalogue Feb. '41, 7).
Fig. 17. Title-page for original 1950 limited edition (top) and 1951 Pegasus Poets edition of *Mine Eyes Dazzle*. 
having a special status, beyond the experience that had occasioned it. This conceit was, in part, cultivated by the Caxton Press, who, by insisting that typography was a subsidiary art and could be rendered neutral, created the impression that it was a simple conduit and mere facilitator of great art. Such a position takes little account of the many factors that enter into publishing decisions, such as, in the case of *Mine Eyes Dazzle*, Pegasus’s desire to establish itself as a printer and publisher of high quality, or to actively market their protégé author. Whether others in the series would have benefited from such elite presentation is open to question, but the fact that the first edition of *Mine Eyes Dazzle* sold out in such a short time was in sharp contrast to the other poets in the cheap series.

Nevertheless, the second edition of *Mine Eyes Dazzle* was important in affirming a commitment to New Zealand literature, for it was - wisely it would seem - chosen as the first in the Pegasus Poets series of cheap, accessible volumes of poetry. With support from the Literary Fund, these retailed at a mere 3/6 (the same price as the Gollancz ‘cheap editions’ of the 1940s), and although they appeared in the somewhat drab, uniform limp covers (see Figure 17), containing the archivally unsound combination of newsprint held together by staples, they nevertheless gave authors the opportunity to present a single, coherent selection of their poetry in what was essentially an accessible format. The series featured six authors in total, and the other titles included (in order of appearance) Hubert Witheford’s *The Falcon Mask*, Louis Johnson’s *The Sun Among the Ruins*, Pat Wilson’s *The Bright Sea*, and Keith Sinclair’s *Songs for a Summer and other poems*; Mary Stanley’s *Starveling Year* was the last to appear, in 1953. Despite the low price, editions were restricted to around 350 copies (by way of comparison, a popular guidebook, *The Southern Alps*, sold at a similar price, but was printed in an edition of 3000), but even these small numbers - except in Campbell’s case - took a long time to shift, with Sinclair’s volume taking six, Stanley’s nine and Johnson’s eleven years to sell out (Pegasus, Publication). This seems to imply that, despite Pegasus’s worthy democratic intentions, the reading ‘masses’ were not particularly interested in poetry.
The same lack of interest in their literary activities could not be said of Caxton, however, who, through Charles Brasch, took note of their new, cheap competition. In a letter of April 1953, Brasch took Leo Bensemann to task for the high price of some Caxton publications: “with Pegasus poets at 3/6 I wonder if you won’t need to cut down drastically on cost of production, or else - like Pegasus - apply for a grant from the Lit. Fund” (11/4/53). Brasch then went on to compare prices with English volumes of poetry which sold for between 7/6 and 10/6 - a comparison very favourable to the Pegasus booklets. Louis Johnson, too, confirmed the competitive attraction of Pegasus publication, the advantages of which he summarised simply as “speedier for one, prettier for another” (LJ-AW 1/6/52).

Louis Johnson’s involvement in the Pegasus Poets series extended beyond the submission of his manuscript for The Sun Among the Ruins in September 1950 (LJ-AW 17/7/51). It would appear that he had acted as something of a ghost editor - in consultation with Albion Wright - arranging authors and receiving manuscripts for the series. Two authors who were considered but did not actually appear as part of the series were Ruth Dallas, who was “interested but cautious” (LJ-AW 1/7/51), and Lyster Paul. It was the latter who provides an insight into the purpose of the series; in suggesting him as a possible candidate for inclusion, Johnson wrote to Wright: “If part of the work of the series is to open up the breathing holes for younger writers, I think this [Lyster] could well be considered” (LJ-AW 23/7/51). However, in the final choice Paul was replaced by the more conservative Hubert Witheford.

Despite this rejection, Johnson’s confidence in his own judgement and abilities was undiminished, as was reflected in the letter accompanying his second manuscript: “I think you should give it careful consideration simply because it contains much that is new and could prove valuable in a future assessment of New Zealand verse - that so many of the contents have been favourably received by discerning editors” (LJ-AW 17/7/51). This spirited assertion, along with his assistance in preparing the Pegasus Poets series, must have gained him the confidence of Albion Wright, because, arguing that it would help to “push along” (LJ-AW 17/7/51) sales of
Sun Among the Ruins, he managed to convince Wright to publish the manuscript under the title of Roughshod Among the Lilies. This allowed him to become perhaps the only New Zealand poet to have two volumes of poetry published in the same year, by the same publisher. The extreme rarity of such an event is probably less attributable to any especial poetic talent possessed by Johnson than to his access to publishing opportunities, and, to varying degrees, this was no doubt true of other poets of this period.

The publication of Roughshod Among the Lilies also pleased Johnson because it coincided with the appearance of the first issue of his “brainchild,” 12 the Poetry Yearbook. He felt that the timing was fortuitous in that readers of the new poetry annual would be curious as to the editor’s own poetry, “[m]ore so since I have (wisely, I think) contented myself with having but one poem of my own in the Yearbook” (LJ-AW 23/7/51). With poetry anthologies boasting something of a tradition of generous representation for their editor’s work, this certainly appeared to be a genuine exercise of restraint on the part of Johnson, but one made with an obvious luxury of choice. Although it may have been exercised with regards to his own work, this choice was not, Johnson perceived, so readily available in his position as editor under publishers A.H. and A.W. Reed. In something of a prelude to the events that were to shroud the final issue of this “heroic venture” (Evans 162) in 1964, Johnson took exception to the publisher’s “literary Presbyterianism,” something he expanded on in a letter to Wright in April 1952: “The whole subject of poetry embarrassed him. He is an ‘old-fashioned publisher’, in his own words; and had hoped that Yearbook would contain a higher content of old bushy stuff, Mum’s sentimentality at the kitchen sink and homilies on Christian life” (LJ-AW 9/4/52). In essence, Reed considered some of the poems contained in the Yearbook to be subversive, and it seemed natural that Johnson, rejecting any interference with his editorial responsibilities and considering his previous association with Wright, would turn to the Pegasus Press.

12 Johnson was unequivocal (and perhaps a little over-protective): “Yearbook happens to be my brainchild - a fact which is recognised by both Reed and the Lit. Fund - and I think therefore that I am entitled to take it where the purpose for which it is intended can be best served - in this case, Pegasus Press” (LJ-AW 9/4/52).
While he maintained a strict view on the role of the editor alone selecting the work, Johnson outlined his proposal to Wright: “The editorial plans I have for Yearbook can make it the most significant thing in New Zealand letters. With your superior printing taste this will be much more readily achieved than with Reed” (LJ-AW 9/4/52). It is very apparent from this last statement that Pegasus had quickly established itself in the Caxton tradition of high quality printing, and that, by contrast, he considered Reeds to be almost in the “shoddy, uninspired, mediocre, ill-designed, completely nauseating printing” (Word 21) category elaborated in Robin Muir’s novel. Furthermore, although there is no doubting the earnestness with which Johnson undertook his task as editor, his statement demonstrates a clear understanding of the materialness of Pegasus’s “superior printing taste” if their efforts were to be taken seriously: it was not simply enough to assemble a collection of “high quality” poets, they had to be seen to be - typographically - a collection of “high quality” poets. At a time when most publishing decisions, at least as far as poetry was concerned, were based on the somewhat arbitrary attribution of poetic worth by the publishing house’s editor(s), with little or no regard for the expected number of sales, it is not surprising that the presentation of a book might be taken as a good indicator of the commitment of the publisher to a writer’s work.

Glover’s assessment of the first issue of Landfall as “fine reading for a retired canon” (DG-CB 5/5/47) highlights the esoteric nature of the journal under Brasch’s uncompromising editorial policy. Ironically, Louis Johnson’s more inclusive approach to the New Zealand Poetry Yearbook seemed to draw more criticism, but he was astute enough to realise that literary controversy was tantamount to free publicity and, at times, deliberately courted it. In his willingness to ruffle feathers, Johnson appeared less doctrinaire and more aware of the complex relations inherent in such an undertaking. Despite the conciliatory mood of the 1951
Writers' Conference, he understood the importance of a platform if a younger generation of writers (epitomised by the “Wellington group”) were to challenge the previous generation's orthodoxy. Curnow's 1945 anthology, which was an assessment of the local poetry scene essentially formulated pre-war, and delayed by international events, was an obvious target.

His roles of editor, both of the Yearbook and unofficially at Pegasus, and critic, as well as his failed attempts to bypass booksellers reveal the complex, but sometimes incestuous social network involved in the production of literature in New Zealand. This parochialism was particularly apparent at the 1951 Writers' Conference, where the significance of Baxter's talk, “Recent Trends in New Zealand Poetry,” seemed to overshadow a national state of emergency and some of the most repressive censorship laws ever passed in this country. However, Johnson's internationalist outlook at least offered the suggestion of a broadening of perspective, not simply in that it was less insular but that it reflected what was a more confident and outward-looking post-war New Zealand society. In the wake of the upheavals of the war, local businesses were looking to expand their traditional markets, and Pegasus's activities during this period exemplified this mood.

Locally, Johnson had established something of a Wellington connection for the Pegasus Press, and he strengthened this association by setting himself up as their unofficial “distributing depot” (LJ-AW 9/4/52) in the capital, taking upwards of 200 volumes of the Pegasus Poets series to sell there. He also arranged publicity, bookshop displays and public readings in an attempt to apply the same democratic principles he brought to his role as editor of the Yearbook, providing an opportunity for as wide a variety of people as possible to involve themselves in literature (LJ-AW 21/4/52). However, his own undoubted enthusiasm for poetry was not always matched by that of “our morbid book-buying public who finger through Parsons' shelves like a morticians' gathering at Belsen” (LJ-DG 8/3/52).

His response to this perceived solemnity was a collection of poems by himself, Baxter and
Anton Vogt (all very much part of the "Wellington group" of poets) in a volume that carried this disclaimer: "The poets in this book are entirely real and unimaginable and bear no resemblance to any other living persons" (1). In much the same tradition as the Glover/Fairburn satirical collaborations, Poems Unpleasant appeared in 1952 and, largely through Johnson’s unorthodox efforts, had sold out by 1954 (Pegasus, Publications). In a letter to Glover, Johnson explained the choice of title: "Such a title may break the hoodoo on any but bright, sunny, cheerful titles which our poets seem forced to commit themselves to by our robust publishers . . . Blasphemy, like fuck and shit, is not to be put on paper either, so you see, that limits us to simple unpleasantness" (8/3/52). Such disregard for conventional niceties suggests a considerable degree of confidence on his part, and this extended to his decision not to sell all of the 400 copies of Poems Unpleasant to trade, but instead to sell as many as possible through public poetry readings.

He had already had some success with this method with the Pegasus Poets series, and more especially with Campbell, whose "Elegy" had been set to music by Douglas Lilburn and was often performed on these occasions. In one reading in April, Johnson sold thirteen Poets (six of Campbell’s, five of Johnson’s, and one each for Witheford and Wilson) [LJ-AW 25/4/52]. Although these were not especially large numbers, this sales method represented a 33 1/3% saving as there was no bookseller’s commission. As the book did not qualify for a Literary Fund grant a further deal was worked out whereby, in order to obtain a realistic retail price of 8/6 for the non-trade sales (10/- retail), Pegasus was prepared to cut its margins if the authors would accept royalties of £3.3.0. each (plus three free copies) and sell at least 100 copies at 1/6 profit (that is, seven shillings to the authors) [AW-LJ 8/5/52]. Although this may be seen as shifting the burden from the publisher to the author, it must be remembered that whatever minimal return such a limited - in number and audience - book would generate for the publisher would only be realised if and when the entire edition was sold. A compromise such as this demonstrated a recognition by at least some authors that much of what publishers did was largely produced pro bono. In fact, such an offer was considerably more generous than
some of those offered to authors of historical works, whose books tended to be consistent, if slow, sellers; they were often asked to bear the risk of a book by way of a personal subsidy or "grant" that would usually be repaid if the edition sold out.

Initial sales of *Poems Unpleasant* were encouraging and this was particularly gratifying for Johnson who wrote excitedly to Wright on 1 June 1952: "My earlier surmise - that one book helps to sell another, seems at last to be coming right"; and he went on to say that *Poems Unpleasant* was selling "exceptionally well" at Whitcombe and Tombs. Two months later, after a bad review by D.M. Anderson in *The Listener* coupled with poor sales at the Teachers' College readings and bookshops (Whitcombe and Tombs, after good initial sales, had sold twenty of its twenty-four books, but Modern Books had sold only six of twenty-four), his enthusiasm had waned somewhat (LJ-AW 2/8/52). By December, Albion Wright wrote to Johnson, readily agreeing with his request to sell to trade, and summarily concluding that "College and Poetry Readings sales cannot supplant bookshop sales" (22/12/52). Once this decision had been made, the remaining copies were sold by April 1954, but obviously with no profit for the publisher (Pegasus, Publications).

This experience did little to change Johnson's attitude, and, despite his close involvement in publishing, his priorities remained literature first, and sales second. This meant that, although his value as an ambassador for the Pegasus Press can not be underestimated, his perception of the publisher's role was somewhat antithetical: he considered it the publisher's privilege to publish a volume of poetry and not the poet's. His ambiguous role was exemplified by his somewhat naïve enthusiasm for a translation of Rilke's elegies by Peter Dronke. Johnson wrote to Wright with seemingly ingenuous benevolence: "Dronke has now agreed,

13 Another financially foolhardy venture for which Johnson acted as an 'agent' for Pegasus in Wellington was the literary journal *Arachne*. An unpaid debt of £86.11.6 concluded this arrangement with Pegasus, prompting Wright to remark caustically: "Someone had better eat that spider" (AW-LJ 23/5/52). Although undeniably generous towards literature, Albion Wright was still a businessman and, as such, always assessed projects for the possibility of a profit at most, and always for the absolute minimisation of loss.
after careful schooling by me in the advantages of Pegasus publication to give you first option" (1/6/52). Undeniably of literary interest, the book was never published by Pegasus, no doubt because of it restricted appeal in New Zealand at that time. Although Johnson was far from alone in his view, the reality was that, due to the limited market for poetry, any especially "privileged" publisher would end up going the way of Arachne, a fate which benefited the author not at all.

It is quite clear that Johnson's expectations of what could be achieved in New Zealand literature were often more idealistic than practical. His desire for New Zealand poets to be part of some kind of international community of authors was reflected in most of his literary endeavours. On a personal level he insisted on having review copies of his own books sent to literary periodicals in the United States, Britain and Australia such as Poetry Quarterly, Poetry Chicago and Southerly, but he also felt that his own effort and vision should be shared by publishers: "I still contend that, just as New Zealand writers have had to look outwards towards wider traditions than a local school of thought would provide, so, in time, must the New Zealand publisher find or make the means to export his goods" (LJ-AW 2/8/52). The implication here is that publishers had somehow failed to follow through on their commitment to New Zealand poets, and that they lacked the courage and vision of their literary protégés to break free of restrictive local practices and look to their overseas counterparts. According to this logic, New Zealand poets were, by taking part in some kind of Esperanto poetic register, precluded from any blame in the lack of overseas sales of New Zealand books; publishers, by contrast, were failing to establish contacts with receptive - albeit vague - international markets. If this was accepted it followed that if other countries showed corresponding per capita interest in New Zealand books, the potential sales to foreign markets would be very substantial. However, this somewhat shaky logic did not take into account New Zealand's disproportionately high book sales (such that a country such as England printed similar numbers of an edition despite their considerably larger population base), as well as New Zealand import and export restrictions, and the high cost of establishing overseas distribution networks. Even had these
difficulties been overcome, the overriding fact was that poetry was rarely, if ever, a profitable venture. It would seem then that if there was ever any obligation owed, it was by the author to the publisher. Wright’s typically pragmatic response to this oblique criticism of Pegasus’s efforts at promoting its authors overseas was simply that there was little worthwhile demand for New Zealand books overseas (19/8/52).

However misdirected, Johnson’s comments were to prove, to some extent, prophetic. By extending its literary net to Wellington, Pegasus differed considerably from Caxton which, as Gormack so accurately satirised in his portrayal of the brooding, introspective “Caxtonites,” centred its literary activities on its premises in Victoria Street, Christchurch. In adopting Johnson as their unofficial literary spokesman, Pegasus could have been said to be aligning itself with the internationalist outlook advocated by him, but, although it is true that Johnson exhorted fellow poets to look outwards to an international audience, New Zealand industry - publishing included - was itself emerging from post-war restrictions to face a more open, less colonially biased world market. The availability of such a market meant that higher print runs could be contemplated (with a consequent lower cost and retail price) as overruns from the domestic market would have more chance of being absorbed elsewhere. Although this strategy had little impact insofar as the meagre print runs of poetry were concerned, its possibilities were not lost on Albion Wright, particularly in terms of fiction.

The fifties were to see Wright explore, if not exploit, these new opportunities in a way that marked it as more progressive than its conservative Christchurch rival, Caxton. However, the extent to which the national/ international debate was split between Caxton and Pegasus demonstrated the extent to which the support of a publishing house was pivotal in establishing a credible platform from which to launch a poetical manifesto. Although much of this debate was carried on in the journals and little reviews of the day, a more permanent rallying point was required, one which the publishing houses of Caxton and Pegasus, by adopting something of a house style, admirably fulfilled. To what extent either firm actively directed, or
simply reflected a poetic movement is difficult to ascertain, but it is clear that the support of a publishing house provided invaluable continuity.

Although the two Christchurch publishing houses were to maintain a friendly rivalry, it was no coincidence that early Pegasus publications (with the exception of the Pegasus Poets series) were modelled on the same English private press design favoured by Caxton, and utilised similarly high typographical standards. In part this was due to the more freely available Monotype book faces, but the coincidence of Denis Glover's involvement in the initial setting up of Pegasus Press cannot be ignored, especially as at least two books directly bear the distinctive stamp of Glover's typography. With his enthusiasm for typography, the opportunity to establish a new publishing house must have held great appeal for Glover, and his long-standing friendship with Albion Wright made him an obvious choice as typographical adviser, despite his working for what was technically the opposition. With his publishing experience and the printing contacts gained overseas, the advice Glover gave from at least as early as 1949 would have been invaluable to the tyro Pegasus Press.

The extent to which Glover influenced decisions is unclear, but one can detect his hand in projects as diverse as a broadsheet struck off at the Pegasus Press to mark the New Zealand Writers' Conference in 1951 (see Figure 18) and an elegant commemorative history. The former is more noteworthy for its "Glover-esque" humour than for any special typographic treatment. It contained a list of remarks attributed to various participants in the conference - including Glover - with what, one suspects, are varying degrees of justification. The comment attributed to Albion Wright - "Why give it away. Charge for it" - was perhaps inspired by the price of sixpence for the single page broadsheet, but Wright's supposed parsimony was often the object of Glover's humour. When one considers the subsequent losses incurred by

14 "New Zealand consists of four centres held together by railway lines with twenty minute stops for refreshments." This comment perhaps could be taken to explain the enigmatic cover of The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse (1985).
G. R. GILBERT: It's an excellent opening.

FRANK SARGENTON: In the French translation of my book the word 'pig islander' stumped the translator. She rendered it 'insular brute'. How bloody true.

CHARLES BRASCH: The best thing the State Literary Fund did was to send Allen Curnow overseas.

ALLEN CURNOW: Alright! You make the jokes Mr Chairman and we'll laugh.

WINSTON RHODES: The Gods have fallen.

ALAN MULGAN: The bloody Boers.

H. H. TOMBS: Ladies and Gentlemen.

ANTON VOGT: I never listen to the radio unless I am on the air.

DENIS GLOVER: New Zealand consists of four centres held together by railway lines with twenty minute stops for refreshments.

PAT LAWLOR: More spirit is needed.

WINSTON RHODES: The Gods have fallen.

O. N. GILLESPIE: The bloody bores.

KENDRICK SMITHYMAN: I've got to go to town.

PROFESSOR ARNOLD WALL: I can't say I've read any.

LOUIS JOHNSON: The only witty things I say are about other people.

G. R. GILBERT: Wonderful what they do when you prod them into it.

C. R. ALLEN: We've got to give them better than they deserve.

PROFESSOR GARRETT: Contrary to popular belief all University professors are not Dull Dicks.

W. H. OLIVIER: The bloody bores.

HELEN GARRETT: I do not approve of the New Zealand intellectuals.

WINSTON RHODES: The Gods have fallen.

MRS H. SCOTT: Charles disapproves of me.

ALAN BRASSINGTON: Henry Ford was wrong. Everything is bunk.

WINSTON RHODES: The Gods have fallen.

VANCE PALMER: I see before me a great deal of poets.

PATRICK McCARTHY: This beard is a symbol of freedom from ingrowing hairs.

LEO BENSEMANN: I haven't been to the more serious discussions, only to the evening ones.

ROBIN MUIR: With a hand grenade now I could wipe out New Zealand Literature for the next twenty years.

IAN DONNELLY: They complain that my voice is too noisy.

JOHANNA C. ANDERSEN: Mind you there's a lot of good stuff in it but it's not poetry.

ANTON VOGT: I go away when Donnelly talks, but I still hear him through the bloody wall.

C. W. COLLINS: Good old lad, we catalogue it.

R. M. CHAPMAN: I'm working out an unguarded remark.

ALBION WRIGHT: Why give it away. Charge for it.

DENIS GLOVER: They found it kauri and left it Pinex.

JAMIES BANTER: Honest Syd Holland is no man to stickle.

When whatlies raise the hammer and stickle

He'll use against them though Jock Barnes may clamber

The Farmers' sickle, the Police State's hammer.

—You'd better wipe that.

PRICE SIXPENCE

Fig. 18. Broadsheet for 1951 Writer's Conference, Caxton Press Library, Christchurch.
Pegasus in publishing literature, one can almost detect a note of wishful thinking in Robin Muir's somewhat drastic speculation: "With a hand grenade now I could wipe out New Zealand literature for the next twenty years." With the presence of the likes of Allen Curnow, Charles Brasch, Frank Sargeson, James K. Baxter and Kendrick Smithyman, this would almost certainly have been the result of such an unlikely event.15

That Christchurch should have been chosen as the site for the first Writers' Conference in fifteen years was apposite in a number of ways. Although individual writers were spread around the country, both Caxton and Pegasus Presses were based there, and it therefore had an almost unchallengeable claim as New Zealand's literary publishing hub. In terms of regional rivalries it could be said that Christchurch tended to be home to the old literary guard - that group of writers who had begun their rise to prominence about the time of the last Writers' Conference. However, whatever the regional origins of individual authors, actual publications were generally routed through Christchurch's publishing houses. Although this should have conferred neutral status on the venue, the Conference was the scene for heated debate and, in particular, the emergence of a division between an older and a younger generation of writers.16 The latter's case was compellingly put forward by Baxter in his speech, "Recent Trends in New Zealand Literature," and, despite being relatively moderate in approach, was in sharp contrast with Pat Lawlor's somewhat more reactionary speech. Baxter conveyed the sense of a gradual transition, and although he made note of the catalytic nature of Arachne for Wellington poets and gave Campbell's Mine Eyes Dazzle special mention, he praised Landfall's stability of "sober critical liberalism" (8). In retrospect, Baxter can be seen to have had a foot in both camps and, as a representative of a younger generation, he appears to have been something of a conciliatory choice.

15 All, however, was not blissfully peaceful at the conference and it did not present anything like a unanimously united front of writers. The storm of protest surrounding Pat Lawlor's conservative speech was more typical of this unique gathering. (See page 156 of The Penguin History of New Zealand Literature.)
16 See chapter seven of The Penguin History of New Zealand Literature for further elaboration of this division.
Louis Johnson, by contrast, favoured an energetic rejection of the previous generation's values and this elicited the following caustic comment concerning Baxter's selection:

why the hell Jim, with his old man's heart, should be asked to discuss the newer and younger poets, is beyond me. He tries too hard to look like the venereal King Arthur bestowing the accolade; and such a sight presented by a younger man reminds me of (Purely imagined) the mummy of Rameses I making love to a chorine. (LJ-AW 26/8/52)

Johnson obviously saw himself in the vanguard of a new - and not a developing - poetic movement and as such it made sense that he attach himself to a new publishing house, especially one that was ostensibly in opposition to the Caxton Press. It seems unlikely that Wright or anyone else at Pegasus picked out Louis Johnson as some kind of literary protégé, but rather that Johnson simply demanded their attention by his dogged determination to follow through on his poetical beliefs. Whatever the reason, the result was the same: Pegasus came to be aligned with a newer breed of writers while Caxton became increasingly to be associated with an older generation.

As has already been pointed out, the Canterbury Centennial Year was a profitable one for the Pegasus Press: not only did it give the firm a sound financial base from which to operate but it also helped to define the sphere of the company's operations over the next few decades. Although it had always been Albion Wright's fixed intention to publish literature - and rival his old friend Denis Glover - the local history proved to be a useful flagship for the press's endeavours. The Journal of Edward Ward was the first example of the sort of fine press work and attention to detail that was to characterise their histories. The book detailed life on board the first of Canterbury's "First Four Ships," the Charlotte Jane, as well as life in the new settlement. It seems clear that it was intended to be released as part of the centenary celebrations, but its publication was for some reason delayed and it did not appear until June 1951. Nevertheless, it had been accorded special treatment in royal octavo, with two-colour title-page and
endpaper maps, and Bob Gormack related the “privilege”\textsuperscript{17} of paging it up in the 13/14-point Poliphilus and Blado Italic.\textsuperscript{18} This setting, Muir’s first major historical, editorial and design undertaking (Muir, Letter 5/1/96), was “almost the first use for a book in New Zealand of those distinctive Monotype faces” (Gormack, Nag’s 33).

Despite the quality presentation and typographical innovation, sales did not meet expectations, and a reissue with a changed jacket was necessary before the entire edition of 1550 copies\textsuperscript{19} was finally sold in June 1964. It is possible that, had this volume been released in 1950, it would have sold out within a matter of months, snapped up by a public swept away in a provincial fervour brought about by the centenary celebrations. There is no doubt that the timing of the release of a new book could be crucial, and a short delay could mean the difference between an enthusiastic and a lacklustre response, a quick profit and a capital drain (a fact that Caxton discovered to its detriment on a number of occasions during this period), particularly with this type of quality commemorative book.

Following Glover’s dismissal from the Caxton Press at the end of 1951, it was not long before he was given an official, albeit flexible,\textsuperscript{20} position as typographer at the Pegasus Press. Despite his erratic attendance Glover still managed to leave his mark and Gormack admiringly made special mention of three publications that carried Glover’s “personal stamp in most if not all production aspects” (Nag’s 38). Rambles in New Zealand 1839 and The Great Journey 1846-

\textsuperscript{17} See page 33 of The Nag’s Head Press: An Outline History and Descriptive Checklist of Publications to June 1992.

\textsuperscript{18} This was a combination later favoured by Alan Loney for a short time.

\textsuperscript{19} Bob Gormack put the edition at 1850 in his Nag’s Head history and checklist (33), but I have used the more conservative figure of 1550 taken from the Pegasus Press Publications List.

\textsuperscript{20} Gormack recounted how Glover’s route to work often included a visit to the Gresham Hotel in Cashel Street which could delay his mid-morning starts, and when he did arrive, “[h]e enlivened our workplace with his spirited attitude to things and, in the best traditions of the trade, managed to lure some of us out once or twice for extended lunch-hour noggins.” Gormack concluded simply that “[h]is navy experience was now an ever-present power in his life” (Nag’s 37), conveying with sympathetic subtlety the extraordinary impact the war had had on Glover.
were, like *The Journal of Edward Ward*, elegant reprints of historic texts, which, considering the fate of their predecessor, demonstrated a considerable degree of confidence, either in their content or Glover’s ability, by the Pegasus management. It would seem that a certain amount of caution was exercised with Bidwill’s *Rambles* as it appeared in a Linotype Baskerville limited edition of 350 copies, but *The Great Journey* was given the full treatment in Monotype Caslon, with a jacket by Russell Clark, in a more substantial edition of 1125 (and a correspondingly hefty price of 21 shillings). Glover also utilised a range of Stephenson Blake foundry type owned by Pegasus (which was ironically Caslon Old Face - the same typeface with which he had begun his typographical endeavours at Caxton Press over fifteen years previously) to make *The Great Journey* “a little masterpiece of book design” (Gormack, *Nag’s* 38).

The third book was the satiric *Poems Unpleasant*, which announced its less-than-serious intentions with a display of “some remarkable free-and-easy typography” (Gormack, *Nag’s* 38) in the manner of Lowry, combining the poster font of Rockwell Shadow with Bensemann’s favoured Legend. Gormack considered it “an example of Glover’s more adventurous typography . . . forceful and agreeably different at the time” (*Nag’s* 38). Glover had obviously decided to extend the lampoon beyond content to form and such a fittingly blithe gesture, as his last effort from Pegasus, seems to have been a characteristic way to farewell the Christchurch quality publishing scene of which he had been so much a part. Glover was eventually dismissed for much the same reasons as he had been let go from Caxton, but, it would seem, with considerably less rancour. His erratic behaviour would have been tolerated by few employers, but his skills had obviously impressed sufficiently for Robin Muir to conclude: “He was a wonderful typographer, had a wonderful eye. He’d never been trained as a tradesman, but most compositors looked at Denis in awe . . . his instinctive feeling for type. He was a brilliant man, there was no doubt about it” (Interview).

Glover had, however, been on hand in August to take part in the Pegasus move to the historic premises at 14 Oxford Terrace, which was to be the Press’s home until its buy-out in the
1980s. Here the distinctive wooden house (now the Pegasus Arms) housed the front office staff of Albion Wright, Robin Muir and - albeit briefly - Denis Glover, who had been promoted to “typographical adviser” (Gormack, Nag’s 39), while the concrete block quarters at the rear housed the compositors and printing staff.21 The move was part of a consolidation of Wright’s operations which included the absorption of Albion Wright Advertising by the Pegasus Press (Gormack, Nag’s 38-9). However, Glover’s printing swansong briefly created a third entity operating out of Oxford Terrace - The Pigsarse Press. This irreverently titled press was spawned for a single publication by the programme for a religious play, The First Born, by Christopher Fry. According to former factory manager (and, later, Pegasus Press director) Peter Low, staff from the Caxton Press (with likely the help of Glover himself) got into Pegasus in the middle of the night and altered the type for the programme. They then ran off about a dozen copies and placed these on top of the correctly printed originals to give the impression the whole job had been printed like that.22

The Pigsarse production was entitled The Thirst Gorn (see appendix) and consisted for the most part of wordplay and references to the general bacchanalia which evidently accompanied its printing. The layout was apparently “execrated by Tom Thumb and Tapper Nandy” and the cast included Albion Stoop as the Maitre d’hotel (as well as “ALBIONS TIGHT en deed”), Robin’s Nest au Beurre and Type Stick a la Gormand (presumably referring to Bob Gormack). Low described it as “an audacious joke, thoroughly enjoyed by both companies and [which] further strengthened an already strong bond that existed between Denis Glover, Albion Wright, Leo Bensemann, John O’Brien, and others, when the borrowing of type, blocks, numbering

21 These included Robert Gormack who was employed at Pegasus until 1955, and who then returned in 1957 for a few years until he obtained a position as editorial assistant at Whitcombe and Tombs.

22 This account is from an article in The Press, “Printers’ Rivalry,” and was also related to me by the current director of the Caxton Press, Mr Bruce Bascand, who also had copies of the two programmes. However, it is necessary to reiterate Mr Low’s comments in the article that “myths and legends may be better than the facts in the telling 30-odd years later.” (Low’s version was submitted to correct an earlier account of the events related in the same paper by former employee Robin Alborn.) The original programme stated that the play was to run from the 13th to the 20th of December, whereas the altered programme was “Mulled from 24-25 December.”
machines, and strong drink between Caxton and Pegasus was the norm” (“Printers’ Rivalry”).

The last verifiable evidence of Glover having worked at the Pegasus Press was a letter, dated 9 April 1953, that he wrote to Douglas Lilburn, telling him of the development of one of his poetical personae: “Harry, who is a projection of many personalities, becomes a little more concrete as Arawata Bill, one of the legendary prospectors of Otago-Westland. It ties up nicely with my recurrent themes of mountain and sea, and there are some quite fair lyrical passages.” A detailed memorandum of agreement was signed the following month (11 May), providing for a ten percent royalty and publication within three months of the manuscript simply entitled Arawata Bill (Pegasus). That Wright was prepared to offer standard royalties on such a firm, immediate publication date, despite there being only 350 copies (of which 63 were review copies) in the edition, clearly demonstrated his belief in the saleability of Glover’s poetry (a bankability that few other New Zealand poets could claim).

Wright’s faith in the attraction of his friend’s verse was well founded, and a royalty cheque for £17.8.9.24 (less Glover’s advance of sixteen pounds) was despatched on 6 September 1955, at which time the second edition of 340 copies (at the cheaper price of 7/6) was under way (Pegasus); by December a healthy 100 copies had been sold of this further edition (AW-DG 20/12/55). The four-page standard document (possibly borrowed from an overseas model) that assured Glover of his royalties had wider significance in that it reflected a new professionalism in the publishing industry. By clearly setting forth the rights and obligations of both parties, such a contract at least went some way to lessening an author’s uncertainties and preventing the kind of delays - sometimes of up to three years - that had occurred at Caxton, ironically with Glover at the helm. Obviously there were benefits to be had by the publisher, not least of which was the clear assignation of a considerable percentage (generally fifty percent) of other

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23 It is not clear from the available records, but it would seem that Glover was no longer working for Pegasus when the first edition was finally published later that year.

24 This was a royalty of 1/3 on the retail of 12/6 (Pegasus, Royalty).
related rights such as those for broadcasting, serials and Continental sales.

The consolidation that took place in Pegasus's business operations was reflected in its publishing list in the next few years. In 1953, William Heinz's *Prospecting for Gold* and a tourist guide, *Mount Cook*, appeared alongside the first Pegasus-printed issue of the *New Zealand Poetry Yearbook* and, as part of the Pegasus Poets series, Mary Stanley's *Starveling Year*. It is interesting to note that the two non-fiction books carried the same price as Stanley's book - 3/6 - and yet appeared in the more substantial edition of 3000. It is clear from this that the Pegasus Poets series was uneconomic, and economies of scale meant that such a low retail price would never be viable for the small print runs of poetry. One need only compare this with the 10/6 retail for the *Poetry Yearbook* to see how poetry was locked into the limited market of a well-off readership: prices could not be decreased because of the limited readership and readership was unlikely to increase because of the high prices. This conclusion is only reinforced by the fact that Stanley's book and the Mount Cook book were sold out by 1962 (August and April respectively, Heinz's book having sold out by September 1959), despite a difference of some 2700 copies. Similarly, 1954's *Poetry Yearbook* took eight years to sell its 450 copies, and of the two volumes of American psychiatrist Merrill Moore's poetry published that same year, one took a sluggish thirteen years before it was out of print (Pegasus, Publications).

Nineteen fifty-five was a busy year for the Pegasus Press and its book list reflected this with a mature spread of publications. In April, a contract (Pegasus) was signed with G.R. Gilbert for *Love in a Lighthouse*, a light-hearted account of Gilbert's experiences as a lighthouse keeper, which, although failing to gain a Literary Fund grant of £150 (presumably because of its potentially more popular appeal25), was published the following year. It is worth noting that

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25 Gilbert informed Wright that it was turned down for a Literary Fund grant because it was "not literary enough" (2/5/55). Its popular appeal, however, did mean it was quickly picked up for Broadcasting Service serialisation. It is also worth noting the economies of scale revealed in a costing sheet for such a book: a limited edition of 750 copies would mean a retail price of 21 shillings, compared to 20 shillings for 1000, 16 shillings for 1500 and, as was finally decided, 12/6 for 2000 copies (Pegasus). It is clear from these figures that, with its editions of 3-500, poetry's only saving grace was the small size of the volumes and the limited typesetting they required.
Gilbert, disgruntled with their slowness, had chosen to take his manuscript to Pegasus rather than Caxton. (Glover had held his manuscript for Glass-Sharp and Poisonous for three years [Gilbert-AW 2/6/51].) The fifth volume of The Poetry Yearbook appeared at the same time as the second edition of Denis Glover's Arawata Bill, with one reviewer describing the latter as “a fine volume which compares more than favourably with any overseas publication” (Arawata).

Two other volumes, one of poetry and one of drama,²⁶ were also published “for the author,” in what was to become an increasingly common practice of requiring payment by the author of some or all of the costs of production. Although this came under the blanket title of “vanity publishing,” all such works were not simply cases of ego gratification by the wealthy. The very narrow margin of profit - if any - with literature meant that worthy but borderline projects would often only be considered for publication with a “grant” or subsidy from the author to cover any loss. This really amounted to an admission by Pegasus that the book had little chance of turning a profit. Ostensibly portrayed as something of a public service, the publication of such books was a useful way to fill in time between jobbing printing and to keep the machines in use.

Balanced against this type of venture were volumes such as Anton Vogt’s English for Teachers and guide books like Stewart Island (both of which appeared in their second edition of 3000 [Pegasus, Publications]). Vogt’s effort was obviously for a much more certain market than his last effort as a contributor to Poems Unpleasant, but his connection with the satirical volume leads one to speculate on the role of Louis Johnson in again persuading Vogt of the benefits of Pegasus publication. (An interesting comparison can be made with Denis Glover, whose literary value to any publishing company was outweighed by his ability to attract clients, although it is doubtful that Johnson, despite his best efforts, was as successful as Glover.) Drama was represented by another Claude Evans play, Overtime, as well as Toi by E.T. Rogers which was distributed by Paul’s Book Arcade in Hamilton. Somewhat ironically, Pegasus was to print a

²⁶ The two were Dora Hagemeyer’s The Secret Parables (the unsold balance of the 250 copies - retail 12/6 - was returned to the author in February 1958) and Rogers’ Toi (Pegasus, Publications).
number of things for Paul’s, which was another publisher to emerge in the fifties and provide increased competition and further challenge to Caxton’s orthodoxy.

Pegasus now also had a friend on the Literary Fund (and Caxton an enemy?) in the person of Denis Glover. Wright’s belief that he now had a sympathetic ear on the Literary Fund is clear from a letter he wrote to Glover in October about Charles Doyle’s _A Splinter of Glass_: “Thanks for your right fine attitude re Doyle’s book of verse. I’m glad that there is someone (at last) on the Committee who knows the poor bloody publisher’s problems” (14/10/55). Glover, however, was also an author and had wanted an assurance from Wright on advance royalties (which were, not surprisingly, uncommon for literature in New Zealand). The best that Wright could offer was an advance on Literary Funded books (which presumably would have been taken directly from the grant and then repaid when funds were available, as, strictly speaking, the purpose of the grant was to reduce the retail price to the public and not to directly benefit either publisher or author).

Perhaps the most important matter to arise out of this correspondence was a further request for Literary Fund money for a novel by one Janet Frame (AW-DG 20/12/55). It is ironic that this unofficial appeal was directed at Denis Glover, the man who was responsible for the loss of one of Frame’s manuscripts and her resultant decision to reject Caxton and seek a new publisher. Nevertheless, unaware of this shadowy connection, Janet Frame rather tentatively submitted the manuscript for _Owls Do Cry_ to Pegasus Press on the tenth of September. Despite her timorous approach, Albion Wright was quick to respond to this unusual piece of unsolicited fiction, sending an enthusiastic acceptance only two weeks after receipt of the manuscript: “I think it an extraordinarily fine work and I would like to congratulate you on having written a long story of such sustained power and interest” (27/9/55). The official ap-

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27 In a particularly unassuming letter accompanying the manuscript she wrote to Wright: “If it were up to standard maybe it could be published, though I understand publishing in New Zealand is in a bad way at present” (10/9/55).
proach to the Literary Fund was made on 28 November, and a grant of £300 was requested to reduce the retail from 20/6 to an industry standard and more affordable 12/6 (Wright). The alternative if no grant was forthcoming, Wright confided to Frame two days later, was a limited edition of three hundred, heftily priced at between two to three guineas (30/11/55).

Despite his enthusiasm for the book, Wright was still cautious in his approach. He estimated that 1500 copies would be the maximum number for the first edition of a novel (although this was still substantially more than the standard editions of 3-400 copies for volumes of poetry). However, he added hopefully that, with a larger grant, the print run could be increased. He concluded: “Although we feel the publication of this novel will be a literary event in New Zealand, this does not mean that it will appeal to a larger number of readers than, say, the circulation of ‘Landfall.’ No one can be sure, of course, but we think that 750 copies are fairly certain to sell and the balance would be our risk” (AW-Secretary). This meant that if a subsidy was granted the publisher’s risk was lessened but not wholly abrogated, as almost the entire edition would have to be sold before any profit was realised.

When Frame was paid her modest advance of £15, the manuscript was known by its second tentative title of “Within Sound of the Sea” (both Frame and Wright were unhappy with the original “Talk of Treasure”). Wright also had reservations about this title, as a book entitled Within Sound of the Bell had just been published. At Wright’s suggestion, Frame submitted a further list of possible titles:

Windows into Eden

“...took a moment of time and drew it out to 7000 years with much care and afflic-

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28 The proposal to the Department of Internal Affairs was made up of the following estimate (any savings on which, Wright assured, would be passed on in lower production costs):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Printing and binding + publishing profit at 10% cost</td>
<td>10/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail mark-up (33 1/3%); distribution costs (6 2/3% + author's royalty (10% retail))</td>
<td>10/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>20/6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wright disparagingly noted that the binding had been carried out by Cartwright "the bloody robber" (AW-Secretary) and its cost (3/9) almost equalled that of the printing.
tion and many tears, and in every year made windows into Eden"

Blake Vala or the Four Zoas

“I need a telescope, even a toy one cheap and plastic from Woolworths, only to look that I may know the world and see my life…”

Toby Withers in a dream

Puppets in the Snow  The Weeping Puppets

“In a dark mill by the sea in blackest snowfall and rain with the waves as witness the sun chained beneath the waves I beheld the weeping puppets who wept and wove the same way abandon their visionary loom. Conformity their master, dullness their wage, their doom the sun, imprisoned light roaming in sea caves”

Blake  Jerusalem II

Between the Flags

“You bathe carefully, as you live, between the flags”

or A Winter Sleep (JF-AW 16/12/55)

Although Frame preferred the title “Between the Flags,” she agreed to the abbreviated form of Wright’s earlier suggestion, “When Owls Do Cry” (JF-AW 14/4/56).

The generous approach to Frame’s book is in sharp contrast to another manuscript submitted at this time. On the recommendation of Pat Lawlor, Lilian Keys had submitted Bishop Pompallier to Pegasus in May 1956 (Keys). On 14 August, Pegasus declined to publish it on their own account, but offered to print it if the risk was underwritten by the author (AW-Keys). The author, together with the Archbishop of Wellington, put up an advance of £750, which was approximately half the production cost. The rest of the costs incurred by Pegasus were to be met by the sale of the first half of the edition (AW-Liston). By December an agreement was signed, with a tentative publication date of September the following year. Aware of the importance of the bibliophile market for such volumes (and aware, too, of their own strengths as publishers and the profit to be made), Pegasus warned against cutting costs on the quality of the edition, and consequently a limited edition of 750 copies was decided
upon. After a slight delay in obtaining a new typeface from England, the book appeared in the shops in mid-December (AW-Keys 18/12/56).

If the reaction of one of the principal backers is anything to go by, the volume was something of a bibliographic *tour de force* by Pegasus; the Archbishop of Wellington wrote: “You have produced a book in keeping with the high standard already shown in other of your publications and I hope that . . . this book will also make better known the skill and craftsmanship possessed in the Pegasus Press” (Liston). Despite this enthusiastic response, sales were not huge. As Pegasus no doubt predicted, the first half of the edition sold out fairly rapidly within the first year of its release, but the remaining sales were sluggish. At the end of 1958, Pegasus turned over the remaining stock of 337 copies to the Archbishop by way of repayment of the initial advance (AW-Liston). That sales were slow is not surprising when the book sported a retail of £4. 4. 0. (despite Pegasus sticking to its original estimated cost price of forty-two shillings, when the actual cost exceeded this estimate [AW-Liston]29), but at least the quality production of the volume ensured a steady trickle of sales. Wright suggested that some copies could be sold direct to Catholic schools, less the 33 1/3% booksellers’ commission, but by 1960 (AW-McKeefy), some 290 copies of the book remained unsold (Pegasus, Royalties).

The official letter stating that the Literary Fund had granted £300 towards the cost of publishing *Owls Do Cry* was sent on 29 March, but Wright had already learned of the grant from Glover two weeks earlier. Although Glover clearly recognised the importance of Frame’s manuscript, he admitted to uncertainty about its impact: “With Janet I feel we are all in the dark” (DG-AW c. 4/56). He warned Wright that Frame had already destroyed a collection of poems that Wright had returned to her, and he feared that she may do the same with the manuscript for *Owls Do Cry* if it was returned to her for revision. Nevertheless, although he thought

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29 Problems also arose in that the edition was 750 copies *in toto* - and therefore did not allow for the 33 review copies - leaving a shortfall of almost £70 (Muir, Note).
Frame's application for a travel grant of $600,30 at the same time as the Literary Fund was considering her book grant, a little precipitate, he actively backed her application and also encouraged Wright to give her an advance on her royalties for the same purpose (DG-AW 13/3/56). This was arranged along with the return of the manuscript from the Literary Fund Committee directly to Pegasus Press.

Because of his close contact with Frame, Frank Sargeson had become an indispensable go-between (he jokingly described himself as her "permanent editor and secretary on commission" [FS-AW 18/12/56]), providing much invaluable assistance and information to Wright between Frame's infrequent letters. In recognition of his efforts, Wright even took the somewhat unusual step of offering Sargeson payment, which he chose to accept in the form of books from the Pegasus list (AW-FS 25/10/56). Although Sargeson's correspondence was mostly concerned with the mundane details of publication, such as whether a photograph of the author should appear on the jacket (FS-AW 1/11/56) - Frame rejected this - his editorial assistance extended only to involvement in the decision to utilise "a certain amount of typographical craziness"31 in the printed work. He was adamant that his role was confined to that of a facilitator for Frame's writing:

I don't think that you can use my name in publicity. A story has already got around that I helped her to write the book. She used to discuss it with me, but I never saw anything of it until after she had sent you the typescript. On the other hand she has been influenced by my stuff in the way she has arranged the book . . . also when I first read the typescript, I was interested to note that some passages suggested that she and I must have been in touch with the same archetypes. (FS-AW 1/11/56)

30 This was awarded in 1956 "to assist her in her literary projects on a visit to Europe" (NZ Lit. Fund 11). This was a large award for an author (surpassed only by the considerable sum of $1250 awarded to Allen Curnow in 1948), especially as in the same year it was decided that direct grants to authors would ordinarily be limited to $500.

31 "She has agreed that a certain amount of typographical craziness would suit the work" (FS-AW 15/7/56).
Although particularly appropriate, the use of “typographical craziness” to draw attention to the text (which was to become something of a feature of Frame’s books) provided technical difficulties for the printing staff, and the awkward settings resulted in delay and added expense (AW-NZLFAC 30/4/57). It had initially been envisaged that *Owls Do Cry* would be released in December, to catch the all-important Christmas rush; however, printing and folding were still being completed at the end of January, and so it was decided to release the book in March (AW-JF 25/1/57). Sargeson was again quick to champion Frame’s case and urged Pegasus to release the book as soon as possible:

I do hope the book doesn’t suffer too many delays. It strikes me publishers in New Zealand are like the editors, not to mention the damned Broadcasting people — vocational writers just have to line up in the queue with hobbyists, careerists, pocket-money sharks and there is scarcely a hint of understanding that what is bread-and-butter to the vocational writer is cigarettes and beer to those who are already provided for at the standard to which they have become accustomed. (FS-AW 15/2/57)

(Some of the indignation expressed here was obviously born of personal experience, but the expression of frustration graphically portrays the precarious nature of the decision to become a “vocational writer.”)

Although missing such an important sales period would have been the kiss of death for most works of local fiction, Sargeson explained that there had been considerable interest from the local medical profession: “She is known throughout the mental hospitals and, since her first book, has been threatened with dire penalties if she dares to write a line about what happened to her inside - which means doctors, nurses, etc are going to be dead keen to lay their hands on the book” (FS-AW 8/8/56). Reviewers, too, were enthusiastic — although for very different reasons — as they struggled to find enough superlatives to describe the book.

“I think it is Janet Frame, conceivably a genius ... I felt certain that this New Zealand book was in world class” (qtd. in Pegasus, Reviews).

“A New Zealand novel of first importance, revealing flashes of real literary talent, even genius” (qtd. in Pegasus, Reviews).
Frame's own response to the final publication was considerably more muted, and not a little enigmatic: "I was disturbed to find the book referred to as a novel when it was never intended to be. And the thing is very attractively printed" (JF-AW 17/6/57). This last brief remark was certainly fair comment as, aside from the unconventional typesetting, Pegasus had gone to considerable trouble and expense to make this an attractive book. This included commissioning several cover designs from English commercial artist Dennis Beytagh.\footnote{Considering the tight budget, considerable time was spent assessing the appropriateness of various designs. These ranged from the rather frivolous depiction of owls to the jacket finally used which illustrated the scene from the beginning of chapter thirty.}

This extra effort was not without extra cost. In April 1957, Wright wrote again to the Literary Fund to inform them that the increased cost (from 9/3 to 10/9) would entail a retail price increase from the proposed 12/6 to fifteen shillings. He cited complicated setting and proof corrections, increased cost for the design and production of the dust-jacket, together with wage and paper price increases since the original estimate in September 1955 as the cause of the price rise, but he assured Andrew Sharp of the Committee that "we have endeavoured, despite rising costs, to maintain a good standard of production" (AW-NZLFAC 30/4/57). This latter statement was a luxury afforded by the involvement of the Literary Fund, in that under normal commercial circumstances the increased costs would simply have to have been reflected in an equivalent cutback in costs. However, their efforts met with approval from a less belligerent and somewhat chastened Sargeson: "certainly you've done all you can to give it a chance with the big public besides the appreciative few"(FS-AW 21/4/57).

Less than a year after its initial release, in January 1958, Owls Do Cry had sold out, and with Janet Frame "cut off" in Maudsley Hospital in England, Wright wrote to Sargeson about the possibility of a second edition to meet the continuing demand (29/1/58). Ideally, Wright saw this as a follow-up to the publication of her second novel, the manuscript of which Frame was obliged, under her previous contract, to submit to Pegasus for first option. Sargeson acknowl-
edged this obligation on her behalf, as well as confirming that Gollancz had expressed interest in *Owls Do Cry*, but had eventually decided not to take it. (He had also earlier sent copies to the reader at Cape and Dan Davin [FS-AW 18/12/56].) However, Sargeson admitted that “[t]he central problem from every point of view is to get fresh work out of her, and this is the point she won’t yield on. She feels that people who have written to her appreciating Owls have made things worse for her. She says she feels everyone is waiting for a new book, and this makes it impossible for her to part with her manuscripts” (9/2/58).

In March, Wright cabled Frame £75 in royalties (a 1/6 royalty on the 15/- retail) from the first edition, and informed her that a second edition of 2000 copies was to be photographed and printed offset (AW-FS 11/3/58). Again Frame’s response to news of the new edition was characteristically equivocal: “Privately I hate the thing” (JF-AW 31/3/58). In the same letter, she ruminated about changes to the book - “So much of the book in italics embarrasses me, but if I begin changing it there’ll be no original left” - which came to nothing, but the cable did pay off, as Sargeson had suggested,33 by giving the first tentative indication of a further work in progress: “I completed a work while I was in the Balearic Islands, it is not satisfactory enough to submit for publication. Have been writing much verse - again for private consumption only” (JF-AW 31/3/58).

Although nothing came of the Gollancz offer, there had been strong interest from New York publisher George Braziller. He considered Frame to be “perhaps the most talented writer to come out of New Zealand since Katherine Mansfield [sic],” and her writing to be “closely akin to that of the best of our contemporary American storytellers” (Pegasus, Press release). On 5 October 1959, after lengthy negotiations with Pegasus Press, an agreement was signed giving George Braziller the English language, serial and book club rights to *Owls Do Cry*.  

33 “Very kind of you to take some weight off well-wishing minds by cabling her some dough. There’s just a chance that it may stir her into sending you a typescript” (FS-AW 13/3/58).
the United States, Canada and the Phillipines, as well as an option on her next book. Brazillers were happy with the quality of the Pegasus production and simply utilised photographic film of the original edition, which, at the same time, saved on the cost of resetting. This sale was something of a coup for a New Zealand publisher, who, if looking abroad, tended to venture little beyond the hidebound English market.

For Pegasus, this was to prove an invaluable experience in the international publishing arena and provided a basis for their later operations. The settlement arrived at was also particularly generous in the context of New Zealand publishing, providing for a US$250 advance and a scaled royalty scheme starting at 10% for the first 5000 copies, increasing to 12 1/2% to 7500, and 15% thereafter. Wright was not able to inform Frame of the U.S. sale until December, but took the opportunity to reassure her of the continued interest in her books (as well as including a further royalty cheque of £75 for the New Zealand second edition): “You have every reason to be very proud of Owls Do Cry. There is no doubt at all that it has had an impact on New Zealand letters, and is regarded as a milestone in our country’s creative literature” (11/12/59). Some five years later, Louis Johnson was to enthusiastically describe 1957-8 as the “breakthrough” year for the New Zealand novel: “I can remember how electric the atmosphere suddenly became in literary circles. Overseas publishers were unpredictably becoming interested in the work of our compatriots” (“Where’s”).34 The response to Frame’s novel was clearly central to this perception and there is little doubt that her novel could be described as a breakthrough, but the interest of overseas publishers was also the result of a determined effort by Pegasus to break into the international market.

Central to these overseas sales was the establishment of links with the London-based authors’ agent, A.M. Heath, who provided a much needed centrally located point of contact with the

34 This claim is perhaps slightly exaggerated when put in the context of the 1961 summation of A Century of New Zealand Novels by James Burns, which revealed that at least one New Zealand novel had been published in England every year since 1861.
international market. It was they who had contacted American authors’ agent Brandt and Brandt, who had in turn established contact with Brazillers (splitting the 10% agent’s fee - 5% to Heath and 5% to Brandt [Heath-AW 3/8/59]). However, it had been Wright’s confidence in the ability of the Pegasus Press to be internationally competitive that saw him approach Heaths early in 1959 to negotiate on his behalf for the rights to print some proven English bestsellers and other popular books in New Zealand (2/2/59). In this way he sought to exploit the import control regulations on books (the number of books that were able to be imported having been cut by forty percent of the 1956 figures) by having them printed and bound in New Zealand. He cited the example of one novel which had sold 40,000 copies in New Zealand and pointed out that many sold in excess of 10,000 copies. Wright suggested two possible options for publication. Firstly, a New Zealand edition could be printed by Pegasus, then distributed through the British publisher’s agent in New Zealand in the usual way. Alternatively, Pegasus could publish the New Zealand edition at their own risk, by arrangement, and pay a royalty for the New Zealand rights on all books sold. (This last offer in particular suggested a considerable degree of confidence in the local book market.)

Why this enticingly lucrative market was rejected by the English publishers was not made clear, but it seems likely that the English underestimated both the quality of the Pegasus product and the ability of the New Zealand market to absorb such large (in relation to its population) numbers of books. There was also a good deal of protectionism, for, despite being fully aware of New Zealand import restrictions, they were loathe to allow any book to actually be printed here. Wright’s claim, however, that “[o]ur press is one of the few in the country that specialises in book printing and we have a good reputation for the quality of our productions” (AW-Heath 2/2/59) was not simply sales hype, and, as Pegasus was to discover through its later joint publishing arrangements, the standard of their own publications often well surpassed that of their British counterparts. Their comprehensive service included the ability to print offset on New Zealand-made plates direct from printed sheets or film, but, as well as this, they also had available to them (in part thanks to earlier efforts of Caxton Press) a good range of
both Linotype and Monotype book faces for any resetting that was required. Wright’s aggressive drive for mutually beneficial international publishing deals seems to have been well ahead of its time, and his approach would perhaps have been more at home in the current context of free-market competition, as would his rejection of the concept of import controls.35

Heaths had set up an earlier deal with Anthony Blond to publish *Owls Do Cry* in England, but this had fallen through after initial enthusiasm because of “extremely adverse” (Heath-AW 30/4/59) readers’ reports. This arrangement would have seen Pegasus printing 1000 copies of *Owls Do Cry* in sheets and then sending them to England to be bound. Nevertheless, in the month following the agreement with George Braziller, Heaths had interested Hutchinsons in a similar deal. Unfortunately, they too rejected it as their agent “felt that many people would find the book both difficult and morbid”, concluding, “I did at one stage think that there might be a possibility for *Owls Do Cry* over here (I can see that it would go down much better in America), if the author could agree to substantial cuts at the beginning of an admittedly shortish book” (Heath-AW 26/1/60). Frame, obviously, would not have agreed to any such major editorial changes.

Considerable interest was, nevertheless, being shown in her work, particularly on the Continent. (Wright even arranged for Heaths to act on Caxton’s behalf in seeking overseas options for Frame’s first collection of stories, *The Lagoon*, such was the attention she now commanded [AW-Heath 25/1/60].) By the beginning of February 1960, publishers in Norway and Holland had expressed a keen interest in her work, but it was the German publishers Nannen-Verlag who were the first to come up with a solid - and substantial - proposal: they offered the considerable advance of £500 on account of 7 1/2% to 3000 copies, 10% to 10 000 and 12 1/2% beyond (Heath-AW 3/2/60). Although the rights to other New Zealand books had been

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35 Ironically, Wright was not in favour of the import controls, and in an article in the *Christchurch Star*, “N.Z. Publishers Do Not Favour Import Control,” affirmed his faith in local publishing: “Books are produced to as high a standard in this country as any in the world. Indeed, in many cases they are better in design and typographical standard.”
sold to overseas publishers, the sale of translation rights was not a common occurrence, as Robin Muir explained in a letter to Heaths requesting comments from Nannen-Verlag for a press release: “Their opinion of the book would make an interesting news item for it will be one of the few New Zealand books published in translation . . . Similar statements from Braziller about the U.S. edition of OWLS DO CRY and from Hutchinson about A GUN IN MY HAND received wide newspaper coverage in New Zealand.”

On 14 May 1960, Frame wrote directly to Wright: “I have written another book which is unfortunately or fortunately private and not for publication, but soon I hope to produce another which I shall send to you for consideration.” However, by 17 June she had had a change of heart and she wrote that she would send the manuscript of “the rather private work.” The manuscript - that turned out to be Faces in the Water - was sent on 1 July from Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, with an accompanying note from her psychiatrist (and the Associate Professor there), John Money, explaining that he had encouraged Frame to write and not to destroy her stories. It would appear from correspondence that the manuscript was also sent to Brandt and Brandt, Frame’s American agent, whose more mercenary approach was in sharp contrast to that of Pegasus. In fact, a letter addressed to Albion Wright was almost sinister in its unabashedly manipulative approach: “I do gather that Janet Frame is somewhat confused over her business dealings, but I do think I know how to channel control over her which will allow us to operate with some authority . . . I’m working very hard to persuade her, or indeed order her, to have it [Faces in the Water] published” (18/7/60). Aware of Frame’s initial reluctance to publish this “private” work, it would seem that they brought considerable pressure to bear to alter her decision.

Frame, however, imposed conditions of her own, and she wrote to Wright: “if it is accepted for publication certain alterations may have to be made in one or two names, and I would wish to put in a foreword stating that the work is fiction only and that Istina Mavet is the real author - for this is so” (26/7/60). Two subsequent alterations that she wished to make were to
change the name of Parkhouse to Lawn Lodge and to have the book appear under the authorship of “Janet Clutha” (AW-Brandt 2/9/60). The latter was strenuously objected to by her American publishers, who felt that a change of name would confuse readers and affect sales. Their more commercially sensitive approach was also reflected in their unease over the last sentence of Faces in the Water, which they thought (in America at least) was open to the charge of libel (Brandt-AW 12/9/60), and which they eventually deleted from the American edition.

Wright would probably have been happier if this second novel had appeared in print before the publication of the second edition of Owls Do Cry (June 1958), but the success of overseas sales 36 meant that interest was still high. A contract for Faces in the Water was signed on 30 August, which, as Wright explained to Money in a letter dated 5 September, was in accordance with their right of first refusal on her next book, obtained in their contract for Owls Do Cry. In the same letter he also explained that they had lent the film of the second edition of Owls Do Cry to George Braziller for a “very nominal fee” - US$50 - and were prepared to take a print run for the new book from England to make it more internationally acceptable. Alternatively, Wright suggested that it could be printed in New Zealand and sent (presumably in sheets) to England and the United States. The contrast with Braziller is again evident in that Wright essentially put the interests of the author before his own commercial printing interests, and this more benevolent attitude is apparent in his appraisal of the book's prospects: “The theme of the book, of course, is not one of itself to make it ‘popular’ reading with the general public, who, like Alice in Wonderland, are not keen ‘to go among mad people.’ But Janet Frame is a splendid writer with a brilliant and unique talent which we are glad to be able to help to a wider recognition” (AW-Money).

This they did by finally securing (in December) a contract with an English publisher - W.H.

36 On 22 June and 29 July 1960, Frame received royalty cheques for £207 and £100 respectively (AW-JF).
Allen - for *Owls Do Cry*, giving them copyright throughout the British Empire market except New Zealand and Canada, a licence to sell throughout the world except for the United States and an option on her next full-length work. The details were similar to their other overseas sales - 10% royalty on the first 3500 copies, 12 1/2% on the next 3500, and 15% above that - but with a smaller advance of £75. Pegasus also negotiated a flat 10% on export sales (as opposed to the then standard of 5%), and, in the event of remaindering (for which there was a two-year moratorium after date of publication), an option for Pegasus to purchase at the remainder price (Pegasus). The more detailed nature of this contract demonstrated a growing awareness on Pegasus's part of the intricacies of international publishing contracts and the importance of negotiating comprehensive coverage. For such a small operation Pegasus demonstrated a remarkable ability to adapt to the demands of the international marketplace and, in so doing, showed a considerable degree of courage, not to mention foresight.

The deal with Allen was followed up at the beginning of 1961 with a similarly detailed contract with George Braziller for the U.S. and Canadian rights to *Faces in the Water*. About a month later the specimen pages arrived from Allen, who, it had been decided, would print both the English and New Zealand editions of the new book. The allocation of the English rights was formalised soon after in a contract on 6 March (with the slightly increased advance of £100). Despite this overseas enthusiasm - or perhaps because of it - the New Zealand edition suffered a set-back in that Pegasus's application for a Literary Fund grant of £200 was turned down (LF-AW 8/3/61). Although it is possible that the well-publicised overseas

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37 Allen supplied 1000 copies at 4/2 1/4 d. each (plus a 1.5% allowance for c.i.f.). The stocks were to be Pegasus's responsibility and were to retail at 17/6 with a 45% discount for the distributors, Whitcombe and Tombs (AW-W&T).

38 Details of all arrangements referred to here are contained in Pegasus ms. 15 (Canterbury Museum, Christchurch).

39 This was equivalent to a subsidy of two shillings per copy, which would reduce the retail four shillings, from 21/6 to the hoped-for 17/6. The equation proposed to the Literary Fund was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail price, with grant</td>
<td>17s 6d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less 40% retail &amp; distribution</td>
<td>7s 0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less 10% royalty</td>
<td>1s 0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>net return from sales</td>
<td>8s 9d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary Fund subsidy</td>
<td>2s 0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of book</td>
<td>10s 0d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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(AW-LF 23/2/61).
publishing interest may have swayed the Fund into declining the application on the grounds that it was a commercially viable proposition (and not taking into account the fact that the purpose of the grant was to reduce the retail paid by the reading public), it would seem that unfavourable readers' reports were the deciding factor. One anonymous reader, who was quoted in the Literary Fund's refusal of Pegasus's application, came to the following astonishingly simplistic conclusion: "I do not feel that Janet Frame has full literary control of her material, or that she has shaped it into anything of great value... the final result is no more than the personal jottings of one who has been through a terrible experience without transcending it or transmuting it into art" (LF-AW 8/3/61).

Despite this set-back, Faces in the Water appeared in New Zealand bookstores in September 1961 (one month after it had appeared in the United States) and, initially at least, considerable interest was shown in it, particularly from within the medical profession. It had been hoped that the publication of this second novel would help the flagging sales of the second edition of Owls Do Cry, which Wright described as selling "slowly but steadily" (AW-JF 12/7/61). However, any resurgence of interest was almost totally overshadowed by the demand for the new book. It quickly became obvious that stocks would not last until Christmas and Wright hurriedly wrote to W.H. Allen on 26 October, requesting an estimate for the cost of printing either 1500 or 2000 extra copies, such was his confidence. Unfortunately, the decision was made for him by strict government import regulations. Whitcombe and Tombs had no further import licences for the year (and his own press would obviously be tied up with the Christmas rush of local jobbing printing) and so Wright was unable to bring in any more stock, even had it been printed in time (AW-Allen 30/11/61).

40 By 1963 it had been made recommended reading for senior staff, and later nurses, by the Director of Mental Hospitals in New Zealand (AW-Allen 25/1/63).

41 In the month of June 1961, 98 copies of Owls Do Cry were sold, which, at a royalty of 1/6, came to £7 7. 0. However, at the same time, Frame's half-share of the advance from Braziller came through, which amounted to a further £26. 16. 1 (AW-JF 12/7/61).

42 Their estimate of 1 November was 1500 copies at 3/11 each or 2000 at 3/8 each (Allen-AW).
In March of the following year, Wright still could not decide whether to print a second edition in New Zealand, or to import extra copies from Allen (who had published their English edition on 15 January) with the knowledge that imports were still heavily restricted (AW-Allen 28/3/62). By this stage the impetus had really been lost for the book, and it was decided the following month to take Allen's remaining stock of 440 copies (Allen-AW 11/4/62). In what appeared to be a joint effort to assist Janet Frame, it was agreed that Allen would pay the full 10% royalty (on the English retail of fifteen shillings) rather than the 5% export royalty as stipulated in their contract, and Pegasus would waive their half share of this subsidiary sale. Possibly in return for this consideration, but also because Pegasus lacked a distribution network there, Wright granted Allen the Australian market for *Faces in the Water* (although Pegasus was to retain the full royalty).

In the same week that *Faces in the Water* appeared in the United States, Pegasus received a statement of royalties for the U.S. sales of *Owls Do Cry*. By 31 March 1961, the somewhat disappointing figure of 1484 copies had been sold.43 Sales reduced to a trickle in the following six months and only a further 149 copies were sold in that time. Total American royalties to this date had been US$646.39 (which did not take into account the US$250 advance, taxes or commissions [AW-Brandt 31/1/62]). After fielding several enquiries about the German rights to *Faces in the Water* from other publishers, Wright concentrated his efforts on Nannen-Verlag, whose German language edition of *Owls Do Cry* had so impressed him. By the time Nannen-Verlag were sold the German option in March 1962, there had been expressions of interest in the Dutch and Finnish language rights, and the prestigious Editions du Seuil had bought the French rights.44 It was perhaps no surprise that the French were the first Continental publishers to secure translation rights, especially as George Braziller had a reputation for publishing avant-garde writers, among them Frenchwoman Nathalie Sarraute.

43 Frame's share of the royalties was a somewhat meagre £14. 19. 1.; however, coupled with her two advances from W.H. Allen, this total sprang up to a more substantial £102 (AW-JF 28/8/61).

44 This contract was signed on 24 November 1961, and included a £200 advance on the slightly lower royalties of 8% to 5000, 10% to 10 000, and 12 1/2% over that (Pegasus ms.15, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch).
The success of the sale of Frame’s second novel to the German publishers, which included an advance of US$625, was offset by the accompanying tax bill of 25% - for both *Faces in the Water* and the £500 advance for *Owls Do Cry* - imposed in the absence of a double tax agreement between Germany and New Zealand (Brandt-AW 18/4/62). The absence of such fundamental trade agreements reflected the relative isolation and Anglocentric focus of New Zealand industry at this time, but at the same time served to demonstrate Pegasus’s determination to break into a broader range of foreign markets. With the help of their English agents, Heaths, they also signed contracts with Rizzoli Italy (May), for the Italian paperback rights,45 Plaza and James for the Spanish rights,46 Van Ditmar for the Dutch rights47 (both June) and Einar Harcks Forlag for the Danish edition (October).48 Spin-offs from this increased international exposure included the sale of six chapters of *Owls Do Cry* for use in an American collection of readings in psychology.49 Also, although it did not directly benefit them, Pegasus helped Nannen-Verlag obtain the option to Ian Cross’s *The God Boy* (Nannen-AW 5/12/61). The traditional English market also responded, and, by May 1962, *Owls Do Cry* was out of print in England and Allen was seeking further copies of Australian stock (Fullerton-AW);50 nevertheless, it certainly showed itself to be more cautious and less likely to embrace an antipodean avante-garde.

Although this succession of foreign contracts amounted to an international recognition of Frame’s talent, the financial benefits were not as immediate nor as lucrative as might have first

45 The contract was signed on 10 May 1962, Rizzoli paying an advance of 120 000 lire (£68) on royalties of 8% of the published price of the paperback, increasing to 10% after the first 5000 copies sold (Pegasus ms. 22).

46 This contract was dated 20 June 1962, and provided for a US$250 advance on 8% on the published price for the first 3000, 10% on the next 3000, and 12 1/2% after that (Pegasus ms. 15).

47 Dated 28 June, this contract provided for a £70 advance on 7 1/2% to 4000 copies, 10% on the next 3000, and 12 1/2 %after that (Pegasus ms. 15).

48 Their contract of 16 October simply paid a £50 advance and a straight 5% royalty (Pegasus ms. 12).

49 Chapters 35, 36, 39, 40, 43, and 44 were paid for at the rate of one cent per word, or $50 in total. Others in the collection included Joseph Conrad and George Orwell (Brandt-AW 18/4/62).

50 As it turned out Pegasus still had 600 copies of its second edition available and this was more than enough to supply English demand (AW-Fullerton).
appeared from the details of the contracts. By the time tax and agents' and publishers' com-
migrations were deducted, the sum of the advance was reduced by well over half, and there was
often considerable delay between the signing of the contract and the payment of monies.
Royalties were also slow to trickle in and, despite critical acclaim for _Faces in the Water_ in the
United States, sales were never large. It was probably not surprising that in August a disturbing
letter about the state of Janet Frame's finances arrived from W.H. Allen in London. However,
their concern was not altogether altruistic and the sense of an overwhelming desire to
protect their "investment" makes them seem, in retrospect, both patronising and manipula-
tive. They wrote: "We have discovered that Miss Frame is at present living on very meagre
funds and this is by no means conducive to her writing plans." They then recounted how they
had encouraged her to embark on a "contemporary novel," which "we feel she is eminently
capable of writing and which would prove to be commercially successful" (Allen-AW 21/8/
62).51

On a more practical level they also proposed obtaining the lease on a flat for a year, which
would cost £655, of which Allen and Braziller were together willing to contribute £500, in the
hope that Pegasus would contribute the balance. Their magnanimity, however, was "in the
nature of loans to be deducted in due course from royalty earnings" (Allen-AW 21/8/62), as
well as an option on the author's work for five years. Pegasus was willing to help and offered
up to £100, a somewhat smaller amount than was requested, but they pointed out that it
would be shortly followed by royalty cheques of £215 and £150 respectively on New Zealand
sales (AW- Allen 5/9/62). There was also a further £175 in advances and expected royalties due
for _The Edge of the Alphabet_, which, Frame had informed Wright, had been completed in
May 1961 (28/5).

All was not international publishing deals with Pegasus, and, along with jobbing printing,

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51 The result is best summarised by Lawrence Jones on page 197 of _The Oxford History of New Zealand
Literature in English_.
they continued to hone their printing expertise on historical works such as biographies and regional histories. One such biography, *The Golden Age of Josiah Clifton Firth*, typified Pegasus's approach in this area, as well as highlighting the risk involved in publishing poetry and fiction. The manuscript, sent in February 1962, was rejected as a publishing venture in April, but a note from Robin Muir offered slight encouragement: "this is a recurring problem in New Zealand where books such as this one may well deserve publication but are expensive to produce and can expect only a limited share of an already small market" (RM-Gordon 4/62). The expensive nature of the book - it was long and included colour plates - meant that not only did Gordon have to pay for the cost of the printing of the book, but she had to treat some part of the cost as a subsidy to reduce the retail - 50 shillings was considered the top price the market could stand - much in the nature of a Literary Fund grant. (This would certainly seem to confirm the belief held in some quarters that Literary Fund grants served only to create an artificially low price for books.) When - and if - the complete edition sold out, the subsidy would be the nett cost of the book for the author.

Wright suggested three options for the size of the edition - 500, 750 or 1000 copies52 - but warned of the danger of succumbing to the temptation to print a large number (because the unit cost decreases with quantity), as this also increased the total outlay and added to the risk of not selling the complete edition. The author agreed to an edition of 500 (the limited edition ensuring appeal to book collectors and libraries) in May and publication was set for Easter the following year (AW-Gordon 23/5/62), so as not to rush the production (or interfere too greatly with Pegasus's other printing and publishing projects). Despite the care lavished on

<table>
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<th>Copies</th>
<th>Tot. price</th>
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<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>£1315</td>
<td>52/7</td>
<td>25/1</td>
<td>£625</td>
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<tr>
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<td>£1532</td>
<td>30/7</td>
<td>3/1</td>
<td>£150</td>
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(Note: The printing cost included £120 on four pages of colour illustrations.) This meant that, at the suggested retail of fifty shillings, the nett return, after the bookseller's discount of 45%, would require a subsidy of 25/1 per copy on an edition of 500 copies.)

52 On 10 May 1962, Wright wrote to the author outlining the costs:
the book, and much to the chagrin of the author, Pegasus Press did not appear as the publisher's imprint, because, as Robin Muir explained to her: “As printers we give our advice but must do as the customer decides. As publishers, though we may consult the author, we act on our own judgement alone. You will understand that we should not be expected to appear as publisher when the responsibility for decision is not ours” (27/3/63).

This was eventually, and reluctantly, accepted by the author, and the book was finally released in August. It was distributed, as usual, through Whitcombe and Tombs, who, Wright reassured Mona Gordon, accounted for 70% of book sales in New Zealand. A much reduced retail of 39/6 was finally agreed upon, presumably leaving the author with a “subsidy” in excess of £700 (AW-Gordon 6/8/63). The book, which the author described to Wright as “the chief interest I have, and the only thing I have lived for in the past three years” (5/7/63), had been published, but at considerable cost to the author, especially considering the whole edition was not sold out until mid-1965 (AW-Gordon 15/7/65). For such a book this was actually a reasonably quick sale, although it must be remembered that this project was entirely sustained by a private individual.

It must have been somewhat frightening for a small publishing operation like Pegasus to be informed that a major author's next book had almost been completed only three months after the publication of her last book, but as it turned out, printing and shipping delays meant that Frame's The Edge of the Alphabet did not appear in New Zealand until over a year later. Frame's own assessment of her new book (in a letter to Wright dated 16 June 1962) was typically censorious: “I don’t know what you think of Edge, but it is pretty terrible. I hope for something better in the future.” (It is possible that this harsh appraisal of the book was a result of the pressure under which she wrote it.) Nevertheless, she granted Pegasus an exclusive

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53 As early as 6 December 1961, Frame had written that she was preparing copy for her third novel, The Edge of the Alphabet, and that all subsequent dealing, including contract negotiation, would be done through her agents, Heaths.
licence to sell *The Edge of the Alphabet* in New Zealand, but with the stipulation that if they did not continue to supply local demand their licence would be terminable by three months notice in writing (JF-AW 2/7/62).54

It would seem from the addition of this requirement that Pegasus was not the only one becoming further acquainted with the intricacies of international publishing. Frame’s decision to use Heaths as her sole agent and the Euro-centred W.H. Allen as her primary printer/publisher (and thereby limit Pegasus to supplying only the New Zealand and Australian markets) seemed to suggest that this rationalisation was a considered reaction to a changing market. Nevertheless, if Albion Wright’s estimates were correct (AW-LF 23/2/61), Pegasus could probably have printed at least as cheaply - if not more cheaply - than Allen (including the cost of sending them unbound, in sheets to England) and, as it later became evident, to a higher standard.

The disadvantages for Pegasus of simply procuring the rights to publish in New Zealand were clearly evident when stocks of *The Edge of the Alphabet* arrived in Christchurch on 22 December 1962 (AW-Allen 25/1/63). This late arrival meant that Pegasus missed the important Christmas gift market and review copies were not able to be distributed until mid-January, by which time Pegasus was already negotiating the rights for Frame’s next book, *Scented Gardens for the Blind*. The latter book Allen somewhat dismissively described to Wright as “another of those strange books of limited interest,” but they were confident that, with Frame installed in her new flat, her new writing would “repay all our efforts, and that it will be more saleable than all that has gone before” (28/1/63). In spite of - or perhaps because of - Allen’s strictly commercial approach, Pegasus was not particularly impressed with the quality of their final product, and expressed their disappointment with the design and production of the British

54 Pegasus agreed to pay a £75 advance on the 10% royalty on the 2100 copies imported from W.H. Allen at a cost to Pegasus of 4/4 per copy. (By way of comparison, the book retailed in England for sixteen shillings [JF-AW 2/7/62].)
editions. In a letter to W.H. Allen, a copy of which was sent to Janet Frame, Wright wrote:
“they cannot compare either in design or typography with, for instance, the German edition
of Owls Do Cry” (20/2/63) - or, by implication, with the New Zealand-printed editions.

Frame herself replied soon after, endorsing what Wright had written: “I agree with what you
say about the printing of books in the U.K., at least the printing of my books, for that is one
thing I care about - how I miss Pegasus and Caxton imprints on my work” (20/3/63). She went
on to agree that the German and American printings were better than the British, but re-
mained adamant about the superiority of New Zealand printing. Nevertheless, she was com-
mittted to Allen by contract, and on 31 May 1963 Pegasus received a request for an advance of
£75 for the New Zealand rights to Scented Gardens for the Blind (JF-AW). Confident of
relatively good sales they ordered 2100 copies at a cost to them of 4/4. They, in turn, had to
pay Frame a royalty of ten percent on the published price of 17/6 (AW-Allen 25/1/63). It was
initially decided to hold up publication of the new book because of the late appearance of The
Edge of the Alphabet, but it had already been displayed in some bookshops, and so was
released in July - only six months after the last novel. At this stage Wright estimated that The
Edge of the Alphabet would be sold out by December, and would provide Frame with a
further £100 in royalties (as well as a further £10-15 for the second edition of Owls Do Cry
[AW-JF 26/7/63]). However, a more substantial sum was provided by the Literary Fund at the
end of that year, when Frame was awarded a Scholarship in Letters, valued at £500 (NZ Lit.
Fund).

The early sixties had seen Pegasus increasingly benefit from the generosity of the Literary
Fund, and this would seem, at least in part, attributable to the appointment of Baxter and
possibly also a Christchurch-based\textsuperscript{55} professor, J.C. Garrett, to its advisory committee. How-

\textsuperscript{55} A regional bias is perhaps less likely, in that Paul's Book Arcade also benefited from a large number of smaller
grants (while Caxton’s Landfall still took the lion's share of the allocation [NZ Lit. Fund]).
ever, it appeared that, after a decade of consolidation, there had developed a more receptive local audience for New Zealand literature, and calls for a more internationalist outlook had resulted in a lessening of regional factionalism and an increase in overseas publications. The impact of Paul's Book Arcade had also reduced Christchurch's dominance in publishing literature (although much was still printed there), and the appearance of other literary journals, particularly *Mate*, suggested a more robust diversity.

In 1962, Pegasus's decision to publish Phillip May's *West Coast Gold Rushes* was augmented by something of a windfall of subsidies, including £300 from the Literary Fund and a further £450 from the University of Canterbury, the Carnegie Social Science Research Committee and the Westland Centennial Council (RM-LF 57/65). Although this was a large - 588 pages - and expensive book, and the other grants were somewhat fortuitous, one must wonder why the Literary Fund was subsidising what was essentially a relatively low-risk commercial book. Admittedly, the grants were used to lower the retail from 53 shillings to 37/6, and so directly benefited the public, but it had the effect of simply lessening what was arguably a common business risk. Needless to say this was a constant area of contention between author and publisher. Nevertheless, two other books of poetry (as well as the *Poetry Yearbook*) received grants that year - *Dawns and Trumpets* by Stuart Slater and Mason's *Collected Poems* (the grant for the latter volume going in part to Denis Glover, who had edited it [NZLF]).

Looking back over this period, Louis Johnson considered the decision to publish this comprehensive volume of Mason's work - to that time, one of Pegasus's best-sellers in verse - a key sign of the strengthening position of poetry ("Year" 15).

56 This volume also received the Jessie Mackay Award for Poetry.
However, during this same bullish period, his own inclusive editorship of the tenth volume of the *Poetry Yearbook* came under attack in a *Listener* review (Broughton) and sparked a minor controversy in that journal’s letter pages for most of the month of November. Johnson was largely unfazed and pragmatically observed in a letter to Albion Wright: “every time somebody writes a letter, it’s surely better than having to pay for an advertisement” (18/11/62). It is unclear whether Wright was as unconcerned about such poor reviews, but he would, no doubt, have appreciated the free publicity.

As Janet Frame’s books had demonstrated, joint publication operated in much the same way as a Literary Fund grant, spreading the risk taken by the publisher (although these sorts of arrangements tended to favour the dominant English partners, who usually had similar numbers of books, but operated in a much larger market). At the end of 1962, an approach was made to Pegasus by romance author Margaret Jeffery, who submitted a manuscript, tentatively entitled “Ghost Flower” (later changed to *Mairangi*), in the hope that Pegasus would take a special edition from Robert Hale Limited (MJ-RM 6/12/62). Hale had already published three novels by the same author,57 and had decided, probably due to the declining New Zealand sales, to seek a partner in the publishing venture. Unfortunately, the deal with Robert Hale fell through and so Pegasus somewhat reluctantly took sole responsibility for the manuscript (AW-MJ 23/3/64). They did, however, manage to arrange an alternative deal with English publishers Heinemanns, who were to print it and take a share of the edition (Heinemanns-AW 18/3/64). In order to achieve what they considered an acceptable retail of 17/6, Pegasus offered to pare their margins if the author would accept the lower rate of royalties, based on the

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57 The details provided by Margaret Jeffery in a letter to Robin Muir were as follows:

- *The Forsaken Orchard* (1955) ed. 4000 (2200 NZ)
- *Too Many Roses* (1956/7) ed. 4000 (1618)
- *Tree Without Shade* (1958) ed. 3000 (1042) (MJ-RM)

"It gets off to a good start unopened, in handsome binding, and striking orange jacket" (Mayson)

"the top of the light-mystery-romances now being written here. Mairangi is a handsome product from the Pegasus Press" (Court)
export price (which was actually the same deal that would have been offered by Robert Hale [AW-MJ 23/3/64]). On 1 April, a contract was signed in which the author agreed to accept a ten percent royalty on the wholesale price of the book (Pegasus). As it turned out, Heinemann printed their own edition, opting instead to purchase the British Commonwealth (excluding New Zealand) publishing rights. Ironically, sales in England were strong and Heinemann approached Pegasus about a joint second edition, which Pegasus, with its considerable stocks of the first edition, declined.

Although Pegasus was struggling with light fiction, they persisted with poetry - thanks largely to the award of an astounding five grants from the Literary Fund in 1963 (the last year Baxter was on the Literary Fund [NZ Lit. Fund]). That year they released three poetry books: a second edition of Mason's Collected Poems, Kevin Ireland's Face To Face (for which, surprisingly, no subsidy was received) and John Weir's The Sudden Sun. It was this literary outpouring - the total grant spread into the following year - which may have contributed to a number of newspapers describing 1963 as a boom year for publishers: "[s]ome booksellers call it a phenomenon - something unprecedented in their experience. The great boom in New Zealand books has caught them unawares. In fact, never before have bookshops sold so many

58 It is interesting to compare this to the comment made by Heather Roberts about Mary Scott: "In 1957 Mary Scott changed publishers to Paul's Book Arcade, marking a move which became more common in the 1950s amongst New Zealand writers to have their work published in their own country. For Scott it made financial sense too as her publication earned higher New Zealand royalties" (593). Obviously, by the early sixties the impetus for English publishers to pick up New Zealand fiction for their local market had somewhat dissipated, and this was compounded by an economic downturn here. To their credit, the New Zealand publishing industry had tried to capitalise on this waning of interest. The PEN (of which Denis Glover was president at the time) gazette for June 1963 devoted almost the entire issue to advocating the benefits of local publication, with articles by Noel Hilliard and publisher Ray Richards. Hilliard related his own experiences with English publishers, citing royalties of a halfpenny on a 2/6 paperback (approximately 1 1/2 % [4]); Richards outlined the publisher's position: "the New Zealand publisher works on lower overheads and profit margins than his counterparts overseas, and also that he relies less on overseas sales of editions and subsidiary rights to increase his turnover and profit" (5). Glover also came to his own pithy conclusion in his editorial: "Fruits of authorship are neither big nor ripe, but re-imported fruit is at a discount" (2).

59 Pegasus received the standard agent's fee of five percent for this deal. They also arranged the sale of the sole New Zealand broadcasting rights for eighty pounds (AW-MJ 12/64).

60 It is fairly clear that Pegasus had not really wanted such a large edition - 2500 - for the New Zealand market alone, but compromised to seal the joint publication agreement (Heinemanns-AW 7/1/65).
New Zealand published books so quickly” (“Great”).\textsuperscript{61} This would certainly seem to confirm the existence of a more vibrant and competitive publishing infrastructure.

Although it did not appear until the following year, an agreement for Denis Glover’s \textit{Enter Without Knocking} was signed on the fourth of September (for copy see appendix), and no doubt because of Glover’s known saleability (and possibly also his friendship with Wright) an advance of £50 was made a few days later (AW-DG 10/9/63). With Glover’s assistance the project was quickly underway and galley proofs were available a month later, but in the meantime Glover had obviously been brooding over Pegasus’s comprehensive contract. He made his reservations clear to Wright in a letter on 23 October: “This is all balls and you know it. I’m not Janet Frame.” Wright gave in to his friend’s demands and altered the agreement to reduce Pegasus’s percentage of the sale of subsidiary rights (see appendix).\textsuperscript{62} With this dispute settled and a Literary Fund grant of £150 awarded,\textsuperscript{63} printing was begun in April of the following year on Pegasus’s newly installed Heidelberg cylinder press, and the book was at the binders in June (AW-DG 27/4/64).

Nineteen sixty-four was perhaps even more significant, in a number of different ways, for Pegasus’s poetry publishing programme. Not surprisingly after the windfall the previous year,

\textsuperscript{61} Fiction, too, provided a major contribution, as evidenced by the list \textit{New Zealand Truth} published (in an article entitled “It’s Been a Boom Year”) of the best-selling authors of the major New Zealand publishers in 1963: Price Milburn - Bruce Mason; Caxton - Joyce Hamilton; Pegasus - Janet Frame; Blackwood Paul - Mary Scott; Reeds - Barry Crump; Whitcombe and Tombs - Jim Henderson.

\textsuperscript{62} With an author as in demand as Denis Glover, the reduced percentage was still mildly lucrative for Pegasus. In 1965, for example, the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation used four poems from the volume and paid a fee of £20 10. 0. (of which Pegasus would have received five pounds). Similarly, English anthologies paid up to four guineas a poem, while their American counterparts paid twenty-five dollars American (as compared to the average New Zealand price of around two to three dollars [AW-DG 6/5/69]).

\textsuperscript{63} Pegasus sent their application to the Literary Fund on 22 November 1963, providing the details as set out below:

- 550 copies, 104pp casebound - printing and binding - £295
- 13/6 retail less 40% and 10% royalty = 6/9 gross to the publisher
- 12/6 retail if 1000 copies (550 in first binding). Otherwise retail of 17/6 without grant of £150 (Pegasus).

[It is interesting to note that the contract with Glover specified a retail of 17/6, which suggests that Pegasus would still have been prepared to publish, even without the grant.]
they did not receive any grants from the Literary Fund, but, nevertheless, released four more volumes of poetry, as well as what was to be the last Poetry Yearbook. Again New Zealand Truth enthused: “more and more New Zealand poets are being published overseas . . . The whole development has more than likely arisen out of the considerable support of Poetry Yearbook by publisher Albion Wright of Pegasus.” Similarly, Louis Johnson’s editorial for the final Yearbook was entitled “The Year the Drought Broke”64 (referring to the poetry publishing drought) and cited Mason’s Collected Poems as a key book in this resurgence.

Louis Johnson himself ended a long association with Pegasus in 1964 when he decided to ‘publish [the eleventh volume of Poetry Yearbook] and be damned.’ His decision to back his own editorial judgement and retain six “obscene” poems, with the accompanying loss of a Literary Fund grant, was a brave but foolhardy one.65 The loss of the grant meant a foregoing of fees by the authors, a seven shilling increase in the retail, and, most significantly, the loss of a publisher who took the opportunity to drop what could only have been a loss-maker.66 New Zealand Poetry Yearbook had been a precariously balanced poetry catchment, resting on only two interdependent supports (Pegasus Press and the Literary Fund), which, when one was removed, collapsed. By comparison, Landfall operated from a somewhat more stable base when buttressed by Brasch’s formidable editorial efforts. Although admirable, Johnson’s one week off per year to edit the journal was not enough to justify Pegasus’s continued support in the absence of a grant. The simple lesson, learnt by editors of other journals with even less Literary-Funded luxury, was that a grant was critical to such a journal’s survival. With increased competition and tighter economic conditions, the input of patronage, whether it be from the publisher or the State, came to be seen as increasingly decisive in all forms of literary publication.

64 This editorial was actually written in 1962, but is reflective of the buoyant, essentially State-funded early years of the 1960s (at Pegasus at least).

65 This last controversial volume took a further thirteen years to sell out its 1000 copies (Pegasus, Publications).

66 This time there was no alternative publisher willing to undertake the venture, and, anyway, it would seem that the editorial effort had taken its toll on Johnson’s enthusiasm.
Despite this disappointment for Johnson (and perhaps a little relief for Pegasus), what is considered perhaps his best book of poetry appeared that year. After submitting the manuscript for *Bread and a Pension* in November 1962, it must have given Johnson some satisfaction to see it finally appear (especially along with Richard Packer's *Prince of the Plague Country*, as it was Packer who had contributed two of the disputed poems to the *Poetry Yearbook*. This must have seemed like some sort of vindication for Johnson, even though his own editorial judgement was decisive in whether or not to publish Packer's collection.) Even when Johnson had submitted his collection, he had taken a calculated approach to its contents, including a final section designed to ruffle feathers: "It [the last section] is there to amuse and those who aren't amused will be bloody annoyed . . . so one way or another it's bound to serve a most useful function" (LJ-AW 18/11/62). At the time Wright was cautious; he wanted Literary Fund backing (which was granted to the tune of £150) and expressed his concern that the last section was too light (23/5/63).67 Johnson's response was typically forthright, but would have done little to allay Wright's anxieties: "[its] express purpose [is] that it shall conflict with the serious sections . . . This section, I hope, will cause some controversy" (30/5/63). This was the same tactic that Johnson had employed with the previous *Poetry Yearbook* and its 'battle' with the Listener.

Most of his efforts, stretching back to *Poems Unpleasant*, can be seen as a gentle subversion of what he saw to be as an incredibly po-faced literary orthodoxy, and it is little wonder that Johnson's manipulation of such events led him to be inserted in *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature* under the sub-title of "The Politics of Poetry" (Caffin 403-6). Although it could be said that he ushered in a slightly more militant poetry scene, his major flaw, like that of his successors, was that he tended to over-estimate the number of people that were actually interested in these minor literary machinations. As one reviewer (ironically, in the same paper

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67 One of a set of poetic "Proverbs" stated "[p]oets would be more popular if you could bet on them" (77), a sentiment not too dissimilar to those expressed (perhaps more humorously) by Robert Gormack in his *Bookie* series.
in which Johnson used to write the book page) observed about the reaction to the “controversial” Yearbook, “the general public, I suspect, remained fairly unmoved” (“Controversial”). When one looks back over this busy literary year for Pegasus, especially if one adopts Johnson’s more lurid depiction of events, it would appear that the poetry scene, or at least that part of it that emanated from Pegasus’s presses, was looking particularly healthy. This impression, however, is not sustained by sales figures. Glover’s Enter Without Knocking was the fastest seller, taking five years to sell its 1250 copies, as compared to Packer’s nine years to sell a paltry five hundred. By way of contrast, William Heinz’s Prospecting for Gold, published in the same year, sold a second edition of 4000 in under three years (Pegasus, Publications).

Although Frame had distanced herself somewhat from Pegasus, operating instead through the intermediary of Heaths, she nevertheless chose to contact Wright directly in February 1964; she expressed disappointment that Pegasus was unable to print her two collections of short stories, Snowman, Snowman and The Reservoir, which had been released in the United States (3/2/64). Although she was concerned that these stories would be unavailable to the New Zealand public, a worse scenario as far as she was concerned was that W. H. Allen might print them. Wright replied that, as far as the New Zealand situation was concerned, Whitcombe and Tombs had (in a bold move for them) ordered fifty sets of the American edition to judge demand. Unfortunately, the books were expensive in the United States (seven dollars for the set) and this meant they had the high retail of three pounds in New Zealand. He explained that Heaths had not given Braziller exclusive rights to the short stories in case Allen was interested later. But he reassured Frame that he was keen to publish a shorter collection of her short stories (although he warned that he would have to sell at least 3000 copies at 17/6 for it to be profitable) as well as a collection of her verse (of at least sixty-four pages) for 1965 (5/2/64). Negotiations continued into the following year, by which time Allen was keen to reprint the American two-volume set, probably to save on the cost of making new plates. However, they were unwilling to go ahead with the project until they had confirmation of a commitment from Pegasus, such was the importance of the New Zealand market to the venture.
Although Allen supplied stock to Pegasus at cost, New Zealand was essentially absorbing the equivalent of a considerable over-run (usually well over half the print run) and thereby reducing the retail price in England. Despite his willingness to publish some of Frame's stories, Wright was more cautious about the ambitious two-volume set and he had strong reservations about its saleability, and not only because of its price. The difference in their attitudes can in a large part be attributed to the size and composition of their respective markets: Allen was catering for a very small, limited section of a market which, as a whole, had a very strong bibliographic culture, whereas Pegasus was selling to a more generalist market, with a correspondingly smaller percentage of bibliophiles. Allen could thus afford to operate within the restricted market that such a two-volume set would necessarily entail. By contrast, Pegasus's *modus operandi* had been to publish good quality books that would also entice bibliophiles, thereby extending their market as much as possible. What this amounted to was that Allen had considerably more leeway in targeting their market and carried considerably less risk than their New Zealand counterparts - and yet Pegasus consistently outsold them in these joint publications.

Allen's insistence on a commitment from Pegasus was only matched by that of the author herself, whose demands ran almost counter to Allen's. A little petulantly, she wrote to Wright on March 20:

> Why can't I have a book printed in New Zealand? It would be printed so much more attractively than the ones that are sent here to be sold [imported from Allen] - I'm...

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68 Frame seemed to confirm this when she wrote to Wright: "Allen told me, when I was in London, that most of the publishers' trade is in N.Z. and Australia - N.Z. and Australia are big business - so Mark Goulden told me" (20/3/65). In fact, this goes even further and suggests that the New Zealand market *per se* was important to English publishers.

69 Frame's response to Wright's offer to print and publish a collection of her poetry in New Zealand was somewhat more equivocal: "About the poems. Well. They would be something printed here; but I'll have to wait until I write some that I have confidence in - or until I die" (20/3/65).
ashamed of them. . . . Again, I'd like to know why it's too dear to print them [the stories], or a selection, in N.Z. I feel very strongly about this, for I'm proud to have my work printed in N.Z., with a N.Z. publisher's imprint on it.

Perhaps somewhat spoilt by the quality of Pegasus's initial productions, Frame was obviously unhappy with the representation provided by Allen, but there was also a sense of some nostal­gic, even patriotic loyalty involved here. However, just as her attitude towards publication had changed - becoming more professional - so too had the nature of the publishing industry in New Zealand.

She was also confused by the admittedly complicated royalty arrangements entailed by the joint publishing agreements, and this is perhaps what led her to the mistaken conclusion that Pegasus's relation to her was "as a bookseller, an importer, not a publisher" (20/3/65). The fundamental differentiation that she had failed to make was where the burden of risk lay, and - as with all publishers - it lay firmly with Pegasus. In effect, Pegasus's arrangement with Allen was the same as most modern publishers who contract out their printing to other firms: they paid cost price for the printing, agreed to pay royalties (including an advance), and had to arrange for publicity and distribution; any unsold stock was their responsibility alone. The bookseller by comparison generally took books on a sale-or-return basis and received a forty per cent commission on sales, as was the case with Whitcombe and Tombs, Pegasus's booksellers.

This state of affairs Wright carefully outlined to Frame in a two-page letter dated 25 March. He summarised that "[a]gainst the cheaper printing and binding prices of Australia and Japan etc., it is no longer an economic proposition to produce two or three thousand copies of a novel for the New Zealand market alone," and that, "except for verse and limited editions," his New Zealand competitors were all utilising offshore arrangements. Nevertheless, he con-

70 Ironically, Allen's role could be said to have been more as printer/distributor than publisher for Frame, as their risk was minimised by the substantial guaranteed sale to New Zealand.
firmed that Pegasus would take up to 1000 copies of Allen's volume of short stories, "depending on format and price, pointing out that some care should be taken with the design and presentation of such a book in order to appeal also to collectors, libraries and gift buyers." He concluded by agreeing with Frame: "We, too, have been disappointed with W.H. Allen's production and feel that your books deserve better treatment. No doubt they can do better but will reply that the cost of the book will be increased."

Pegasus's faith in British book production was not restored when a dummy for the cover of the prolific Frame's next book arrived from Allen - "uninspired, dull and lacks appeal" (AW-Allen 25/5/65) was Wright's succinct verdict. Nevertheless, after some negotiation about design, Pegasus signed an agreement for the New Zealand rights to The Adaptable Man on 31 August 1965, which included the standard royalty advance of seventy-five pounds on a retail of twenty-one shillings a copy (Pegasus, Contract). The release date for the book was set for the end of October of that year (AW-JF 13/9/65). This, of course, did not halt negotiations on the collection of short stories, which Allen rather optimistically (or perhaps opportunistically, as it would have put Pegasus in the awkward position of having two books by the same author released almost simultaneously) envisioned for release in New Zealand in November (Allen-AW 5/10/65). The problem of an unsuitable jacket design recurred and, this time, Pegasus opted to print their own dust-jacket.71

By the time that this had been settled, it was 6 April 1966 before the exclusive New Zealand licence could be granted, Pegasus agreeing to take 1050 copies for an advance of fifty pounds against ten per cent royalty (JF-AW). It was perhaps no surprise, but certainly no consolation, when Wright's rather negative assessment of Allen's efforts was borne out by The Press, which severely criticised the production of The Reservoir in its review. The contract for Frame's next

71 It was very difficult to disagree with Wright that the blue tidal wash chosen by Allen was particularly uninspiring, and it is little wonder that Pegasus opted for their own jacket (AW-Allen 22/10/65). What may have been sufficient for a small sector of the English market was far from satisfactory for the broader slice of a New Zealand market familiar with good book production.
book, *A State of Siege*, was signed less than a month (20 July 1966) after this review appeared, such was the rate at which Frame was now producing manuscripts (Pegasus). The details were the same as for the other novels, right down to the provision of another “awful” (AW-JF 30/3/67) dust-jacket.

Aside from negotiations with Frame, 1965 had been a quieter year for Pegasus and a desire to turn over unsold stock is reflected in the remaindering of the Pegasus Poets series at half price - some thirteen years after they were first released (Pegasus, Books). Of the two volumes of poetry released that year, one received a Literary Fund grant - A.I.H. Paterson’s *Cave in the Hills* - and Sylvia Thomson made a payment towards the cost of her volume, *The White Flame* (Pegasus, Publications). Pegasus also printed for A.H. & A.W. Reed Arnold Wall’s autobiography. However, perhaps the biggest success story from that year was a novelist, whose last novel Muir had rejected three years earlier, explaining, “[a] few years ago we would have published it here ourselves quite happily, and perhaps gathered a small grant from the Literary Fund, but the New Zealand market for fiction has almost vanished and even the Literary Fund seems to have dried up of late” (Muir-Watson 20/11/62). Since that time prospects, at least as far as the Literary Fund was concerned, had improved, albeit briefly. Unfortunately, *Stand in the Rain* received no grant, but it was moderately successful, especially in terms of overseas sales.

So confident was Pegasus (although unjustifiably as it turned out), that they even allowed for increased royalties up to fifteen percent after the sale of 7500 copies in their agreement of February 1965 for Jean Watson’s novel (Pegasus). They also put considerable effort into its presentation and the finished product received much praise for the high standard of book production. One reviewer curiously described the high quality format as a “paradoxical ben-

72 However, the actual cost of the printing had risen to 5/8 per copy (Pegasus).

73 Entitled “An Orange and the Sun,” this was presumably the same book that appeared in 1978 under the title *The World’s an Orange and the Sun* (Palmerston North: Dunmore, 1978).
efit of local production," implying that the greater resources behind overseas publication did not necessarily result in correspondingly higher production standards (and perhaps expressing some surprise that a small, local publisher could achieve such standards). However, another reviewer saw the standard of production as a reflection of Pegasus's confidence in the book: "Stand in the Rain . . . should prove to be one of the most successful prose works published here this year. The Pegasus Press certainly seems to think so, to judge by the very high quality of the book's appearance" (Arvidson).

Its success is perhaps not so surprising when Jean Watson's background is taken into account: she was a friend of Janet Frame and knew Frank Sargeson and others in the Auckland literary scene in the fifties, and, for a time, worked for Bob Lowry's Pilgrim Press before taking up with Barry Crump (M. McLeod). It was the latter literary personality who probably had the most bearing on Albion Wright's decision to publish the novel. Wright was aware of the success of Crump's novels and was keen to capitalise on the association, although it was not public knowledge at the time. The dust-jacket, to Watson's dismay, described her as a "good keen" woman (Watson letter). Whatever effect this had on the local market, it probably had little influence on the decision of American publishers Bobbs-Merrill to pick up the U.S. option on the novel for an advance of US$750 (of which, under her contract with Pegasus, Watson received only a half-share [Watson]). In fact, it was probably no coincidence that the book had been recommended to them by Arnold Wall (whose autobiography had been printed by Pegasus), and not only did they like it but they were enthusiastic about Pegasus's production. Their editor wrote: "May I also congratulate you on the very handsome manner in which you produced the book. In fact, we would like to reproduce your jacket exactly" (Bobbs).

74 "Stand in the Rain is elegantly printed in large type with a distinguished dust-jacket by John Harrison. This high quality format is a paradoxical benefit of local production" (Hall 19).

75 Although this was a very positive reaction, it is ironic that the cover design of a partially obscured woman's face was simply a cropped advertisement copy. Nevertheless, it reaffirms that Pegasus's books were produced to an internationally recognisable high standard.
The American edition appeared in 1966, and the following year a Dutch publishing company picked up the rights for a lesser advance of £84 and a five percent royalty (increasing to ten percent after the sale of 10,000 copies [AW-JW 17/2/67]). A couple of years later the same company was also to pick up the paperback rights for £30 at five percent (AW-JW 26/2/70). However, the biggest sale was to come from an unexpected quarter - film rights. In 1970 an American film company paid US$1000 for an option on the film rights, then extended the option later in the year for a further US$1500 (AW-JW 4/11/70), and then, in 1972, finally paid over US$7500 for the full film rights (AW-JW 27/3/72). The film was never made. What the transaction did reveal though was that the author contracts prepared by Pegasus were a little dated. With the growing importance and saleability of broadcasting rights, the percentages for subsidiary rights were somewhat over-generous to the publisher (in the case of film rights, 75% to the publisher), just as Glover had earlier emphatically pointed out. It could be argued - and Albion Wright no doubt would have - that as publishing fiction in New Zealand was largely an act of patronage, it was a simple trade-off that whatever subsidiary rights that might be sold should go to repaying some of the publisher's efforts. It must be remembered that this case was somewhat exceptional and was more of a case of over-enthusiasm by the Americans. Certainly this was the case with the American edition of the novel: when Jean Watson enquired in 1977 if there had been any more royalties, Wright informed her that sales had not yet repaid the advance (31/1/77).

As well as negotiating the rights to new books in 1965, Wright also started to investigate an offer from Sun Books Australia for the paperback reprint rights to Owls Do Cry, which seemed to offer at least a partial solution to the problem of reprinting Frame's out-of-print titles. Sun offered, through Heaths, a substantial £250 advance on account of a less substantial 7 1/2% royalty divided between Allen and Pegasus (the latter to be shared 50-50 with the author [Heath-AW 22/10/65]). Initially, he was reluctant to accept as Pegasus had planned to release a third case-bound edition for the New Zealand market and did not want to expose the small market to a paperback. However, he reconsidered and decided to forego their plans to reprint,
providing a satisfactory agreement could be reached regarding the paperback (AW-Allen 11/2/66). At the beginning of 1966 he wrote to Heaths, expressing his view that Frame should receive a larger share of the royalty. He suggested that, after Heaths's ten percent agent's fee, Frame should receive fifty percent, and the other fifty percent of the royalty should be split evenly between Allen and Pegasus (11/2/66). This seemed the fairer solution and was adopted, although it is surprising that Heaths, who were Frame's agents, had not proposed this themselves. On the first of August, Sun was granted exclusive rights to publish Owls Do Cry for three years in the British Commonwealth (excluding Canada), with Pegasus acting as their representative in New Zealand (Allen-AW 1/8/66). The first paperback edition appeared the following year and was reprinted again in 1971.

At the same time Wright gave Heaths formal notice of the termination of their contract agreement for Faces in the Water and The Edge of the Alphabet, as both of these books were now out of print in New Zealand (although there were still stocks available at booksellers). At the same time he sought out their opinion on a reprint of Faces in the Water - possibly also in paperback - because of its continued demand, particularly through psychiatric nursing courses (for which it was recommended reading [31/8/66]). Wright was prepared to take about 750, but this was not sufficient to be economic. Allen had only 100 copies left in stock, but were unwilling to reprint unless Pegasus ordered 1500-2000 copies, of which they would have had to take the bulk (Heath-AW 20/10/66). This left the possibility of it being taken up by Sun, but Wright wished to wait and see what sort of a job they did with Owls Do Cry before offering it to them (AW-Heath 27/10/66). It is also interesting to note that after reviewing the various sales of Faces in the Water, Wright made the observation to Frame that it "seems to have been more popular in translation" (21/6/71). This would seem to suggest that Frame's novels had more in common with a Continental avant-garde than the English tradition.

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76 It is interesting to note that Wright had also had discussions with Victoria University, who estimated that they could absorb 1000 copies if Faces in the Water was prescribed for at least two years. It is clear that the decision of a single institution such as this could have a marked influence on a publisher's decision to publish (AW-Allen 12/66).
Despite Glover's diagnosis in 1966 that "[w]e suffer from too many authors, and, by God, too many publishers" (DG-AW), Pegasus continued to introduce new authors, although contributions towards production costs from these authors were not uncommon. One of the more unusual customers of this period was Frank Nielssen Wright (or Niel Wright as he appeared on his books), who had some sixteen volumes of verse (see checklist) published by Pegasus between 1960 and 1976. A number of these were phonetically transliterated - A Man of Conscience: a play in verse (1961) became A Man ov Konshins: a pla in vurs (1960) - as the author plotted his own unique and unorthodox way through New Zealand literary history. It is particularly interesting to note Albion Wright's reaction to a satire on the poets grouped around Curnow submitted by Niel Wright (no relation). Niel described how Albion "begged off printing it because he thought I should not ruffle feathers on the literary scene" (Last Makers 57). One wonders how much this decision sprung from some form of altruistic paternalism, or from a desire not to alienate his existing poetic clientele in the face of increasing competition.

It is interesting to compare Albion Wright's attitude to this particular work to his whole-hearted support of Louis Johnson's attempts to stir up some sort of poetic controversy. There are two ways of looking at the situation: either, in the decade since Louis Johnson's breakaway attempt, the literary hierarchy usually so closely associated with Curnow had firmed up - Louis Johnson had come and gone while Curnow remained, pre-eminent, squeezing out alternative literary strains - or it had become simply uneconomic to support a more diverse literary scene. What little money there was available for poetry was tending to favour the more established poets. Perhaps Niel Wright's most telling comment about his publishing relationship with Pegasus was: "Albion had respect for my poetry, but admittedly he had more for my money" (Last Makers 57).

Fairburn's Collected Poems tended to bear out the assertion of a stronger level of support for

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77 This was Book Three of his proposed 120 book epic.
established writers. Edited by Fairburn's literary executor, Denis Glover, the volume sold out its first edition of 3000 copies in an astounding six months. A smaller second edition of 1500 copies met with similar success, being out of print in under two years (Pegasus, Publications). Reviewers, too, were enthusiastic: "Perhaps, after all, this is the most important (and most beautifully produced) book of verse yet published here" (Watson). This reviewer went on to point out that Pegasus had published its record (for New Zealand poetry) first edition without a Literary Fund grant. This was perhaps just as well, as Fairburn's poem "Note on the State Literary Fund" had been included in the volume (154):

Here is a piece of wisdom
I learnt at my mother's knee:
The mushroom grows in the open,
The toadstool under the tree.

All were not such mushrooming success stories, however, and sales in the area of romantic fiction, such as Catherine McLeod's Dorinda, were disappointing. (Romantic fiction was generally recognised as a solid seller - certainly more so than poetry - and this perhaps justified Glover's pessimism about the publishing scene.) Printed in England for Pegasus in conjunction with Robert Hale, the modest edition of 1500 copies scarcely moved. (Almost ten years later, half the total New Zealand stock was remaindered at below cost, and Robert Hale still retained most of their stock [AW-McLeod 23/2/76].) This was not to say that novels per se were poor sellers, as Gordon Slatter's A Gun In My Hand, which had recorded sales of 12 885 copies (Pegasus, Publications), had demonstrated, but demand for New Zealand novels had certainly decreased during the sixties.

Having fulfilled her wish to have the collection of short stories published (although not printed) in New Zealand, Janet Frame seems to have relented in the matter of her poetry, and agreed to Wright's entreaties to have a collection published. However, the collection destined for Pegasus was sent instead by her agents to George Braziller (no doubt because of potentially better
returns), who decided to publish a volume called *The Pocket Mirror* (AW-Heath 22/3/67).

This news was relayed via Allen, who, with few preliminaries, requested an urgent response from Pegasus as to how many copies of the unseen American volume they wanted (10/3/67). This virtual requisition was given at very short notice for what was essentially an unexpected (at least from this quarter) book, especially as it followed so closely on the heels of *The Adaptable Man*. Sales of this latter book had been slow and, as a consequence, Wright's response was somewhat cautious. Allen, however, were feeling the pressure of time and were becoming increasingly agitated, as it would seem that they had been working from the assumption that Pegasus would have no hesitation in taking a substantial number of the edition. Initially, they were apologetic for offering the poetry at such short notice, claiming, "[w]e are all in the same boat financially, so to speak, and we never look at poetry as a profit-making venture, but there is no reason why any of us should be out of pocket" (10/3/67). But their tone soon changed over a succession of letters and they adopted more the air of a patronising reproof: "You could have relied on me to ensure that you would not have lost money - although, frankly, where poetry is concerned I doubt whether anybody will make any profit. It is a question of keeping faith with a good author, and her poems have a prestige value" (15/3/67).

This was clearly the wrong approach to Albion Wright, who would have had few illusions about the profitability of verse (especially if it was to meet the high production expectations of the New Zealand market), and who was no doubt unhappy at being by-passed by Frame's agent. At one stage the agent for Allen threatened (rather emptily it would seem in the light of prior arrangements whereby Pegasus had exclusive New Zealand rights) to buy all British Commonwealth rights, including New Zealand, and supply the market from England. (He even condescended to offer 500 copies for Pegasus to distribute with the Allen imprint [AW-Heath 22/3/67].) Reacting to Allen's perceived railroading, Wright's replies were somewhat terse; he viewed Allen's offer - and the urgency with which an acceptance was expected - cynically (although accurately it would seem) as a result of "an afterthought by Braziller as a means of increasing their print run" (AW-Allen 22/3/67).
Wright also expressed concern that American book production was considerably more expensive and that there was a marked difference in style, which he was more diplomatic to describe: “although we respect Braziller’s productions, we were not certain that an American-style typographical presentation (and spelling) of a New Zealand author’s verse would be altogether acceptable to New Zealand readers” (AW-Allen 22/3/67). Wright was at pains to state that the merit of the actual poems was never in question, and that he just considered that the New Zealand position was very different: “There is a high standard of poetry publication in this country, so it is important that the format and appearance of the book should be of good quality. The majority of New Zealand books of verse are assisted by a grant from the New Zealand Literary Fund which enables the book to be sold retail at an attractive price (15s to 17s 6d)” (28/3/67).

It is clear from these statements that there was a well established typographical standard in New Zealand, and as a consequence New Zealand authors and readers were able to enjoy quality book production at an affordable price. (Allen rather condescendingly failed to acknowledge this and simply assumed that what was good enough for them was good enough for New Zealand.) This was at least beneficial for local publishers in that it established a resistance in local book buyers to cheap foreign publications, and, at the very least, prevented the kind of colonial inferiority complex that so often afflicted other locally made products.

In a letter dated 19 April 1967, Allen grudgingly conceded that “[f]rankly, we are going to lose money on this project. We do not regard this book as a commercial proposition,” and their editor reluctantly pleaded, “I would rather not lose money on it if this can be avoided.” Allen proposed to write off some paper in stock and requested the maximum price Pegasus was prepared to pay as a way of minimising their losses. It was clear that they still regarded Pegasus as being largely responsible for any potential loss because of their failure to take a larger edition of the sight unseen volume of poetry. This is despite the fact that they had
accepted from Braziller a larger number of copies than they could realistically expect (or were willing) to dispose of, simply based on the assumption that Pegasus would be willing to underwrite a substantial proportion of their stock. In May, they hurriedly cabled Pegasus, offering 750 copies at the somewhat hefty price of eight shillings, landed in October. Seemingly more as a way to keep faith with Janet Frame, this offer was finally accepted, and publication was set for February the following year (AW-Heath 7/6/67). This proved not to be optimal timing, as the impetus for sales of Frame's novels had been lost. This was reflected in Whitcombe and Tombs's decision to put their stocks of The Edge of the Alphabet and The Adaptable Man in their annual sale,78 and Pegasus's final determination not to re-print Faces in the Water (AW-Heath 7/6/67).

On the eleventh of August, Frame wrote to Wright granting him the exclusive right to sell The Pocket Mirror in New Zealand (at a price of 22/6), and Pegasus agreed to pay a twenty-five pound advance on the standard ten percent royalty. The appearance of the book the following year (1968) confirmed Wright's initial fears about such a production: there had been a number of misprints and changes from the original manuscript and this could only be attributed to sloppy proofreading by the American publishers. Frame, too, complained to Wright of the American changes, such as "kerosene" to "paraffin," and, even more creatively, "turkey" to "turnkey" (30/3/68). All Wright could do was to reaffirm his offer to Frame of publishing - in New Zealand - another collection of her verse (AW-JF 10/4/68).

The Glover name - this time Denis's son, Rupert - was also associated with Pegasus, as both editor and author, in the late sixties. Rupert edited the U.C.S.A. Arts Festival poetry yearbook entitled Strawberry Fields, and in 1968 his own book of verse, The Wine and the Garlic, was published by Pegasus. In the same year Peggy Dunstan's Patterns on Glass broke a drought in terms of Literary Fund subsidies, and was then followed by something of a deluge the follow-

78 This effectively put paid to Allen's plan to sell their overstocks of the same two books (almost 1000 in total) to Pegasus at 2/6 each (AW-Heath 7/6/67).
ing year, with one novel and two histories being subsidised. This can perhaps be attributed to a change in Literary Fund policy, adopted in 1968, whereby a “four-times” subsidy was put in place of the old “three-times” formula (this related to the customary guide that the retail price should not be more than four times the printing and binding cost per copy less the amount of the grant [NZ Lit. Fund 4]). Whatever the cause, the result was a productive year in terms of book publication, with The Fateful Voyage of the St. Jean Baptiste picking up the James Wattie Award for Book of the Year.79

The Wattie Book Award essentially judged the book as a product, as the convenor of the award explained in a review of St. Jean: “A book, after all, is meant to be sold and to sell successfully it must not only be well written, but carefully edited and designed, well produced and reasonably priced. At the same time, however, what is in the package is arguably more important than the package itself” (A. McLeod). His use of the qualifier “arguably” would suggest that, viewed strictly as a commodity, there is little difference between the package and its contents. He then went on to give his reasons for choosing this book for the 1970 award:

What attracted me to the book in the context of the Wattie Award was the way in which it coheres. Not only is it ably written. It is printed with real style. The type and format chosen are dignified to a finely judged degree. Illustrations are kept to a minimum but are always helpful. The end papers taken from a chart of de Surville’s voyage, add to a feeling of authenticity and elegance. Even down to the dustcover - often a weak point in New Zealand books - the elegance is maintained. (A. McLeod)

As in so many other reviews, the author equates quality production with authenticity, just as poetry often seems to have been valued by the care that went into its publication. (The corol-

79 This retailed for four dollars - instead of six dollars - with a Literary Fund grant of six hundred dollars. This could be broken down into a print cost of $1.40 and the remaining $2.60 divided between bookseller, author and publisher (forty-five, ten and ten percent respectively) [Muir-Dunmore].
lary is also true in that shoddily presented work is often dismissed as ephemeral.\(^8\) Although a publisher would rarely accord a collection of poor poetry quality, and therefore expensive, publication, other financial considerations, such as the bibliophile market, were also taken into account. This would suggest that, in terms of the larger cultural context, taste was determined by a craft aesthetic, that is that the amount of work put into a product reflects the belief by its producers of its innate quality.

While reviewers were generally unanimous about the quality of the appearance of The Fateful Voyage of the St. Jean Baptiste, reservations were expressed about the appropriateness of such ostentation for a Literary-Funded history for the general reader: “it appears in good Pegasus style, as an attractive and rather expensively-made little volume . . . This care would not have been out of place for a full scholarly version, but it seem curious for a subsidised edition of a summary for lay readers.” (Curious too is the implicit elitism of this statement, whereby certain types of general readers merit lower production standards.) The retail price of four dollars was substantial but not excessive, but the question remained that if the purpose of the Literary Fund grant was to make books more accessible, whether such extravagant treatment was warranted.

Two other books were published in 1969, J.H.E. Schroder’s Yet Once More (compiled with the help of Niel Wright, who, himself, had had another two books of his poetry printed [see checklist]) and Gay McInnes’s Castle on the Run. Correspondence regarding McInnes’s novel is particularly revealing of Albion Wright’s attitude to fiction (perhaps more than a little influenced by his experience with Janet Frame) at this stage. His advice to her in 1968 was honest and pragmatic:

I think that you should write from experience, and then because the names and incidents are changed, muddled and distilled by time, we need not present it as autobiog-

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80 Outrigger was a case in point, and a review by Riemke Ensing is representative of this attitude: “But Outrigger’s publications are, to say the least, depressing in their uniformity. One almost wonders at the haste with which some younger authors rush into print.”
raphy but as a novel... All we ask as publishers trying to produce a book that people will enjoy reading is that your story be entertaining. Can't say I'm interested in 'the honest truth'; it usually ends up as only part of the truth and makes for dull going. (7/10/68)

Similarly, when Wright sent McInnes the copy of Frame's The Rainbirds that she had requested, he added, perhaps a little dolefully: "I am afraid the theme bores me. Am sick to death of the artificial plots she uses, like heavy Victorian furniture, to display her bric-a-brac of fine writing. I am all for a bit of good earthy lust, belly laughs, and a sense of the ridiculous in this power-mad, pompous, over-serious world" (13/9/68). These sentiments, often hinted at but rarely expressed in reviews, epitomise the difficulty trying to sell a novel like The Rainbirds poses a commercial publisher. By comparison, a more general novel like Castle on the Run had sold 1100 copies of the 2000 bound (3000 in the edition) within the first few months (AW-McInnes 30/11/69).

It is clear that Wright was becoming increasingly disillusioned with patronage of the arts for little or no reward, as he candidly outlined for the benefit of another prospective author that year: "We are very hard up at present, have never had so much owed to us (or owed so much)" (AW-May 30/5/69). A large part of this financial difficulty can be attributed to Pegasus's involvement in setting up Printset Processes (who were the typesetters for St. Jean) with Caxton Press. Considerable capital expenditure was required to purchase special IBM film-setting equipment, and coupled with the increasing dominance of television and something of an economic depression, it is not surprising that Pegasus's resources were stretched (AW-May 29/10/69). Although the immediate result of this investment was a cutback in publication, the results, in terms of the quality of publications, were particularly gratifying for Pegasus. On receiving a copy of P.R. May's Gold Town: Ross, Westland, the librarian at U.C.L.A. wrote back enthusiastically: "I believe I have never before seen a similar work in which pictures and text have been so capably wedded" (U.C.L.A.). The only verse published in that subsequent year was J.E. Weir's Literary-Funded The Iron Bush.
Although a second collection of Frame's verse was never to eventuate, a précis of her new manuscript arrived from Allen - in what was becoming something of a pattern - almost immediately after the New Zealand publication of her last book. The prolific nature of Frame's output was certainly commendable, but not exactly desirable for a small company like Pegasus Press operating in New Zealand's limited market. Sales of her previous novels were falling off and the regularity of her new manuscripts left Pegasus little breathing space in which to contemplate reducing their mounting stock. Wright was obviously looking for a book of more general appeal, but was clearly discouraged upon reading Allen's précis: "Your Chief Editor's précis of The Rainbirds gives me publishing shudders. However, it is not altogether fair to judge a novel on a précis. What the title has to do with the story is not clear. I can only hope that the writing is satirical enough to justify the morbid unreality of the theme" (AW-Allen 19/4/68). It would seem that although the importance of Frame's writing was never in question, its saleability weighed heavily on Wright's mind. It is a truism to say that a publishing company's ability to support so-called worthy literature can only continue if it maintains a sound financial base. Commitments to worthy, but ultimately loss-making projects, although laudable, are only short term gains for literature, as it serves no one, least of all future authors, if the company goes broke.

Frame, however, like other authors, had her own financial worries, and wrote at the end of April 1968, telling Wright of The Rainbirds and another new book, Mona Minim and the Smell of the Sun, that was to be published by Braziller the following year (29/4/68). It would seem that Frame tactfully did not offer this latter work to Wright (who would have been unlikely to accept yet another publication, especially a children's book, the production of which was not really within Pegasus's scope). However, Frame was not so tactful on matters

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81 State of Siege, published in August 1967, had sold only 900 copies to 31 March 1968, and this included the major Christmas selling period. Stocks as at 31/3/68 were: State of Siege-1134; Adaptable Man-483; Edge of the Alphabet-0; Pocket Mirror-446; Reservoir-214; Scented Gardens for the Blind-169 (AW-Allen 19/4/68).

82 Frame had earlier written to Wright of her admiration for George Braziller's wife, who wrote children's books, and this may have been the inspiration for this unexpected change of format (JF-AW 20/3/65).
financial, and pleaded for the waiver of an accidental overpayment of $80, adding "[y]ou've made small steady sums from Owls Do Cry and Faces in the Water on the basis of a contract The Society of Authors was horrified to read. I admit that their knowledge of publishing conditions in New Zealand is vague (I think)" (29/4/68). This was perhaps not the best approach to what was already a financially strained relationship, although Wright acceded, but not before clarifying the position, as he saw it, in New Zealand: "Sales of novels in New Zealand have suffered a considerable drop - a fall off in demand that is blamed by some on the competition of TV and our rather depressed economy." He went on to add a somewhat more terse P.S.:

The Royalty Agreement made when Owls Do Cry and Faces in the Water were first published was the standard agreement used by New Zealand publishers at that time. Arrangements for publication of New Zealand authors overseas then were in their infancy and took a great deal of time and trouble to develop. Contrary to the belief of some there is much risk and not great profit in book publishing in this country. In fact those few New Zealand Book Publishers who publish poetry and books of some literary merit would be unable to survive if it were not for other activities such as printing or bookselling. (2/5/68)

It is difficult to tell to what extent Wright's response was motivated by Frame's criticism, but it is clear that Wright had some justification for resenting its implications. Nevertheless, there had clearly been a change in circumstances since the post-war boom period when Pegasus published Frame's first novel.

As with Owls Do Cry, difficulties arose over the title of the new work, with Frame wishing to use the title that was eventually to appear on the American edition, Yellow Flowers in the Antipodean Room (AW-Allen 29/5/68).83 Wright was worried that this title could further depress sales (and these fears would not have been alleviated by Frame's pencilled-in opinion

83 In the middle of 1968, George Braziller had sent a royalty statement for Owls Do Cry, which showed that they had only managed to sell 1402 copies in eight years (Braziller).
of the typescript - "A load of rubbish"), because it did not fulfil what he saw as the requirements of a good title, "which should be easy to remember, and to ask for, and be readily quotable" (AW-Allen 29/5/68). Needless to say, Frame's concerns were not the same as those of Wright, and her response to his "requirements" was that they were "the last thing I think of when I'm writing; and just as well. I've learned not to listen to advice about my work; and publication or no-publication does not worry me greatly as I repeat that posthumous publication is one of the few forms of literary decency left" (29/5/68).

Publication was set for early 1969 (AW-JF 5/9/68), and Pegasus received written confirmation of their exclusive New Zealand licence to The Rainbirds (Frame evidently succumbing to pressure from Allen and Pegasus to retain the shorter title - for their markets at least) in December (JF-AW 9/12/68). Frame also observed, "I gather from the advance that things are not too good in the novel-publishing business" (12/10/68). Aside from the fact that, strictly speaking, Pegasus was not "in the novel-publishing business" - they were primarily printers - her summary of the state of publishing was basically accurate, but the advance of $100, on a retail of $2.75, was reasonable in that only 1239 copies were imported this time (JF-AW 9/12/68).

With a number of Frame's books out of print in New Zealand and mindful of his contractual obligations,84 Wright decided in 1969 to allow Allen to market their remaining stocks of those out-of-print titles in New Zealand (AW-Heath 1/12/70). When this was confirmed by formal written permission in January of the following year, the titles included were Owls Do Cry (casebound only), The Pocket Mirror (which had been awarded a Literary Fund Award for Achievement in 1969), Faces in the Water, The Edge of the Alphabet, and The Reservoir (AW-Allen 22/1/70). (Pegasus still had stocks of The Rainbirds, A State of Siege, Scented Gardens for the Blind and The Adaptable Man.) At that time none of the other titles looked likely to join the list, but, on the evidence of past form, Wright was probably awaiting the arrival of

84 Pegasus's exclusive licence in New Zealand was dependent on their maintaining supplies of Frame's books.
Frame’s next manuscript, which, although unlikely to be a best-seller, usually renewed interest in the older titles.

Although Frame had not ceased her prolific output, Pegasus heard nothing of her new book until a rumour reached Wright that Allen had offered it to Reeds (AW-Heath 1/12/70). Wright made enquiries and Allen confirmed (there had been no contact from Frame at this stage) that they had been specifically instructed by Janet Frame to do so, adding, “[i]n your place, I would be most annoyed, having done what you have done for Janet Frame and her books in the past” (22/12/70). Immediately after the Christmas break, Wright wrote indignantly to Frame, asking why Pegasus had not been informed of her decision:

If you believe that we have made money from the sale of your books we are sorry to have to disillusion you, or anyone else who may be interested in the actual figures. Confronted with these, I cannot imagine another publisher rushing in to share our losses. However, should you find such a one, I will be glad to offer our large stock of your books still in our warehouse\(^{85}\) at a substantial discount, and I trust that you will also help us to do this. (8/1/71)

Reeds also wrote that they had reluctantly accepted the option on Intensive Care, after Frame assured them that she would not allow Pegasus to publish it. They also admitted to being

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\(^{85}\) In a letter to Allen of the same date, thanking them for their understanding letter and giving them permission to market any of their stock through New Zealand agent Leonard Fullerton, Wright outlined the position of Pegasus as at 1/12/70:

- **A State of Siege:** 2089 imported May, 1967
  - 1 Dec.: 937
  - **1/4/71**
- **The Rainbirds:** 1239 imported February, 1969
  - 265
  - 236
- **The Adaptable Man:** 2100 imported October, 1965
  - 446
  - 442
- **Stocks of Scented Gardens for the Blind,** which sells at the rate of about one copy per month.
  - **93**
- **The Reservoir**
  - O/P - Took four years to sell 1000 copies.
- **The Pocket Mirror**
  - O/P - Took over two years to sell 750 copies.

N.B. Each new title includes forty copies for the New Zealand Review List and six to the author.

(Figures in bold are the stock figures four months later, pencilled on to a letter of enquiry regarding The Rainbirds from the University of Alberta [Wright].)
apprehensive about its prospects: "we've closed with it even though it'll mean a pretty nasty retail price and one can't expect to quit more than a small edition" (11/1/71). (The comment about the price would suggest that this was perhaps a slightly more lucrative contract for Frame.) In his reply to Reeds, Wright again took the opportunity to explain the situation as he saw it, pointing out that they were not the sole recipients of Frame's rationalisation:

Well, well. Heath and Brandt have done a great deal of work to sell her books and short stories overseas for little reward, and she sacks them to save their small fee! I have a feeling that she is being ill-advised by some tyro in the world of publishing.

After publishing her first two books, Owls Do Cry and Faces in the Water, we relinquished our option to her forthcoming book on a plea from Heath that it would help the author. This was on the understanding that we would have the sole rights to the New Zealand market through W.H. Allen, under our imprint, and we to pay substantial advance royalties based on 10% of the New Zealand retail.

All I can say is that we would be terribly hurt if the author was a profitable one. All I do now is to heave a sigh of relief and remainder our stocks at the best price going. (12/1/71)

It is clear that, as an "investment," Frame had, apart from the small success of her first two books, provided little or no immediate return for Pegasus, and the arrangement, at least as Wright saw it, was more long term in its nature. Considering the considerable stocks of her books that Pegasus held (and in some cases had held for some years), it is not surprising that Wright was concerned that this termination was premature.

Frame, for her part, finally wrote to Wright on 24 January 1971 (some two months after Wright had first heard of her change of publisher) explaining her decision: "My main reason for wishing to change is that you have not kept to the contract which allows you to import and distribute the books, and in which you promise to give me a twice-yearly statement."86 It

86 The situation as regards the provision of statements is unclear. It would seem that Frame was sometimes not sent statements because her address was unknown or because the sums involved were so small. However, her letters revealed a confused recollection of details of received statements, suggesting that they were often lost or at least partially forgotten.
is true that Pegasus had not strictly adhered to the letter of the contract, in that they had allowed some of her earlier books to go out of print and had not had them reprinted. Nevertheless, although Pegasus did not have stocks of the three early books, they were by no means unobtainable. Some booksellers still had stocks and the arrangement with Sun provided an accessible source for *Faces in the Water*. However, because of such breaches on the part of Pegasus, Frame was entitled to terminate their contract.

It is possible that, as with her writing, Frame was ahead of her time, and was simply anticipating the more "free-market" approach prevalent in publishing in the eighties. She was not legally bound to any publisher, and was free to seek out whoever offered the most competitive deal for her books. Yet, in the context of the less competitive market of the late sixties and early seventies, it is fair to say that a certain degree of company loyalty - which was generally beneficial to both parties - still existed. The trade-off for a bigger advance could simply be cheaper, and consequently shoddier, production standards - a short-term compromise that really benefited no one, least of all the reader.

An accountant's balance sheet of Pegasus's association with Janet Frame (although it was not completely at an end at this point) would no doubt deem it to have been, overall, an unprofitable venture, and yet both sides gained from their arrangement. Frame's startling background and her developing literary reputation were such that the prestige value of having her on their publishing list can not have helped but draw attention to Pegasus's printing and publishing activities. Backing Frame would be considered good public relations by today's advertising agencies, and although this never appeared to have been the motivation for accepting any of Frame's manuscripts, it is clear that Pegasus's support of Frame proved a positive endorsement of the company's standards. This concept of prestige value was a two-way street and Frame similarly benefited from Pegasus's reputation for quality printing. As a means of establishing her reputation as a serious writer, she probably could not have chosen a more appropriate partner - either locally or overseas. Part of the reason for this can be found in the fact that the
majority of her English language sales were still made in New Zealand, and it would seem unlikely that any foreign publisher would have picked up her novels had they not first been published in her own country.

Pegasus also accorded her work a quality of publication that later overseas-printed editions demonstrated was not as readily available as in New Zealand. They had also worked hard to establish overseas contacts that were again mutually beneficial, but ultimately - and ironically - led to the split in their relationship. As Pegasus became more involved in bigger business deals and international contracts, it moved increasingly away from the idea of the gentleman publisher, and the laissez-faire approach to the business of publishing that left room for more generous patronage. For Frame it seemed as if her reputation - if not her sales - had outgrown Pegasus's admittedly limited resources, and she was forced to look elsewhere.

The result of the new publishing arrangements was presumably a more financially beneficial arrangement for Frame, but again this had its downside, as evidenced in a letter received by Wright from Peter Alcock at Massey University, who lamented (what he understood to be) Pegasus's abandonment of Frame (18/11/71). He was disappointed that Mona Minim and the Smell of the Sun was not available in New Zealand, but he was even more dismayed with Reeds' edition of Intensive Care. Evidently in an effort to keep costs down, this had been taken directly from film of the American edition and, as a result, contained all their (American) spellings and misprints.

By contrast, Pegasus's reputation for (Anglocentric) quality was still very high - although this did not necessarily translate into publishing contracts. For example, in response to a request from Longman Paul for the rights to some poems from The Pocket Mirror for a proposed

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87 This attitude can more readily be attributed to Glover in his later years as Wright was first and foremost a businessman. Nevertheless, initially at least, a more benevolent approach could be said to have presided over Wright's better business sense in some of his decisions to publish New Zealand literature.
anthology, Wright offered his printing services. Longman, having already planned its production, declined, but acknowledged, "[y]our expertise in this area is well known" (12/4/72). Similarly, Denis Glover, unimpressed with what Wellington printers had to offer, not only affirmed Pegasus's reputation but was only too willing to utilise their services for Allen Curnow's *Trees, Effigies, Moving Objects*. He was going to publish this under his Catspaw imprint and wrote to Wright: "This of course must be such a prestige job that there is nobody except you that I could trust with it. I'm sending you what Wellington submits me as a dummy. If you know any spastic paraplegics, cross-eyed, aged about 7, give it with my compliments as a scribble pad" (9/7/72).

After an exchange of several letters,88 Glover was forced to reject the first dummy submitted by Pegasus, although for very different reasons than those which led him to reject Wellington's "scribble pad"; Glover wrote: "Your ingenious design is so unmistakably Pegasus that it wouldn't signal Catspaw, which, for the few and infrequent things I shall do, must have some sort of distinctive identity" (11/8/72). It is clear from this statement that not only did Pegasus have a firmly established and identifiable house style, but it was a very important factor in its reputation.

Another factor evident in this exchange with Glover was the attention to editorial detail extended by Pegasus - which seemed to have been sadly lacking in the American editions of Frame's books. As a poet himself, Glover was only too aware of the importance of layout,89 and so made specific demands for page design of *Trees, Effigies, Moving Objects*, such as having the turnovers facing and the title page verso blank. Although the text's appearance on the page would never have been far from Glover's mind, these changes were more related to content. Glover explained: "Some find Allen's verse knotty to follow, and I want them to

88 Glover commented that "[t]here has already been more writing about this booklet than there is in it" (11/8/72).

89 Alan Loney shared Glover's technical concerns with such matters, sometimes utilising them as the focal point of his poetic endeavours (see chapter five).
follow on as a double opening: This is important, too, for readings, often so badly done (Lyn was at one recently where the reader ended eloquently at the bottom of the page, and omitted overleaf)” (4/9/72). Similar reasons applied to his title page design: “I have tried to give the prelims as much air as possible and left the title page verso blank. This helps the NOTE, which I regard as important” (4/9/72).

This was clearly design in the sense of form as content, rather than simply decorative design, and Glover’s rejection of any sense of the decorative in poetry and advocacy of form appropriate to content was well known. This was tempered, however, by his awareness of the financial constraints of running a publishing business, particularly time, which did not always allow for such subtleties. Nevertheless, the Catspaw Press was more of a hobby press, and having no premises or printing equipment of his own, Glover was free to spend as much time as he wished on the editorial side. Pegasus, for its part, simply agreed to print 550 copies of Trees, Effigies, Moving Objects for seventy-seven cents each (AW-DG 11/72).

Glover’s association with Pegasus also provided a revealing insight into the workings of anthologies, in that Glover, as probably the most anthologised of the poets published by Pegasus, had been involved in almost all aspects of the anthologising process, from publisher to compiler. As a poet, he viewed anthologies as a means of stimulating a wider audience for his work, and so was not averse to having large cross-sections of his work presented in this way. Wright, by contrast, was opposed to in-depth representation in anthologies on the grounds that educational institutions would not then look beyond these anthology selections and this would therefore obviate the necessity to buy collections of individual poets (DG-McQueen [20?]/2/72). A request to Glover for such a representation from Harvey McQueen met with little

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90 In discussions about what was essentially a very minor printing project for Pegasus, Glover gibed: “Why, any time now the Dean’s wife will be coming back to order another dozen Christmas cards from dissed type when you are straining to get out a couple of books or a Hogmanay Sports Programme” (4/9/72).
resistance, although he warned that it would probably be unacceptable to Albion Wright unless McQueen could “come to a composition on a sub-letting basis!” He went on to admit that he was “morally tied to my dear friend Albion Wright of Pegasus who has just gone to the heavy expense of re-printing Enter Without Knocking” and explained his compromise by concluding that “one must back up the publisher who takes the big-dollar investment. You yourself are unaware of the publishing jungle” (DG-McQueen 20/2/72). In another letter to Glover, Wright had also pointed out that he had been demanding increasingly large fees from anthologists because of all the correspondence, including corrections, they demanded (for which, it must be noted, Pegasus received a small percentage of the fee as stipulated in the original author’s contract [19/6/72]). Glover perhaps summed up the situation in a letter to Wright, in which he cynically noted “[t]here are more anthologists than poets these days . . . The Muse was always a whore, but used to do it for free - these publishers and exploiters are now grand pimps” (6/6/72).

It was also Glover who described Pegasus as having a “twined leaf arrangement with Caxton,” after hearing rumours of collaborative efforts. Despite his antipathy towards Caxton Press, Glover considered this “a very good move, each of course preserving a publishing identity. In these big-fish-eat-little-fish days, you might as well be a big fish” (DG-AW 4/9/70). Albion Wright confirmed that Pegasus and Caxton had, as the major shareholders in the trade setting firm of Printset Processes in 1970, vaguely talked of a merger (22/9/70). The merger never eventuated, but, in 1972, Pegasus and Caxton again joined forces in an attempt to claim a very small part of the lucrative educational book market, traditionally dominated by Whitcoulls. This took the modest form of four 32-page post-primary poetry booklets - two each by the respective presses - plus a fifth editor’s explanation by John Weir (AW-DG 25/2/72).

Although, in principle, Glover was not overtly opposed to his work appearing in anthologies, his attitude to anthologists was less accommodating: “The Great Duke wrote grimly, ‘I have been much exposed to authors.’ For authors read anthologists, a tribe I dislike like jackdaws. They have their own notion of glitter, like mice they fancy their taste in cheese, and leave the rind. Anything I publish is my own choice at the time, and I don’t like those who scavenge my rubbish tip. For that’s what it is” (DG-McQueen 207/2/72).
This was obviously hardly sufficient to establish the co-operative effort as a “big fish,” and, in fact, in the two years since Glover had expressed these sentiments, changes had occurred that made him less optimistic about the direction of New Zealand publishing. He wrote in a letter to Bob Gormack that Wright was “suffering from Tom Pinch” and concluded that “[t]he New Zealand printer-publisher has had a good flowering, and may blossom again. But the Pommie boys in Auckland have moved steadily in” (11/5/72). With an established infrastructure and key European distribution networks, it seemed only logical that the English publishers would establish offices in New Zealand. Without the need to maintain expensive plant and machinery and with considerable resources at their disposal, they could maintain a considerable competitive advantage over local firms.

Despite straitened financial circumstances and the increasing competition, Pegasus continued to publish significant amounts of poetry, which included a third new revised edition of Mason’s Collected Poems, Alistair Campbell’s Kapiti and the first volume of Poetry New Zealand, edited by Frank McKay. All were particularly good sellers and represent an astute selection of readily marketable work. Campbell’s Kapiti is his most successful (in terms of sales) book of poetry to date, selling an estimated 2500 copies (Campbell, Letter). Poetry New Zealand was also very well received, with 400 copies selling within a month and the entire edition of 1000 shortly thereafter. In his Introduction, McKay stated, “the seventies seem an attractive time for a new start” (9), citing a new wave of poets like Sam Hunt, Ian Wedde, Dennis List, Alan Brunton and Lydia Wevers. He also went on to describe the Poetry New Zealand series as an “act of patronage by Pegasus Press” (11), noting that, as was the case with Landfall, the Literary Fund grant was put towards paying the fees of the contributors. Nevertheless, editions of poetry were small and generally restricted to 500 copies, as opposed to the 5000-odd copies of a regional history such as The Story of Shanty Town, published in the same year as Campbell’s Kapiti (Pegasus, Publications).

92 In his Introduction to the second volume of Poetry New Zealand, McKay claimed that the entire edition sold out within nine weeks (9), and, in a letter to Glover, Wright was enthusiastic that 400 copies had sold within the first month (22/7/71).
This literary output, however, did not go entirely unnoticed, and in a Listener review of three books - Four Plays by Allen Curnow, Glover's Enter Without Knocking, and Mason's Collected Poems - James Bertram observed that “[a]ll were once ‘Caxton poets,’ in the days when Denis Glover was the Caxton Press. It is, perhaps, significant of a shift of poetic interest (at a time when Landfall itself is in jeopardy) that these three representative and important volumes should all appear over the names of other publishers” (“Curnow”) - of the three, two were published by the Pegasus Press. Although this small instance would suggest that Pegasus had assumed Caxton’s mantle, it is perhaps more an indication of the diversification of the industry. Specialisation, especially in something as uneconomic as poetry, was a luxury few publishing firms could afford, and so it was inevitable that what publishing was undertaken was spread amongst those publishers willing to accommodate such a liability. This is not to say that poetry was a dead loss, because, as Caxton and Pegasus had discovered, it was an effective medium for showcasing their printing and publishing skills - unusual layout and setting usually implied that if one could publish poetry, one could publish anything. (In this sense, volumes of poetry were not dissimilar to type specimen books.)

Although they were, even at this late stage, publishing the likes of Glover, Mason and their début poet, Alistair Campbell, Pegasus had diversified somewhat in its choice of authors. Their publication list recognised a new wave of younger poets, which included Philip Klukoff, an expatriate black American poet, Alistair Paterson - a man not unlike Louis Johnson in his fervour to act as advocate for what he saw as a new, vigorous poetry scene - Anne-Louise Philpott and Barry Southam. The second volume of the biennial Poetry New Zealand also appeared in 1974, but this was not quite the immediate success of the first, taking three years to sell its 1500 copies (of which 500 were hardcovers [Pegasus, Publications]). A review by Terry Snow in the Auckland University student magazine, Craccum, provides an interesting insight into how the volume was perceived by contemporaries of the poets included in the volume:

_the quarrel probably lies widely with the self-styled poetics of New Zealand and not_
with Frank McKay, or the idea of a biennial exhibition of poets . . . Could there be less
scene-setting young ones, and more poems beginning at the first line . . . In the verse
and rhythm thinkers club represented here, so many hold themselves up as so-o-o
Serious; it seems to me that if the poet pays blood to his craft, and dismisses himself
lightly, nothing lies in the way of the poem and its embrace of us.

It would seem that, while Pegasus acknowledged the emergence of a new generation of poets,
MacKay's selection of actual poems was somewhat more conservative. This would seem to
point to a change in attitude towards poetry by its new practitioners, away from the solemn
"self-styled" poetics of the previous generation to a more open, craft-oriented practice. The
writer of the Craccum article considered the old-style poetics too didactic and rejected what
he called the "dogma of their definitive stained-glass reactions," opting instead for "trust in
the hewn experience nakedly proclaimed without commandment." In its presentation, Pegasus
was certainly more suited to - and, it could be claimed, to a certain extent responsible for the
rise of - the "stained-glass" school of poetry. Its high quality publications appeared authorita-
tive and suggested permanence, but, to a young group rejecting the established hierarchy, they
appeared simply sacerdotal. The take-it-or-leave-it style of presenting their developing, rather
than definitive, poetic material was more suited to a more casual, and more accessible produc-
tion, and this was certainly reflected in the number of small presses and little magazines that
sprung up during the seventies.

Although Pegasus's approach was starting to appear somewhat anachronistic, its publishing
list looked anything but moribund. 1975 saw the appearance of eight new books of poetry
(helped no doubt by the award of seven Literary Fund grants), which included volumes from
Stephen Chan, Marilyn Duckworth, Lauris Edmond and Fiona Kidman. Even though it
was the International Year of Women, the appearance of the latter three authors was an inno-

93 Chan had been involved in postmodern journals like Parallax in Auckland, and had himself published Ian
Wedde's Made Over, although Pegasus had printed it.
ervative, not to mention perceptive choice. Representation of women authors in print, particularly anthologies, was still fairly limited and this recognition by Pegasus of a further ascendant poetic grouping led Sam Hunt to somewhat patronisingly dub Albion Wright “the saviour of sheilas’ verse” (32). This claim is perhaps not as extravagant as it may appear when one considers Denis Glover’s almost total aversion to what he described as the “she-poets” (DG-AW 5/7/76). Wright, however, was less blinkered and recognised that, in Marilyn Duckworth’s case, her reputation as a novelist made her a more bankable prospect. He had received the manuscript for *Other Lovers’ Children* in June 1974 (Duckworth) - and accepted it two months later (23/8/74). In order to obtain a reasonable retail price, Wright sought a grant of $500 from the Literary Fund, which would bring the retail price down to a more acceptable $2.75 (from $4.75 for the paperback). He was granted only $300 and this meant the heftier retail of $3.50 (AW-MD 18/12/74). By the end of the year in which it had appeared 260 of the 700 copies had been sold, which Wright considered “not so bad” (AW-MD 6/11/75), but, even taking into account the Literary Fund grant, this would scarcely have covered printing costs.

Encouraged by the acceptance of her book of poems - if not by its sales - Duckworth also submitted a novel entitled “Facing Up” for consideration by Pegasus, but the answer was an emphatic “No” for reasons that Wright explained: “The novel at the present time is a most difficult proposition for New Zealand publishers. We have made serious losses on too many of our novels, no matter how well written and acclaimed by responsible critics both here and overseas - a most disheartening state of affairs for both the authors and ourselves” (16/6/75). Pegasus could sustain a couple of poetry books that only covered costs, but novels were more substantial undertakings and had to be judged against their profitability, and this was reflected in the reader’s report: “It’s well-written in a ‘literary’ sort of way but thoroughly artifi-

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94 This was a factor he was keen to incorporate in the book design as he explained to Duckworth: “Poetry is difficult enough to sell without off-putting the reader with a sentimental cover ... Instead we will concentrate on an attractively designed jacket ... with the emphasis on your novelist name” (14/3/75).

95 Wright wrote to Duckworth in August 1974: “As you may know, it is difficult in the face of ever rising printing and landing costs to produce verse today to sell at a reasonable retail price (whatever that is) without a subsidy or grant from some source or other” (23/8/74).
cial and certainly not commercial. Pity" ("Facing Up").

It is clear that tougher government regulations of the late seventies and the increased competition from English-based publishing companies meant that there was little room for a company like Pegasus to move. Joint publication agreements were virtually redundant and, as Wright explained in reply to an enquiry from Heaths, their market was consequently limited: “We have not had much in the way of m/s or published works over recent years which would be of particular interest to you. All of our book publications, history, biography, poetry etc. have been by New Zealand authors and published for the local market” (19/5/76). Travel and health booklets were successful but the demand for Pegasus’s high quality product was limited and it could do little but “retract its toenails” (DG-AW 14/8/77), as Denis Glover so eloquently put it. Wright’s reply was more succinct and business-like:

> Our publishing side has been an expensive pastime of late and we simply cannot afford any further investment in new titles until we can turn our stocks of unsold books into cash. Our overdraft has climbed to perilous heights, and our debtors lag­gard and overdue with their payments - signs of difficult Muldoon prescribed days ahead.96 (3/5/77)

The “retraction” was particularly evident in the publishing list of 1976, when the only volume of poetry to appear (aside from one vanity edition) was the third - and last - volume of *Poetry New Zealand*. It is ironic that as Pegasus was curtailing its publishing activities, McKay, although paying homage to benefactors like Pegasus and Caveman, could declare in the Preface to the fourth volume that “[i]t has never appeared easier for poets to get into print” (10). By this he was referring to the proliferation of little magazines that he had made mention of in the previous volume of *Poetry New Zealand*. The implication was that it was perhaps too easy for someone to have their work published, and it was the job of journals like *Poetry New*

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96 The similarity with Glover’s post-war position at Caxton is striking.
Zealand to sort the wheat from the chaff. However, the fate of a volume like Poetry New Zealand was perhaps best summed up in a review by Alan Roddick: "If the third biennial Poetry New Zealand had contained photographs instead of poems, and had been therefore a Heavy Glossy instead of a Handy Readable, it would have been on coffeetables all up and down the country this Christmas" (35). Essentially, what he was saying was that had poetry been a majority interest for New Zealanders instead of a minority one, this was a particularly useful and well presented reference book. As it was, Pegasus cited the economic recession as the reason for not picking up the fourth volume, and the project was taken up - somewhat sporadically - by John McIndoe.

The view from outside the establishment was that the little magazines and presses were a means of wresting control from the established hierarchy and revitalising a moribund tradition. Although the vibrancy and proliferation of print during this period is testament to a lot of hard work, the short duration of many of the presses is indicative of the same financial problems faced by a larger press like Pegasus. Poetry is a minor interest; the economics of scale make poetry publication, except in rare instances, unprofitable, and that a commercial company like Pegasus should err on the side of conservatism is not only understandable, but almost inevitable. As a consequence Pegasus restricted itself to more stock titles like the fifth revised edition of Native Plants and a regional history, Sumner to Ferremead.

Nineteen seventy-six was also to see the departure of long-time client Niel Wright, who decided to abandon commercial publishing of his epic, The Alexandrians. He described Albion as being "peeved" (Last Makers 57) at this decision, and, as if to symbolically highlight the break, Niel published Book Three - the same volume that Albion had rejected some fifteen years earlier. About its purpose, Niel was unabashedly explicit: "I have no doubt that, for Schroder, Book Three of The Alexandrians was tit for tat for The Arraignment of Marris in 1937. Revenge is sweet, even after twenty-five years" (59). By implication Niel Wright lumped Albion Wright and Pegasus in with Denis Glover and Caxton as purveyors of a modernist
conspiracy against Georgianism, but, by extension, there also seems to be an implicit recogni-
tion of the decline of its dominant influence and the correlative ascendancy of a new postmodern
mode (which Niel Wright also condemned). The publication of Book Three can almost be
viewed in the manner of a parting gloat, as modernism succumbs to postmodernism, just as
Georgianism had to modernism before it.

The jaded tone of Wright's correspondence with Glover at this stage reflected a wearing down
of enthusiasm for an endeavour that had offered so little financial reward. After 25 years of
publishing literature, his attitude was somewhat less philanthropic, and he half-jokingly con-
fided in Glover: "Just send me the work that will sell and sell - and make dough for us both.
Dunmore, Catley and McIndoes are welcome to the rest" (5/1/77). Glover, for his part acerbic
and incorrigible as ever, advised: "You are right to avoid any more of the she-poets. Most (not
all) use their ovaries as an inkwell, and SLF must be tiring of your continual intercession on
their ragtime efforts. Yes, dump the poets" (5/7/77). Wright wearily agreed: "As to your remark
about publishing a plethora of poets is a waste of time - I agree. The few books we have done
is nothing to the flood of manuscripts we have rejected" (17/11/77).

Nevertheless, Wright had agreed to publish The Pear Tree by Lauris Edmond, which, even
with a Literary Fund grant, he was not particularly optimistic about: "All we have to hope for
is that the book will be well reviewed and sell enough to cover costs" (AW-DG 17/11/77). It is
worth noting that Edmond and Fiona Kidman (who, the following year, was to be the last
new poet published by Pegasus - in a meagre edition of 350 copies) were two of the more
senior women poets of this period, and it could be said that their more conservative poetic
style was more suited to Pegasus's more conservative publishing style. The trend for the younger
poets was to establish - usually short-lived - presses and to publish themselves. Glover had
already somewhat cynically predicted that "[o]ur local lads and lasses are all panting for a
posterity that will be too busy panting for itself" (DG-AW 5/3/75). This clamour for publica-
tion could obviously not be met by the existing - and very much struggling - publishing
industry and the result, as Glover reflected, was that "[e]very poet seems to turn publisher and may it chasten him" (DG-AW 17/3/78). It would seem that if the younger writers were happy to publish themselves, Wright was probably relieved to relinquish the financial responsibility (and accompanying liability) of seeing them into print.

By contrast, Pegasus continued to demonstrate the basis for its deserved reputation in the field of regional histories. By now its efficiency was such that a manuscript sent in February 1978 (entitled Gold Mining at Waihi 1878-52 [Richards-AW]) was ready for release - three weeks ahead of schedule - in October for centennial celebrations (AW-Richards 12/10/78). This was even more remarkable in that their quoted price had only been sent in July. This was virtually a straight commercial printing job, arranged through independent publishing consultant Ray Richards.97 The total cost of $16 00098 was simply to be paid in three instalments - one-third at galley proof stage, one-third on printing and the balance on publication (AW-Richards 7/78). The effort and response were so successful that a second edition was considered, although ultimately rejected.

Nineteen seventy-eight99 was also to see the end of what had been a turbulent twenty-three year relationship with Janet Frame. In 1974 Frame had written to Wright, informing him that, as per their contract, Pegasus's failure to reprint her books meant that she assumed sole rights in the United Kingdom and New Zealand to all her books except Owls Do Cry (9/11/74). (This book was presumably exempted because Pegasus still had an active arrangement with Macmillan (Sun) for the paperback.) The following year Allen wrote to Pegasus, inform-

97 In many ways this approach was a sign of things to come on the publishing scene.

98 Fifteen hundred copies were printed at $10.36 each, allowing a retail of $16.50, with an accompanying 2000 promotional leaflets.
The estimated cost of the reprint was correspondingly cheaper: 1000 copies $7420 - $7.42 @ 1500 copies $9764 - $6.51 @ (AW-Richards 12/10/78)

99 Presumably because of the somewhat ad hoc and haphazard way the rights had reverted to Frame, the final confirmation of reversion of total rights did not appear until 1983, when her agents, Curtis Brown, finally closed the saga.
ing them of the reversion of *Owls Do Cry* as well (10/12/75). Yet it was not until 1978, after
the failure to obtain Frame's consent to the sale of film rights arranged by Pegasus, that Wright
reluctantly (although, no doubt, with a certain measure of relief) acknowledged the close of
their relationship (AW-JF 29/8/78). They had spent some time negotiating the sale of film
rights to *Owls Do Cry* to Patrick Cox for a fee of $6000, and had even offered to reduce their
commission from twenty-five to ten percent (in acknowledgement of the higher fees offered
for film and television rights since their contract was signed [AW-Cox 10/11/77]). Frame's
refusal to agree to the sale drew a bitter response from Wright, and one that seemed to confirm
the poignant observation made by Alistair Campbell:

> By the time Wright came to publish later books of verse, e.g. Lauris Edmond's two
volumes, he was losing interest in book production as an art - they are pretty unattrac-
tively produced. Poor health may have had something to do with it. When I last saw
Albion Wright, it might have been at the launch of one of Lauris's books at the Wel-
lington University Teachers' Club, he was rather sad & I thought tired & disillu-
sioned. He may have thought we weren't sufficiently grateful to him for seeing our
books into print. (Letter)

Viewed in its entirety, Pegasus's relationship with Frame provides significant insights into, and
makes a useful case study of the development of New Zealand literature and its institutions. If
the fifties had been a period of consolidation for poetry and a slight firming of institutional
support, the same period has been seen as a culmination for New Zealand fiction, with Law-
rence Jones describing 1957-8 as an *annus mirabilis* ("Reflections" 17). The publication of a
number of significant novels, most particularly Frame's *Owls Do Cry*, seemed to answer the
calls of the critics, both for an effective critique of New Zealand society and for an author of
international standing. To suggest that Frame's book was the inevitable result of a more ma-
ture and less self-conscious nationalism, a lucid awakening from "fretful sleep," is to accept an
easy critical determinism. It seems to deny the dynamism of the events that led to the publi-
cation of this startling novel, which can be traced to Caxton's publication of *The Lagoon*, or,
perhaps even further, to Frame's membership of the Oamaru Athenaeum.

Although the structure of subscription and public libraries is beyond the scope of this thesis, Frame's description in her autobiography (Janet 70-71) of her revelatory introduction to a world of literature at the Athenaeum demonstrates the fundamental importance of such institutions in making literature, primarily of English origin, available. As I have tried to demonstrate, the establishment of institutions of literature production in New Zealand owes much to developments in England, but their evolution here provided an outlet for creative expression that was mediated by a local environment. The publication of The Lagoon, and by necessity any subsequent publications by Frame, is as attributable to the foresight of the Caxton editors as it is to Leo Bensemann's printing during the war, the establishment of the State Literary Fund, or later, Frank Sargeson's unassuming support and encouragement. In this sense, the institutionalisation of literature in this country not only gave Frame the opportunity to express herself, but it can be said to have saved her from another, potentially destructive form of institutionalisation.

Lawrence Jones\textsuperscript{100} places Owls Do Cry within, but towards the end of the Provincial period (1935-64) in New Zealand fiction, and in a number of ways it signals a move away from the dominant mode of writing of that period. Not least of which was the interest shown in Frame's writing by overseas publishers, which gave the lie to the remoteness implicit in the notion of provincialism. Similarly, as Pegasus became increasingly involved in international negotiations, it was evident that their book production was of a standard at least equal to that available in other parts of the world. This represents a marked contrast to the sort of provincial insecurity that was a feature of their initial desire to produce books that were "not a reproach to their country of origin" (McCormick, Letters 172). Although Pegasus was still very much in the "small fish" category, comparison with their overseas counterparts reflected very favour-

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\textsuperscript{100} See particularly pages 140-69 of \textit{The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature}. 
ably on them, and showed any sense of inferiority to be clearly unwarranted. With limited resources, Pegasus had built on the work of Caxton, providing a more stable infrastructure for local literature, and this was evidenced by the growing establishment of a community of serious writers. This, along with the appearance of yet another publisher committed to local literature in the form of Blackwood and Janet Paul, seemed to justify a cautious confidence about the role of literature, which was in turn conducive to, and perhaps even made possible the comparative diversity characteristic of the “Post-provincial Period.”

Despite the modest scale of operations in New Zealand, the commitment to providing as high a standard of production as possible resulted, for a short time at least, in the establishment of an internationally competitive infrastructure. However, as was revealed in their negotiations on behalf of Janet Frame, their willingness to facilitate international arrangements was not matched by correspondingly compliant trade regulations. Internally, there were import restrictions on materials, a considerable bureaucracy involved in dealing in overseas currencies, and later, under Muldoon, an increasingly regulated labour market, while external links were hampered by the absence of international trade agreements. The consequences for authors were significant, and the inequities were exemplified by Frame’s experience in the absence of double tax agreements.

Unique and distinct from other writing of the period as Frame’s work was, it demonstrated a remarkable propensity to conform to the dominant critical prescriptions formulated post-Writers’ Conference. Chapman’s challenge to writers to provide a “clinical report . . . on the state of the patient” (54) seems a particularly appropriate metaphor for Frame’s fiction. However, her emerging reputation, both literary and personal, meant that she was subject to increasing critical attention. In many ways, her impact can be said to have had a long-term, defining effect on literary criticism in New Zealand. In her case, the constraints of a repres-

101 See particularly pages 170-99 of *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature*. 
sive, Puritan New Zealand society were not simply intellectual but physical and manifest in
the form of mental institutions. Her ill-treatment was taken by the writing community as
representative of an uncaring and intolerant society, despite the fact that similar practices
existed in many other parts of the world. The prominence given to the state of her mind
seemed to confirm the notion of literature as solely the product of a unique imagination,
somehow removed from the environment it describes — despite the virtual denial of this posi­
ton implicit in publication. In fact, in Faces in the Water, her supposed failure to conform to
this convention and "transcend" her experiences had resulted in the denial of a Literary Fund
grant. Similarly, The Adaptable Man dramatically reveals not only the extent to which the
author is influenced by environment but how that, in turn, can be determined by the publisher's requirements.

It was perhaps fitting that, as it wound down its publishing activities, the last volume of verse
published by Pegasus was written by Denis Glover. His close association with Albion Wright
and the Press, and the fact that Towards Banks Peninsula (1979) was dedicated to the area
where the two friends used to spend a lot of time sailing, made it all the more poignant (not to
mention that the regional focus made it all the more saleable). In the same year Pegasus also
continued another long-standing association when they printed Baxter's The Labyrinth for
Oxford University Press. That Oxford should utilise Pegasus's services is testimony to the high
standard and competitive nature of their bookwork. A somewhat more surprising literary
venture was one of Pegasus's few forays into short fiction, which took the form of Owen
Marshall's first collection of stories, Supper Waltz Wilson. (This was made more explicable by
the fact that it was printed for the author [Pegasus, Publications].)

The late seventies was a period of transition for the publishing industry and the resultant lean
period was merely a prelude to the wholesale transformation of the industry in the next dec­
aade, when restructuring and mergers were to dominate. As far as poetry was concerned, the
appearance of small presses was a reflection of the depressed state of the industry, forcing those
who were dedicated enough back onto their own, usually limited resources. There were also ideological reasons for this move away from mainstream publishing outlets, which included a desire for independence and control over the presentation of their own material arising out of a particular poetic theory current at that time. In some ways the circumstances mirror those that inspired Denis Glover, almost fifty years earlier, to establish the Caxton Press. Pegasus, by contrast, was less concerned about poetic theory and more concerned with managing an overdraft. Although the notion of public duty persisted, their perseverance with poetry had, by this stage, probably as much to do with its convenience: physically, it was shorter and easier to set, and, because of the importance of careful editing and proofing, poetry did not require the same urgency as more topical matters, thus making it ideal for utilising idle machinery between jobbing printing. Their policy of producing good quality limited editions of poetry recognised the limited nature of the poetry market, while adding value in terms of high quality presentation.

Others, however, took a different view: in 1981, Stephen Higginson of Pilgrims South Press complained that, in the world of New Zealand books, appearance became equated with actuality: “There is a long tradition and belief in New Zealand that the more precious something is so increases its intrinsic merits accordingly. I have been astounded to hear, frequently, asserted the claim that the aesthetics of poetry are above all else, that it is better... for a book to be in a limited edition than that more readily available” (sic) [Letter]. Although there is certainly evidence to justify Higginson’s claims, he is perhaps more indicative of a younger generation less saturated in an established book culture. Pegasus, by contrast, was catering for an older, more bookish audience (which had admittedly thinned out considerably by this stage), and their style of presentation reflected this. To claim that Pegasus was also conservative in its poetry list was manifestly unfair when the number and breadth of poetry books it published is

102 Even Glover acknowledged this when he wrote to Robin Dudding regarding Islands: “It must not be Landfall in a mirror, while avoiding the void of some of the “younger” fellows, nice to talk to, whose work I distrust, as an earlier generation wagged a finger at me” (5/8/73).
taken into account, as well as the value of the continuity it provided. And yet, to the poets who took to their presses in the seventies, this is exactly how it did appear. As practitioners with a zeal to explore the possibilities of poetry, they were understandably prepared to take more risks. As a result of taking responsibility for producing their own material, they exposed the contradiction of commercial businesses acting as patrons. This was no doubt a sobering experience for both parties.

It was almost as if, like the publishing companies, the literature scene was retrenching. Firstly, their aims were confined to simply establishing an alternative outlet for their poetry, and did not extend to revitalising the art of the book (except in the case of Alan Loney). The “frill” of quality bookwork was rejected in favour of often deliberately ephemeral publications (like And), ostensibly as a means of affirming postmodern concerns, but also, one suspects, as a prior acknowledgement of limited resources. Secondly, the actual expression of poetry seemed to be reduced to a bare minimum, seemingly as a part of the reclamation of the practice of poetry from the perceived excesses of a gentrified poetry scene.103 Close contact with the physical production of their own work (especially in the case of Alan Loney) drew many poets into a closer examination of the actual process of writing, and particularly the base material of language itself. It seemed as if the image of the wry, gentrified versifier was being replaced by that of an earnest young theorist. Although these are both stereotypes, it certainly seems that the dedication required to survive the lean period of the seventies resulted in a tighter, more professionally focussed writing community. These writers emphasised the practice or craft of writing rather than regarding it as simply a vehicle to express some sort of social critique.

Similarly, this closer, almost professional concern with the nature of poetry alienated a number of older writers and seems to have ensured a smaller, more specialised group of practitioners - as well as a more restricted audience. As Alister Taylor bluntly put it in 1981: “Poetry publish-

103 It could be argued that, because of their control of publication, the so-called “Phoenix generation’s” influence extended beyond its natural life span.
ing is almost non-existent because of lack of demand. Ten years ago I could sell 3000 of a poetry book. Now I can barely sell 300! What’s the point?” (Letter). This harsher literary climate reduced those remaining active in it only to the most dedicated. It seemed inevitable that in this new, leaner look for the literary scene, the time for acts of patronage was over, especially as publishers moved into the market-driven eighties.104

I remember being pompous about books one time and saying they were the highest expression of man’s endeavour, more important than rockets or brassieres or atom-powered submarines or TV sets or venetian blinds; the noblest things a man could make, the most valuable things a printer could print. And Harry said, oh, I dunno; what about the people who print banknotes? (Muir, Word 285)

Although the appointment of David Thorpe in 1955 had led to one of the few periods of less than harmonious staff-management relations, Peter Low commented that it was Thorpe who set Pegasus along the path of offset printing that was to become such an integral part of their commercial printing operations (69-70). Letterpress was far from obsolete - and in fact had a special place at Pegasus - but offset was ideally suited to putting through large commercial runs at high speed. Speed, however, was of less importance with book publishing, where the editing process and small print runs continued to make letterpress not only viable but a positive advantage. Offset machines were geared for 100 000 copies of a magazine and, although the actual print time was minimal, they took a considerable amount of time and money (platemaking, initially at least, was an expensive business) to set up. As Muir explained, letterpress was the most practicable option: “It [offset] was like getting out a racing car to drive across the road - hardly worth the trouble. You were better on a bicycle” (Personal interview). Similarly, the maintenance and upgrade of continually larger and faster machines led to a remorseless squeeze of costs during the 1970s. As more money was sunk into plant it became

104 Alister Taylor's curt assessment, in 1981, of the disappearance of many of the small presses of the seventies was that “[t]hey are reacting to the marketplace at last” (Letter).
imperative that the machines were kept running, and Pegasus found itself “running faster and faster to stay in the same place” (Muir, Personal interview).

It was the cost of maintaining a viable commercial printing operation that put their publishing activities under increasing strain: “We said originally that we’d never get big. We were going to resist expansion and stay quite small, but it was kind of impossible . . . we had to keep buying bigger machines just to be economical” (Muir, Personal interview). These larger machines required correspondingly larger capital outlays, which could not be sustained by profits (as was the case with the extensions to the premises at Oxford Terrace) and so outsider shareholders were enlisted. Nevertheless, Pegasus always remained undercapitalised. As many of its initial shareholders saw Pegasus’s operations more as a worthy cause than as a generator of substantial dividends (although Muir admitted that they had initially paid good dividends [Interview]), it is not surprising that they were a little reluctant to sink large amounts of capital into plant and machinery. By contrast, later shareholders, brought in specifically to underpin the commercial printing side, questioned the logic of continuing with unprofitable book publishing, and, as a result, extravagances in this area became increasingly harder to justify (Muir, Personal interview).

This change in printing technologies and the prevailing economic circumstances, along with Wright’s ailing health, led Pegasus to virtually drop literature from its list and focus on the more predictable histories. Publications in general were also scaled back to about one per year in favour of commercial printing, and consisted of more dependable titles like the sixth edition of *Prospecting for Gold*, which appeared in 1980. In the same year, Albion Wright resigned as director to take up the less active role of chairman of directors (Low 24). His death in 1982 and the virtual withdrawal of Robin Muir from the operations of the company for personal reasons left Pegasus, in Muir’s words, “a rudderless ship completely” (Personal interview). *The Golden Reefs* by Darrell Latham was what Muir considered the “last real book” (Personal) produced by Pegasus and was published in 1984. Even in this case, few risks were
taken, with the author paying the full cost of its production (about $24 000). Its 1800-odd copies sold out in a few weeks, and highlighted the effectiveness of good marketing (as well as perhaps drawing attention to the past inadequacy of the distribution network operated by Pegasus). By printing several thousand extra dust-jackets on cheap paper, they saturated the West Coast with a direct mailout. The response would easily have allowed for a second edition, but the author was not amenable (Muir, Personal interview).

Under its new managing director, Don Wallace, Pegasus concentrated on its more profitable commercial printing side, obtaining a lucrative contract to print gaming cards on its new four-colour press for the local and overseas market. Print runs of 100 000-plus left little room for works of literature, especially when this change of emphasis corresponded with a surge in profitability (Low 75-6). However, this kind of commercial success from a small company was like a beacon in the takeover-hungry eighties. Low in capital but high in assets, Pegasus, like many other small New Zealand publishers, offered excellent opportunities for corporate takeover and asset stripping, and when Don Wallace retired in 1986, this is exactly what happened.

P.J. Skellerup, who had been on the board of directors at Pegasus since 1959, bought up Wallace's parcel of shares, thereby obtaining a majority shareholding. Initial indications were that Pegasus Press was going to be retained as a going concern, utilised, at least in part, to print Skellerup's advertising and promotional material. For a short time this was the case, but within a few months first the land and then the historic building that housed the Press were sold to Archibalds (later, appropriately enough, to become The Pegasus Arms). In December 1986, the plant, including the one million dollar four-colour press and a GTO Heidelberg, along with the rights to the Pegasus imprint, were sold to B.C.P. Limited. Some staff, such as former director Peter Low, continued for a short time with B.C.P., but most opted for early retirement, disillusioned with what they saw as betrayal by corporate decision-makers (Low 14-19). The last book to appear under the unusual hybrid "Pegasus/B.C.P. Ltd." was a history of the Oamaru freezing works in 1990 - a bathetic finale that perhaps Frame herself could have
One cannot help but be reminded of the words of Muir's fictional publisher, Harry, who identified quality as the keystone to the small printer-publisher's survival. His warning that "the day they [the major commercial printers] can turn out a better job than us we've had it" was almost prophetic in its application to the real-life Pegasus Press. The cut-throat eighties revealed the quality printer-publisher to be something of a dinosaur, unable to survive in the new, harsher economic climate. The time for acts of patronage was most definitely over, and it was clear that the luxury of having a printing plant at a publisher's disposal would be a casualty of retrenchment. The convenience of such a facility cannot be doubted, but its high capital cost and the inefficiency of putting through time-consuming bookwork - that may or may not return a profit - with resultant delays to commercial printing meant that it came at the cost of an increasingly decisive competitive edge. Initially this versatility had served them well, but in an increasingly specialised and competitive market, the compromise required to reconcile these two operations served neither especially well. Similarly, to have accorded literature first priority would have been financial suicide, so although Pegasus's approach was sustainable, it was becoming more difficult for them to do justice to their initial ideals regarding New Zealand literature.

Starting with Alistair Campbell's Mine Eyes Dazzle, Pegasus had built its reputation on quality - of both publishing list and presentation - and attention to detail, and because of an outmoded infrastructure, this reputation became increasingly hard to maintain. In financial terms the separation of the two components was a logical step, and one adopted by all the larger publishers based in New Zealand, the majority of whom by this stage sent their printing offshore, primarily to Hong Kong. What did not figure in this financial equation was the loss of quality control. Printing in-house meant actual hands-on control of the finished product,
as well as the ability to make last-minute alterations. Former production manager Peter Low noted that Pegasus's reputation for quality attracted highly skilled printers who enjoyed the variety and challenge of bookwork, and therefore took a much keener interest in maintaining those standards (Interview). Similarly, Muir described the typesetters as "back-stops" and marvelled at their familiarity with the Oxford University Press style manual (Personal interview). As technologies improved, the results of their competitors were probably rarely "the shoddy, uninspired, mediocre, ill-designed, completely nauseating printing" (Word 21) of which Robin Muir wrote, but at least one of those adjectives could often be attached to what resulted from such increased specialisation.

Looking back at the initial development of Pegasus Press, Muir nostalgically recalled the sense of post-war buoyancy in which they had set about the business of publishing:

There was a tremendous feeling of optimism in those days . . . [there was] a lack of competition . . . When a new book came out, everybody knew about it . . . [It was] in the newspapers, there were window displays, people talked about them and they sold. It was quite a thing. It's just a dull plot now in most cases, unless it's some All Black scandal. (Personal interview)

Fired with a more widespread national fervour, people wanted to read books by and about New Zealanders, and they were no longer apologetic about the writing emerging from their own country. There was already in place a strong infrastructure of booksellers (New Zealand having one of the highest ratios of bookshops to population in the world [Reed, Author 13; Rogers 1-2]) to aid distribution, and more importantly, few competing distractions. However, with the spread of television and in the face of a wider range of sporting and leisure activities, the publishing industry had to work harder to maintain its audience. Marketing, which had scarcely been an issue in the 1950s, came to take on increasing importance. Although lacking the resources of the subsidiaries of large overseas publishing companies,

106 In summarising Pegasus's intentions, Muir stated: "We deliberately did want to help New Zealand writing. People had been pretty apologetic about it in the past" (Personal interview).
Pegasus managed to maintain a reputation based on quality form and content. The increasingly successful operation of its jobbing printing was both a blessing and a burden, however. It enabled Pegasus to subsidise many of its less successful publishing ventures, but the safety net that it provided sometimes meant that attempts to sell or market a book once published were not as urgent as they might have been. Nevertheless, a number of brave publishing ventures were undertaken, and the foresight displayed by Pegasus has often been borne out by later reprintings by other presses - which have sometimes been more successful due to the author's by then established reputation.

It seems particularly appropriate that Alistair Campbell's admonition "[d]on't go into publishing books of verse except on a small scale and for fun" (Letter) was, for the most part, heeded by Pegasus, and this was reflected in Robin Muir's modest assessment of Pegasus's achievements: "It was a very small fish in a very small pond really, but for a brief period we did have a lot of fun" (Interview). This unpretentious summation seems entirely in harmony with the similarly modest aim of Pegasus "to produce books that were not a reproach to their country of origin." In terms of this unofficial charter they had been entirely successful, in fact producing books of a standard equal to, and in many cases better than elsewhere in the world. Building on the tradition started by Caxton Press, Pegasus established itself as a consistent supporter and promoter of New Zealand literature, but it was the continuity and professional approach of a successful business it brought to New Zealand letters at a time of uncertainty that was perhaps its greatest contribution. However, far from being staid, they were responsible for introducing and nurturing some of New Zealand’s most notable literary talents, and it was in no small part due to an initial sense of adventure that led them to embark on the publication of a number of works that good business sense would probably have advised against. The survival of Pegasus for almost forty years was a testament to their sound judgement, and their legacy of almost 100 volumes of poetry and over twenty works of fiction, as well as numerous works of history and biography, still stands as one of the most significant contributions to New Zealand’s cultural heritage.
The Byron of Burnside
and the
NAG'S HEAD PRESS

Printers

I speak now of printers and bookmen,
Praise men acknowledged great
Whose business has been display of words
Fragile as bones of birds,
Careful of how hyphens mate
Considering each comma, establishing
A style as precedent for the mile-
Wide errors of authors laughers
At their own inaccuracy.

(Glover, Or Hawk 78)
Of all the presses examined so far, perhaps the least likely to have had its origins in subversive printing activities is R.S. Gormack's Nag's Head Press, and yet it was in 1939, while preparing illicit anti-conscription pamphlets for the No More War Movement, that Bob Gormack “managed to acquire a certain facility with hand setting lines of display type, locking up printing forms and hand feeding both treadle and motorised platen presses - elementary basics of 'the trade'” (7).\(^2\) This introduction to the trade of printing was to prove a necessary prerequisite to the founding of the Nag's Head Press in more ways than one. But, as befitting the author of the nine "interminable, and interminably funny" (DG-AW 27/11/73) volumes of The Centennial History of Barnego Flat, the road to the founding of his press was a circuitous one, involving Graham Greene, mathematical graphs, some recreant "lurkers," and a well known Christchurch chemist with a penchant for taxidermy and powerful motorcycles.

Bob Gormack first arrived in Christchurch in 1936 to take up a job with the Public Trust, but after a short stint with them in both Christchurch and later Wellington, his interest in things literary drew him towards Victoria University. There he was impressed by the enthusiasm of a new lecturer from Scotland, Professor I.A. Gordon. Unfortunately, ill health and a lack of funds forced his early return to the South Island, where, after a period of rest, he again returned to university, this time to become “a kind of Russian-style 'permanent student'” (7) in Christchurch. His involvement in the pacifist movement led to the aforementioned involvement with surreptitious printing, and he was even present at a raid of the No More War

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1 So impressed was Denis Glover with Gormack's extended sonnet sequence in Swagger Jack that he dubbed Gormack “the Byron of Burnside” (DG-RG 23/11/73).

2 I am indebted to Bob Gormack's ninety-second publication, The Nag's Head Press: An Outline History and Descriptive Checklist of Publications to June 1992, for many of the subsequent details, which are supplemented by my own interviews with Mr Gormack. Where there is only a page reference, quotations are from the aforementioned publication.
Movement's rooms in what is now Chancery Lane. The activities of this organisation eventually led to the confiscation of its press - only for it to make a further, somewhat fortuitous, appearance some twenty years later in Gormack's publishing career; however, it was during the war years that the foundations for this particular career were laid.

With this recently acquired printing knowledge, Gormack supplemented his income by printing specialised graph papers at a church press in Rakaia. In the winter of 1944 he was offered this same machine with motor, accessories and a small quantity of type “on the best possible terms - no outlay whatsoever” (8). With friend and accountancy student A.D. McKenzie, he then proceeded to set up a printing business at 84 Hereford Street, naming it the Raven Press\(^3\) after a suitably literary namesake in Graham Greene's novel \textit{A Gun for Sale}. With Gormack as compositor and McKenzie looking after the books and soliciting work through his college contacts, the Raven Press soon bought a second platen press and employed a third person, Robin Williamson, on a casual basis to deal with the surplus. The bulk of their income was derived from the production of graph papers, gummed labels, and some jobbing work for the Student Association “sufficient in total to bring us into brief early rivalry with Caxton” (11).\(^4\)

In fact, this was not Gormack's first contact with the Caxton Press: he recalls being aware of Glover's presence through his interest in the literary scene, and, in his earlier student days, he had submitted what he described as a "wacky" poem, “which had no relevance to New Zealand at all” (Interview 1993), and which was consequently rejected.\(^5\) He also came into brief contact with Leo Bensemann in 1943 in connection with the printing of the New Zealand Universities student magazine, \textit{Rostrum}, of which Gormack was the editor. (He was later to become better acquainted with Bensemann in the early 1950s, when he would earn extra money on the weekends distributing type at the Caxton Press.) In retrospect, Gormack ac-

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\(^3\) The Raven Press still operates in Christchurch today.

\(^4\) Betting slips, however, were "never printed in any shape or form" (20).

\(^5\) Without knowledge of the actual poem, this still seems to be an interesting indication of bias in Caxton's editorial policy, even at this early stage.
knowledged the keenly felt presence of the Caxton Press: “anyone with the slightest interest in quality printing could not have helped but be aware of what Bensemann and Glover had then achieved in typography”;6 he then went on to admit that “[f]or my part, I think I was always out to emulate them but had everything to learn and could never really match them in equipment or artistry” (11).

In terms of materials, Gormack was initially restricted to the two or three sources of trade linotype setting (Baskerville being one of the few acceptable faces produced by this method) then available in Christchurch, as “the trade monotype development engineered by the Caxton Press worthies was away in the future” (11). However, by November 1945, Gormack had acquired a range of Gill sans-serif type, and, a little later, some Garamond “to be a little different from Caxton” (15),7 as well as Bodoni Medium and Madonna Ronde as a fancy script. To accompany this new diversity of type, their first cylinder press, a stick-flyer Wharfedale similar to that owned by Caxton, was added to their expanding business. Following in something of a tradition, Gormack had had no formal training in the printing trade and, like Leo Bensemann before him, learnt to operate the new machine by a process of trial and error.

This approach seemed to have met with at least moderate success as orders continued to flow in. The work was diverse and ranged from the Christchurch Girls’ High School annual magazine and the Canterbury University College Songbook to the protective wraparound covers used by the independent lending libraries. Although this last form of jobbing work was lucrative, it was to prove one of the factors in the disposal of the Raven Press. As well as including the name of the lending library concerned, these covers also came to have advertising on them, which was sold by a less than reputable breed of salesmen who Gormack dubbed “lurkers” (18). One such lurker disappeared owing the Raven Press something in excess of £500; al-

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6 In this regard, Gormack made special mention of Caxton’s 1940 type specimen book (Interview 1993).

7 This would seem to suggest that by this stage Caxton had a distinctive typographic house style, which consisted in the main of Caslon type. In a recent interview (1995) Gormack confirmed that this was the case.
though this was eventually recovered through the courts, it was a long and involved process. These events were enough for Gormack's partner, Doug McKenzie, to want to sell the press in 1948, and, not having sufficient capital to be able to buy him out, Gormack had reluctantly to accede.

However, before the sale finally went through Gormack had some niggling regrets:  

Had I not entered upon the venture away back with the secret desire and firm hope that I would be able to print some of my own early writings? ... Not only that but we had failed to publish anything of a literary nature. How differently had we performed from our ostensible rival, the Caxton Press, which had continued in its long-proclaimed way to build up its school of writers! (22)

It could be said that this purpose for establishing a press in New Zealand seems to have now established something of a precedent, but the aim of putting forth his own material was obviously secondary in Bob Gormack's case to the more immediate claim of simply making a living; nevertheless, in something of a carefree final fling, he not only published a miscellany of his own creative writing, but created a fictitious press and an equally fictitious cast of literary characters who were supposed to have written it. Both imaginary pressmen and press had their origins firmly in the compos(ition) room of the Raven Press: a mounted horse's head hung from the wall had provided a name for the new press - the Nag's Head Press - and it was here that a suitably loquacious street hawker and regular visitor had regaled Gormack as he printed with stories of an old friend of his, whose characteristics coalesced in the founder of the press, Jack Entwhistle.

'Bookie' 1 appeared in March 1948, and, despite its title, was not an early Best Bets, but more of a poetic punter's guide, bearing as it did more than a passing resemblance to the Caxton Press's own, recently-ceased miscellany, Book. Both connotations were deliberate, and Gormack recalled that when it appeared it caused something of a stir in Christchurch literary circles: "It did have quite an impact at the time ... [laughs] It was a tour de force and no question"
(Interview 1993). Its origins in particular gave rise to considerable speculation, and many thought that Glover himself had published this elaborate 100-page literary satire. (Only a tiny “RAVEN” imprint on the back cover gave away its true source.) The good-natured satire was nevertheless directed at what Gormack perceived to be “the cultural hegemony of the Caxton Press”: “The Caxtonians, though deservedly in receipt of all the publishing kudos going at the time, had, at least in the view of an outsider, become a little schoolish, monopolistic, and even intellectually overbearing i.e. disparaging of the nation’s rugby, racing and beer image” (23). Aside from the obvious comic aspect, the racing theme was doubly useful: it was both the dominant cultural mode in New Zealand at the time and the antithesis of any notion of high literary culture, as well as there existing within the racecourse itself the social distinction between the “inside” and “outside,” similar to that existing within and without the Caxton circle.

This clique aspect was exploited in a biting (although still good-humoured) extended parody, entitled “Specimen Days in New Zealand: A Continuous Extract from the Unpublished Journals of James Flaxbush” (51-97). These were the journals of James Flaxbush, a young writer of promise, who suffered from “mal de New Zealand” (Entwhistle 53), torn as he was between the dour Caxtonians and their more convivial (and race-going) literary rivals, the Nag’s Headers. The journals end abruptly with his departure for England. The satire was directed most pointedly at Holcroft’s essays and Curnow’s anthology of verse, which were continuously cited by his fellow Nag’s Headers as having a deleterious effect on the aspiring James Flaxbush. For example, Flaxbush comes across an artist friend by the banks of the Avon, who, when

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8 J.C. Reid included a couple of items from Bookie in his 1961 anthology of prose humour, The Kiwi Laughs. He described Bookie as an “odd jeu d’esprit,” which Gormack, in turn, found to be “a not unacceptable description” (27).

9 A specific instance of this satire is the sixtieth stanza of “The Ballad of Kaka Thompson,” which suggests that the imagery derived from Holcroft’s trilogy of essays (The Deepening Stream, Encircling Seas and The Waiting Hills) was not as definitive as it had been portrayed:

Nor did he dream the black bush stream
   Was deepening by degrees-
   The waiting hills were up ahead;
   Beyond the encircling seas . . . (37)
questioned, informs the young, aspiring author that he is “making a practical study of the slow deepening of this particular stream . . . The Christchurch Avon . . . The stream that doesn’t deepen,” and then concludes, “[s]ymbolically, it’s a fraud” (62). Although this episode was all in the nature of irreverent fun, the implication remains that the representation of the artist’s plight by “Caxtonians” was considerably more symbolic than actual. This criticism was elaborated on by another character who asked:

For one thing, why did they put so much emphasis on justifying themselves as creative workers, conjuring up either a state of geographical isolation (a resentment from the environment itself), or a cultural neglect on the part of their fellow New Zealanders, to account for their own inadequacy? . . . [it seems that] the artist must enter a halfway house and spend a large portion of his time convincing people that he was a bringer of benefits, a valuable man to have about the place from the point of view of cultural progress. So much the better if one could avoid, by this process, any real imaginative effort. (77-8)

Although satire seems to have been the primary aim, Joycean epiphanies and Rabelaisian digressions pepper the text, belying the literary lampooning and suggesting a more genuine, albeit out of favour, interest in things literary.

Writers and essayists were not the only subject of Gormack’s entertaining satire - typography, inextricable as it was from the Caxton poets, also came in for similar treatment. In the introduction (entitled “Speaking for Ourselves” after the Caxton-published collection of short stories edited by Frank Sargeson), this intention was made clear: “Typographically, too, we intend to turn topsy-turvy many pretentious topical technical tendencies” (8). This ranged from a page of fictional display types (49), “Some Type Faces at a Glance” (86) with accompanying poems that parodied the page of the same name that appeared in Book,10 and also an

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10 Compare:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sans-Serif Types, If Closely Spaced</th>
<th>SANS-SERIF TYPES, IF CLOSELY SPACED ARE ALWAYS IN THE BEST OF TASTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gill sans-serif</td>
<td>Gill sans-serif rings the bell;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Bookie 1, 86)</td>
<td>Though zeal in it may be misplaced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unless the lines are widely spaced.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Book 7, 32)
"advertisement" for a limited edition pamphlet from the Nag's Head Press, entitled "A Vindication of the Chamber of Commerce against what has been objected to it by 'Singing Harry,' 'Whim Wham,' D.G., A.R.D.F., M.H., A.C. & divers others by a self-made merchant" (58). Furthermore, a Maori lament, "New Zealand!", concluded not only with a translator's note, but with one from the editor, typographical adviser, linotype operator, proofreader, compositor and, finally, the printer, who had been roused to lyrical heights by the printing of such material:

As I worked on this job I could not help thinking, with some pride, of the humble contribution I was making to New Zealand literature. Such things are worth-while! I am a representative of the working class and I can say so without, I hope, any trace of sentimentality. There can be no comparison between doing work of this kind and ordinary, commercial printing jobs. Work of this nature makes one feel an individual, a craftsman. One becomes conscious of one's soul. (48)

In his good-humoured way, Gormack acknowledges the considerable contribution of the many people involved in book production, while at the same time grounding literary endeavours in a wider, less privileged context. This seems to confirm McGann's assertion that "[w]riting that is carried out in such a context [small press] is forced, by nature of the situation, to confront its material, its economic, its social relations" (Black 113). Certainly, Gormack's work implicitly rejects the lofty notion that there is some kind of classical type style, unrelated to its particular cultural context, which is somehow inherently more readable than any other. In fact, he specifically flaunts the speciousness of such a notion in Bookie 2, where the editor looks forward to

the time when all standard Nag's Head literary works will be available in small uniform editions, printed in as many different typefaces as there are psychological groups among human beings. The time is not far off, he says, when any individual will be able to undergo a test to determine the type-face most agreeable to his or her reading temperament. (60)
For Gormack to find such ample satirisable material, despite the obvious fact that he was a printer himself, is a very good indication of the (high) seriousness with which the Caxton Press endowed this aspect of their endeavours. In further mockery of the exclusivity associated with Caxton Press, Bookie 1 was stated as having been “limited to 200 numbered copies” (4) when in actual fact there was more like 500 copies - un-numbered. Nevertheless, it did represent something of a printing achievement, the entire one hundred pages - twenty-three of them handset - having been produced by Gormack alone on a two-on platen (26).

By poking fun at what he saw as their “schoolish” (23) pursuit of high culture, his good-humoured complaints anticipated much of the criticism levelled at Landfall in later years and yet appeared after only its first issue. For Gormack, who had much respect for the Georgian tradition, Caxton’s literary demarcation was too narrowly delineated and he recognised the inherent contradiction of a “national” literature which set itself above the society it claimed to be defining. That such an “artist must . . . spend a large portion of his time convincing people that he was a bringer of benefits” (Entwhistle 77) seemed to confirm their increasing lack of touch with a wider community. Gormack’s satire, then, makes it plain that the alienation of the “Caxtonian” author was more a case of self-imposed exile than the oft-cited cultural neglect.

There seemed to have been two other factors involved in the publication of Bookie that are of interest here. Firstly, it provided an opportunity for Gormack (through his fictional personae) to mount something of a rearguard action in support of the much maligned Georgian poets. In the introductory remarks to Bookie 1, “The Ballad of Kaka Thompson” was cited as an example of nineteenth century ballad-making that provided “a most satisfactory answer to the many contemporary New Zealand writers - particularly those of the modern Caxton Press school - who still maintain, either directly or by provocative innuendo, that their native land has no poetical and literary traditions worth following or worth investigating” (18). What the “Caxtonites” treated as non-existent was still of significant interest and importance to a number
of their contemporaries. Far from being “without parentage” (Baxter, Recent 6), their movement was a part of a literary genealogy which encompassed Georgianism, although they had done their best to suppress this fact in order to give credence to their claims of spontaneous cultural nationalism. Gormack himself admitted to enjoying the Georgian poets and, when interviewed in 1993, he still had on hand an anthology of their verse edited by Henry Newbolt, entitled New Paths on Helicon, which he recalled as being particularly popular at the time. Ironically, this collection included both Pound and Eliot, whom Gormack remembered as being the source of this criticism of Georgianism, and so his aim had been to place the “Caxtonians amongst these intellectual verse writers . . . in that satirical way . . . of giving my allegiance to the Georgians” (Interview 1993).

The second point of interest in Bookie appeared in the character of J.A.K. Hay - a thinly disguised J.K. Baxter. Gormack perceived at the time that the growing superciliousness of Caxton Press was “completed by the arrival of little Baxter on the scene. He came trailing such clouds of glory . . . people tended to resent him a bit . . . he was welcomed into the Caxton fold with great alacrity, and it was a factor in stimulating this opposition” (Interview 1993). The fact that this “opposition” was, for the most part; good-natured fun should not, of course, be overlooked. Nevertheless, this friendly reminder to over-zealous “Caxtonites” would seem to suggest that the literary vacuum that existed prior to the emergence of the Phoenix generation was not quite as pronounced as they would like to have made out. In trying to define their movement as a unique and spontaneous cultural expression, the “Caxtonites” were characterised by Gormack as ignoring or deliberately obscuring their literary origins, which were more evolutionary than revolutionary.

The emergence of a new generation of writers can be much more usefully understood in terms of the larger international modernist movement (a context that is much more readily acknowledged in art historical analysis of the same period). When one character in Bookie 1, H. Churchill Wakefield, remarked, “they [the Caxtonians] want culture, and they go after it,
flying in the teeth of the obvious. . . Culture a full-time occupation. . . Culture an aggressive weapon; better still, a political weapon" (57), one can begin to gain a better understanding of New Zealand's peculiar literary culture, where vigorous expression of writers' rights to express themselves often had the effect of establishing a creative elite. What had given particular force to their claims were changes to the dissemination of literature: the local publishing house was now an incubator for new literary movements and, viewed in those terms, represented a significant advance for New Zealand literature.

Bookie: The Cultural Miscellany for Passionate Punters Number Two Containing Three Tales of Jack Entwhistle appeared in January 1950, and was, according to the title page, printed "under the kindly cultural auspices of A.W. & the Pegasus Press, ChCh." Albion Wright, whom Gormack vaguely remembered as having offered to buy out his own Raven Press "in his great determination to rival his friend Glover as a printer/publisher" (28), had offered him some part-time copy work at his newly established Pegasus Press - which certainly did rival Glover's concern - in 1947, and this had subsequently turned into a full-time position. However, working at Pegasus merely facilitated the production of the second issue, and the imprint remained that of the Nag's Head. Written with "more of a set literary purpose" (28) in mind, this second volume contained three droll tales, with the major influence again being Gormack's French reading (particularly Rabelais), as well as a diverse range of other sources from Chaucer to Joyce; as regards the last influence, he was more expansive: "I was clearly in thrall to the James Joyce of Ulysses and Finnegans Wake, which could have made things difficult for all but the happy few - and New Zealand's fewer than few!" (32).

Despite these more serious literary pretensions, Bookie still did not stray very far from satire, and the book opened with a frontispiece of a considerably more salacious version\(^{11}\) of The Pleasure Garden (see Figure 19), a painting which had caused considerable controversy in Christchurch at the time. Unfortunately for Gormack, even this was not enough to secure a

\(^{11}\) The frontispiece version was drawn by Robert Brett, a commercial artist used extensively by Pegasus Press.
sufficient readership, and, in suitably "turf-ish" terms, he summed up its performance: "If Bookie No. 1 at least gained a place in the readership stakes, No. 2 somehow failed at the start and ran dead last" (32). As if to foreshadow Alan Loney's experience (with Rhys Pasley's book) some years later, the majority of this particular edition was destroyed for want of sales; although this event was not as glum as the title page might have suggested: the stated 1950 copies were simply another Gormack side-swipe at the proliferation of Canterbury Centennial material - material which, ironically, provided a considerable windfall for the Pegasus Press (31).

A year and a half later what was to be the final issue of Bookie appeared. This, too, was something of a change of pace, the whole issue being devoted to "Swagger Jack: A Station Tale," a narrative poem in regular ten-line, rhyming stanzas. Again, its humorous rural aspect belied the literary source (for the tale-in-verse form at least) behind it: a translation of Pushkin's Eugène Onégin (35). This received more enthusiastic support, although still somewhat limited in terms of numbers sold. Basil Dowling and D.M. Anderson were among its ardent supporters, and even a number of years after its publication, Denis Glover seemed particularly inspired by it: "Your neo-sonnet 10-line form is, apart from often brilliant expression, artfully and beautifully turned to theme . . . We shall have to call you the Byron of Burnside" (DG-RG 23/11/73). Reviewing it in Landfall, James Bertram departed from the usually serious tone of that particular journal and approached "Swagger Jack" in a manner similar to that in which it was offered. He offered in return some thoughts on its "New Zealand-ness" - "surely there must be some connexion between the campfire or drover's hut, and this elaborate dilation of
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and put it in something of a historical perspective: "Some day an enterprising research student in literature or psychology ('a seagull pecking at a stranded whale') will write a history of New Zealand humour" and suggested that the conclusion of such research would be "that New Zealand humour, like New Zealand sport, must be taken seriously" (315-6).

Certainly, the typographic flair represented by "Swagger Jack" suggested that Gormack should be taken seriously (despite Bertram's observation that "the best jokes are typographic" [316]) as a printer. The bookwork and monotype handling that he had become familiar with at Pegasus seemed to have had an effect on his printing style. Gormack had adopted a restrained typographic style for the book reminiscent of Caxton, which was probably due to the fact that Glover had been working for Pegasus on and off up until his dismissal from Caxton (it was after "Swagger Jack's" publication that Glover worked full-time for Pegasus as typographical adviser), and that the display headings were in the Legend script type favoured by Leo Bensemann. However, some pen and ink drawings and the decorative fleurons at the top of each page distinguish it as slightly more private press in its orientation. By not abandoning this style, Gormack continued to react against the austerity adopted by Caxton. McGann's explanation that "[t]he [decorative] textual move is the opposite of transcendental ... the work forces us to attend to its immediate iconic condition" (Black 75) seems to be borne out in the New Zealand context, where Gormack's efforts can be read as an attempt to deal more directly with his material, social and economic environment than his more well known contemporaries.

In The Arts in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the authors affirm that "art must pass down a long industrial chain with a complex division of labour. It has to cross many thresholds, be scrutinised by all-powerful gatekeepers and be subject to a number of administrative, financial and technological operations over which artists have little or no control" (Beatson and Beatson 161). Yet by perpetuating the notion of typography as a subsidiary art that merely conveyed
the author's message to the reader, Caxton obscured the power of its own position while
affirming the significance of the artist. The impact on those outside the Caxton circle was
clearly demonstrated in the reception of Gormack's own work, which was dismissed because
comic effect was mistaken for intention. Although his literary aspirations were sincere and
genuine, the concentration on the author (narrowly defined) fostered by Caxton 12 meant that
influences drawn from beyond the endorsed Anglo-centric canon were discounted. For Bookie
was, in part, a deliberate attempt to counter Caxton's increasingly saturnine aspect, but it was
also a direct result of Gormack's readings of Rabelais and Joyce. Similarly, his penchant for
wordiness ran counter to the narrowly delineated "New Zealand-ness" of taciturn realism. His
exuberant (by contrast to that exhibited in Landfall) humour was thus interpreted as a lack of
"serious" commitment to a nationalist literature, rather than an attempt to broaden the scope
of such a body of work.

That Gormack's influences were out of favour was apparent from the poor sales of the final
two, less satiric issues of Bookie. The fact that even Bertram's sympathetic review of "Swagger
Jack" had sought to examine Gormack's work in terms of its "New Zealand-ness" serves to
demonstrate the pervasiveness in criticism of Caxton's narrowly defined nationalistic terms of
reference. Gormack's work was not only an attempt to broaden this definition of "New Zea-
land-ness," but, generally, to seek a more inclusive literature. That it was necessary to publish
under his own imprint in order to do this was compelling evidence of Caxton's definitive
power. The appearance of his works in a more private press format was determined by the
limited resources at his disposal, but, in keeping with that tradition, this had the effect of
drawing attention to their making. By re-asserting the bookmaking practice in this way,
Gormack can be seen to be rejecting the concept of a disinterested art, which stood apart from
social practice, that was increasingly being encouraged by Caxton.

12 Glover specifically criticised Lowry's typography because it "spoke for itself," rather than for the author who
briefed it ("Typography: Bob"). By contrast, Sargeson's Speaking for Ourselves epitomised the nationalistic aesthet-
thetic conveyed by an artistic avant-garde.
As with the previous edition of *Bookie*, "Swagger Jack" (*Bookie* 3) was run off, after hours, at Pegasus, and it was under Albion Wright's "auspices" that Gormack remained while the Nag's Head Press was in abeyance. As well as working on a number of elegant, limited-edition historical books with Denis Glover, Gormack developed his layout and design skills with Wright who, through his advertising agency, had had considerable experience in this field (Interview 1993). However, a number of factors combined to precipitate a move from Pegasus; these included the arrival of a new factory manager, the sale of Gormack Graph Papers to Dennis Donovan at Caxton Press, and Gormack's own marriage in 1955. The sale of the graph papers raised enough money for a trip to England, where Gormack followed in something like Glover's footsteps some ten years previously: he visited the St Bride's Typographical Library and, armed with a letter of introduction from the local Christchurch Monotype agent, met with the great typographer Beatrice Warde and, fittingly enough, ended up discussing Caxton's type specimen books. He also met with Dr. John Johnson of the Oxford University Press, who also "affectionately remembered" (RG-DG 14/3/56) Glover from his war visit.

Unfortunately, unlike Glover, Gormack did not have a Royal Navy commission to support his travels, and, to compound his difficulties, he had neither formal apprentice training nor a union card, which made it especially difficult for him to obtain work. He nevertheless obtained sporadic work and utilised this opportunity to continue with his literary endeavours: he told Glover in a letter of August 1956 that he had written two three-act plays, one of which he had entered in the Southland Centennial Play Competition (9/8/56). Also while in England, he sent Albion Wright a manuscript for *Bookie* 4, which he described to Glover in the following terms:

It is only part of a bigger scheme . . . With your taste for clear, incisive prose, it is hard to ask you to be patient with my long-winded stuff, but how else can one indulge one's love for Joyce and Rabelais? . . . The general idea was to take my Nag's Head Club members back among their lusty New Zealand pioneers - satire on the ridiculous in modern pioneer-worship. There should be good fun in it for those that can penetrate
Although this fourth edition was never to eventuate, this description is a virtual blueprint for the long-running Barnego Flat series that Gormack began in 1964. The influence of his time at Pegasus is again evident, in that a considerable amount of their list (and consequently their reputation) had been built on well-presented local history books. It is worth noting that this was not the last time that Wright was approached to publish Gormack’s work. Casting around for publishing ideas, Glover wrote to Wright in 1963: “Have been reading through the much-overlooked Bookie. Bob Gormack had something unique. A selection from it - a generous selection - might just return the penning [printing?]. He never tried to publish or publicise it” (23/10/63). Nothing, however, seemed to have come of the request.

It was to the Pegasus Press that Gormack returned in 1957, or more specifically Albion Wright Advertising, this time to work more on the editorial side. In a letter to Glover he described the Pegasus operations as “on the up and up” (19/5/57), although he was not particularly happy with the decrease in the amount of composing work available and the corresponding increase in the use of the Rotoprint, a fast photosetting machine for jobbing printing. Despite the pay being regular, the work was not, and although he was very grateful to the “well nigh philanthropic Albion Wright” (39), Gormack was quite relieved to receive another (and fortunately more lucrative) offer from Whitcombe and Tombs in 1960. A new editor had been recently appointed there and Gormack was taken on for his practical experience of book editing and production (40). Whitcombe and Tombs, which Glover always referred to as “The Octopus,” was by far the largest publisher in Christchurch and the only truly national one, due in a large part to its monopoly on scholastic publications. It had not, however, been renowned for its book production, but this had changed somewhat with the acquisition, for its own exclusive use, of the small Monotype trade setting firm set up by Glover and Bensemann,13 thus allowing Gormack access to a full range of classic Monotype book faces and printers’ flowers.

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13 Glover and Bensemann had encouraged Burch Steele to set up the trade setting firm, and selected the typefaces for him, but they did not actually run the business (see chapter two).
It seems most fitting, and in some ways almost inevitable, that Bob Gormack should have become the proxy custodian for the lovingly selected fine letterpress upon which Caxton and Pegasus had built their reputation, and which were, even by this stage, becoming increasingly anachronistic with the more widespread use of photosetting. And yet, although his time at Whitcombe and Tombs gave him considerable satisfaction, such a large firm obviously did not have the same flexibility to allow Gormack to pursue his own, somewhat erratic literary peregrinations. He also wanted control over his own product and the satisfaction which comes with such an undertaking. It was for this reason that a detached shed had been standing vacant at the back of his Memorial Avenue property - awaiting a “private” press on which he could pursue his modest literary ambitions. The rationale for such a press is perhaps best explained by Gormack himself:

GORMACK. I was really into printing. That was my life really and trying to write as well.

AUTHOR. The two went together?

GORMACK. Yes, yes, especially when you're writing unpublishable stuff. The publisher's not going to pay you any money. If you want to print it, you've got to print it yourself. . . [laughs]. (Interview 1993)

This seems to be the epitome of the appellation “private-press publishable.”

The actual acquisition of a press occurred in 1964, in the sort of mixture of chance and coincidence that seemed to be a feature of many Christchurch publishing arrangements. During a chance meeting with the local Corso secretary and prominent peace campaigner, R. Thurlow Thompson, Gormack was offered a dismantled Harrild treadle press that had lain unused in a woman's garage for over twenty years, ever since it had been confiscated by the police during the war. For a token donation to Corso, Gormack could have the press - the same press on which he had learnt his trade, sheet-feeding anti-conscription notices at the beginning of the war! After two key brackets had been made up to replace the ones presumably removed by the police, the press was duly installed and type was chosen (41-2). As his
basic text Gormack settled on Monotype Caslon, which had been used at Pegasus on their fine limited edition books, and which had also been Glover's initial type of choice at Caxton. These essentials remained virtually unchanged to the present day, and with them Gormack has managed to produce, in his spare time, an impressive array of 104 hand-set and hand-printed books in just over thirty years.

The first book to appear from the now permanently located Nag's Head Press was Part One of what was to be known as The Progressive Piecemeal Printing of the Centennial History of Barnego Flat. As with most Nag's Head productions, it was entirely hand-set and then laboriously printed off one page at a time. As the fictional editor of the "history," E. Dadds, put it in the preface to the first part: "it [piecemeal printing] has since proved to be the process most suited at present to the staffing, mechanical and other facilities of our worthy printers, the Nag's Head Press" (62). This was in many ways an extension of the Bookie idea, and, in description, bore a remarkable resemblance to the fourth issue submitted - but never published - to Pegasus (see earlier quotation). However, the historical setting of Barnego Flat owed a great deal to Gormack's time at Pegasus as well as to the general publishing environment of Christchurch during this period; Gormack explained: "New Zealand's centennial in 1940, Otago's in 1948 and Canterbury's in 1950 had spawned a great many publications, district histories among them. The idea of centennials was in the air all through the 1950s and beyond" (45). It is not surprising, then, that Gormack, with his alert eye for satire, should pick out pioneer worship as a potentially fertile subject, especially as both Caxton and Pegasus were particularly sought after by historical groups for the quality of their presentation, as well as for a certain amount of prestige value that attached to their imprints.

14 Also, the cover illustration was drawn by Robert Brett, the graphic artist used extensively by Pegasus and occasionally by Caxton Press.

15 This was re-stated in Barnego Flat itself: "It rains district histories . . . likewise and in much the same category and suiting the same familiar phrase, it plente centennial studies. In fact, it fairly teems regional centennial histories" (Dadds 15-6).
Comprising ten parts to date (the last appeared in 1994), this rambling fictional narrative traced events in the lives of the pioneer ancestors of the Nag's Head subscribers, and, like its title, utilised a style familiar to readers of *Bookie*, and which Denis Glover summed up in his inimitable way: "Your muse is a rambler, a Peregrine Pickle, a discursive Rabelais-Cervantes" (DG-RG 23/11/73). Although a representative example is difficult to isolate because of this discursive quality, the following excerpt is fairly typical:

> The wholly original and delightful spirit in which the Flat was altogether pioneered; the warm, glowing, richly human light which, almost without exception, irradiates and suffuses the recorded events of the district's history; above all, the stalwart, rumbunctious, enterprising, forthright, courageous, dedicated, resolute, rorty, forward looking, bold, formidable, vociferous, uproarious, powerfully operative, incorrigible, unflinching, somewhat Rabelasian and Falstaffian nature of the first settlers on Barnego. (Dadds 21)

In fact (or fiction in this case), the entire cast derived from the original Nag's Head subscribers of the first issue of *Bookie*, and was extended to include the Barnego Flat Balladeers' Club and Horse-followers' Guild, as well as the First Four Bullock Wagons (a reference to the First Four Ships of Canterbury settlement) on which these pioneers travelled to the new settlement of Barnego Flat. As these titles suggest, the strong parochial tradition that is particularly evident in Canterbury was treated with a spirit of comic irreverence. However, the attention to detail and characterisation, and to accuracy of representation would suggest that **Barnego Flat** is more than a parodying pastiche; it could equally be taken as a tribute to a comic spirit as necessary to the pioneer as their wagons and ploughs, but which is often overlooked by overearnest researchers and amateur historians. By contrast with the latter, Gormack tends to place more emphasis on "those elements of fun and nonsense which can never be overlooked when studying an aspect of Barnego Flat history" (Dadds, *Part 2* 203).

The description of **Barnego Flat** by the editor Dadds as "[a] true-to-type district history" (Part
119) would certainly seem to be true, but it was also compositionally “true to type,” in a very real, physical sense - that is, most of it was “written” straight onto the composing stick (Personal 1993). This unusual method of authorship rarely involved drafts and the results tended to belie the seemingly capricious nature of such a process. (It is especially interesting - and not a little surprising considering their antithetical writing styles - that Alan Loney also utilised this method.) In fact, because hand-setting type is such a deliberate and time-consuming business, and to a certain extent irrevocable (in the sense that once a page is printed, the type is “dissed” or distributed back into the type case), much care and attention goes into composing it, both editorially and typographically. Although admitting that the first part was “a little undergraduate,” Gormack affirmed in an interview that, far from being carelessly thrown together, Barnego Flat was “worked at as prose” (Personal 1993). For Gormack, the type case offered a panoply of descriptive possibilities, as many of which were to be utilised as possible, especially for humorous ends.

The next Nag’s Head publication did not appear until the following year, and represented something of a change of face16 for the Nag’s Head Press (see Figure 20), in that it was its first wholly serious literary offering. Six Songs and The Wake was a collection of poetry written by John Caselberg, whom Gormack had met when he was working at Pegasus Press and Caselberg had been included in their New Zealand Poets series. In keeping with the close bond between literature and art in Christchurch, the poems of “The Wake” formed the text of sixteen large canvases painted by Colin McCahon in 1958 (47). It also appeared in a distinctive small format similar to that used with Barnego Flat (although with something of a bibliographic heresy in that it was stapled rather than sewn), but it made use of ornamental borders on the cover.

16 From the sixth book onwards, the Press had two different horse-head logos: a more dignified one designed by Robert Brett for literary titles and the original, more cartoon-like version for non-literary or humorous titles.
and title-page. This same year also saw the expansion of Caxton Press and the retirement of Ray Elliott, their factory manager, who had been a very helpful source of offcuts for Gormack. Another “lost to the cause” (RG-DG 19/8/65) was John Walton,17 whose mechanical expertise had been integral to the initial assembly of the Harrild treadle platen, and had helped with the first few Nag’s Head publications.

A further serious piece followed in 1966 in the form of a dramatic monologue by Dora Somerville entitled Maui’s Farewell, which had been recommended by Denis Glover. A detailed correspondence ensued between the two printers, with Glover betraying his more classical approach by favouring a much more austere layout of centred text and wide letter-spacing (DG-RG 8/12/66). Nevertheless, Gormack’s more decorative approach won out simply by virtue of the fact that by the time Glover had received the proof, the title page had already been printed (48). Perhaps a further factor in Gormack’s inclination for decoration was the acquisition of four trays of old borders when two old city printeries - Purses and Willis and Aitken - merged (RG-DG 19/8/65), and this bonus was represented by the old-style wooden shapes on the cover.

The piecemeal printing of Barnego Flat continued, with the second part appearing in 1966 in the same format as Part One. This contained an account of the discovery of moa bones on the Flat, complete with illustrated artifacts such as the the “Dadds Adze” (175) and a “Calcified Droppings Fragment” (185). Although these were stories worthy of a West Coast publican,18 such was the meticulous detail with which they were catalogued and described (complete with footnotes, cross-referencing and mock-scholarly comment) that parts were even reproduced in scientific journals for humorous effect. The following year saw the first (Letters to Joe) of six books printed for John Summers, a well-known Christchurch second-hand bookseller and

17 Walton took with him a heavy old platen acquired from Purse’s, a Christchurch printer, and later, with the acquisition of a motorised platen, started his own private press, the Arbor Press, operating out of Akaroa. (See appendix.)

18 An Arthur’s Pass publican claimed to have photographed a living moa in February 1993.
friend of Glover’s. At over 100 pages and in the relatively large edition of 300 copies, it was not surprising that this volume of verse was the only book to appear from the press in 1967.

Considering that Gormack was working full-time at Whitcombe and Tombs (and consequently had to be a little circumspect about his “competing” publishing activities [RG-DG 18/3/68]), his average output of two books a year on his single platen was no small achievement. (By way of comparison, Alan Loney considered that four books per year was a realistic expectation for a full-time private press [Interview].) Nineteen sixty-eight saw Gormack achieve his target of two books. His friendship with Glover had yielded another, slightly unusual manuscript, in the form of a tongue-in-cheek letter by A.R.D. Fairburn concerning an unpaid bill. As Fairburn’s literary executor, Glover was able to give permission for it (entitled A Slight Misunderstanding) to appear as a separate publication - publication that would only ever be contemplated through a private press (RG-DG 20/2/68).

The Nag’s Head Press followed through with another author who had had his first book published by Pegasus when Peter Hooper’s second volume of verse was published in 1969. Negotiations for this publication (and, subsequently, a number of others) were conducted through John Caselberg, himself an author published that year. His volume, The Voice of the Maori, was described in Gormack’s checklist as “a culture-conflict anthology” (52) and reproduced evidence of Maori grievances from early literature. In terms of its format, the small size - an eighteen-line page - was dictated by the availability of materials, in this case, some paper offcuts that were to hand. A further addition to the Nag’s Head list, and one that Gormack was particularly pleased to acquire, was Denis Glover. Myself when Young, a small collection of Glover’s youthful verse, “did nothing for Glover’s reputation” (53) according to the Nag’s Head checklist, but the volume did, fittingly, contain an epitaph to the Caxton Club (see epigraph to chapter two). Coincidentally, Gormack chose to set the verse in Caslon Italic, because he had seen, and admired, two Scottish rhymes set in it in the Caxton type specimen book (RG-DG 19/3/70). The combination of the Nag’s Head imprint and Glover’s name seemed
to be enough to attract the interest of booksellers: of the 150 copies there were advance orders for 80 and two booksellers - one in Dunedin and one in Tasmania - offered to take the whole edition (RG-DG 18/3/70). This combination of Glover's flamboyant character and his printing background made this an ideal private press package that offered something unusual for the collector.

In the same year Glover also sent a further "wodge of stuff" (26/6/70) for Gormack to edit as he chose and as the constraints of his enterprise allowed: "Your resources dictate things more than my words, which can always be put back in the dictionary" (26/6/70). The importance with which both regarded quality presentation was also made clear by Glover: "The printing is the thing, and all the ramifications appertaining thereto should it look like something knocked off between late lunch and afternoon tea"; nevertheless, he had confidence in Gormack's abilities and appreciated his efforts: "I am prouder of your press than my own work." Such was his admiration that he even provided Gormack with a second book of love poems, To a Particular Woman. This was published in a distinctively private press edition, in that fifty of the edition of three hundred were especially casebound, and it included a lineblock taken from a book by one of the earliest presses, that of Paulus Manutius. 19 The following year these poems were included in a considerably plainer volume published by Glover's own Catspaw Press.

Gormack himself certainly had reason to be proud of his effort in 1970, in that his output for that year totalled a prodigious five books, three of which involved Robert Lamb to a greater or lesser extent. 20 Lamb, the Reference Librarian at the Canterbury Public Library, was "a cham-

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19 In an interview with the author, Alan Loney described how "books about books" were the most saleable in the private press market (poetry being the least). Limited editions, for obvious reasons, also increase a book's interest to collectors.

20 In 1970 alone Lamb edited Pioneers in Protest: No Gains without Drains Being Letters, Mainly of Complaint. Culled from the Archives of the Christchurch City Council, provided a copy of a rare pamphlet for The New Zealand and Australian Songster, as well as organising an anniversary bagpipe recital to coincide with an historical event revealed in the fourth part of the Barnego Flat series (54-6).
pion of Barnego history” (54) and close friend of Gormack's. On many occasions he was to provide unconventional archival material (such as that relating to early Christchurch drainage in *Pioneers in Protest*) of sufficient interest or anomaly to warrant private press printing, and he also made a number of the initial approaches to Gormack on behalf of other authors. Although the subject matter was predominantly of a local nature, Nag's Head books still attracted the interest of the wider international private press community, particularly across the Tasman. Geoffrey Farmer, who wrote a regular bibliophiles' column in the *Australian Book Review*, devoted an entire article to “High Jinks at Barnego Flat,” in which he praised the work of the Nag's Head Press and, in particular, the Banego series (four to that date). Ironically, such was its “authenticity” that he appeared to take it at face value, accepting it as an authentic, if somewhat unusual, piece of New Zealand local history. The Australian connection was extended in 1971, when James Dally, an antiquarian bookseller from Tasmania, perhaps inspired by Farmer's article, commissioned Gormack to reprint the first of many rare historical documents: *Scheme of a Voyage* was “printed for the publisher, James Dally, Hobart, Tasmania” (56) and his later books were to appear under the Sullivan's Cove imprint.

Historical extracts and journals continued to be the staple of Nag's Head publications, but more literary efforts were rarely absent for long periods from the publishing list. Basil Dowling contributed three in three consecutive years, beginning with *A Little Gallery of Characters* in 1971. Another author introduced by Bob Lamb, Dowling was, however, not unknown to Gormack, who had been aware of his pacifist stance during the war and his early verse collections published by Caxton Press (57). Dowling's second book, *Bedlam: A mid-century satire*, was distinguished amongst Nag's Head publications in that it was one of the few books to be machine set in Monotype Caslon, mainly because, after twelve years, Gormack's type was beginning to wear out. As well as publishing the third Dowling volume in 1973, Gormack was approached by Glover to print a volume of Allen Curnow's poetry, *An Abominable Temper and other poems* (26/7/73). This was to appear under a joint imprint with Glover's *Catspaw*.

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21 This was the title of the article.
Glover held Curnow’s verse in high regard and was closely involved in the production process through a lengthy correspondence. I propose to deal with this in some detail because of the insights it provides into the juggling and compromise involved in such a process. Constrained by the publication of Curnow’s collected poems by Reeds the following year, Glover had set early December as the publication date (DG-RG 26/7/73). This had the further advantage of being able to get the book included in the end-of-year sales and review notices, a cheaper alternative to expensive advertising and a consequent saving on cost and, therefore, retail price. Not wishing “to saddle an over-willing Nag” (DG-RG 26/7/73), he had tentatively approached Gormack in July with the tight deadline, but Gormack was confident that he could complete the project in time. Apart from the reasonable cost and flexible timetable of the Nag’s Head Press, Gormack’s imprint was also worth money in itself: such a small print run (of 333 books) had added value coming from a private press relatively well known in bibliographic circles (not to mention the added guaranteed sales to bibliophiles, who may not otherwise have purchased such a volume). Glover was also astute enough to realise that a meticulous approach to matters of presentation conferred a special status on the verse as well, implying that the content warranted such treatment (a factor that Alan Loney was later to exploit). The spartan approach particularly emphasised conceptual arguments, such as the necessity of a spare (see below for Gormack’s comments to this effect) writing style in order to produce “serious” poetry.

Although both Glover and Gormack obviously shared a passion for quality printing, publishing involved other factors, as Glover acknowledged in one of his letters: “Marks on paper can

22 Glover wrote: “Imprint: Wd it be reasonable to suggest a joint one - Catspaw Press, Wgtn & Nag’s Head, Chch? Odd, but I hope we are both still oddities” (26/7/73).

23 On receiving his copies of The Abominable Temper, Glover declared: “With Fairburn, Mason, Curnow, we can inform English poetry. Not that the epicene English, Bloomsbury self-centred, can either speak or write English” (DG-RG 11/11/73).
be manipulated. But we both know that expedience, from the publishing point of view, can't be scrupulous" (10/8/73); therefore, further savings of both time and money were made by rejecting case binding in favour of a sewn limp cover, and having the book trade-set (as opposed to hand-set) in Monotype. This latter decision was also explained by Glover:

I am delighted that it will be set Monotype. Saves, and diss, and time . . . intelligent styling is something you know as well as I do. I used to tell my correspondence apprentices Set Mono, even Lino if you must because then it's into the pot with the lot; the Meynells latched onto this with Nonsuch [sic]. Style the book in a few hand set pages, then use the machine . . . One great advantage of the Mono is that you can fiddle it to your eye's best advantage. One other advantage is that Allen who is properly meticulous about print can sight his own proofs.24 (21/8/73)

So, by mid-August, Gormack had done the costings, which included fifty dollars for the Monotype from Express Typesetters; together with the paper (about twenty dollars) and binding (at twenty cents per copy), the cost price worked out at ninety-five cents a copy (RG-DG 17/8/73). Retail was worked out on the standard basis of three times the cost price, but, because this would have meant a rather hefty price for a slim thirty-six page volume, $2.50 was finally settled on. Glover commented: "I once published poets at about sixpence (more than they were probably worth). Now they can pay for Curnow, Gormack and Glover, a third Triumverate [sic]" (7/11/73).

After providing the page proofs at the end of August, Gormack then received two pages of corrections and additions from Allen Curnow along with some typographic advice from Glover

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24 "Diss" refers to the time-consuming process of distributing the individual type back into the type case. Glover was, for a time, typography tutor for apprentices at the Technical Correspondence School in Wellington. When a book was printed from either Monotype or Linotype, the type itself was melted down to be re-used. The advantage of Monotype lay in the fact that, because letters were cast individually, fine adjustments could be made to letter, line and word spacing. Furthermore, the entire book could be set at once - as opposed to hand-setting, where Gormack's limited range of type meant that only a few pages at most could be set before printing and dissing - allowing for provision of a complete set of page proofs as required by Allen Curnow. In respect of another book requiring careful attention to printing - Fernie Brae, a novella in Lowland Scots dialect by John Summers - Gormack commented: "Printerly responsibility was correspondingly increased, where, as always, hand setting did not permit of page proofing" (80).
on the twentieth of September. These were incorporated into the text and, by the twenty-fourth of October, Gormack, after treading steadily for a fortnight, was writing Glover to tell him that Curnow’s book was at the binder. The format differed somewhat from Gormack’s other books in that he had “borrowed” some Poliphilus for the display headings from Whitcoulls, a decision which, he later recalled, owed something to an earlier hint from Glover: “Denis had written at one time about the Poliphilus type snaffled (Monotype matts and all) and never used by Whitcombe and Tombs” (61). The result was, in Gormack’s opinion, “all very stark and unornamental, but it seems to suit Allen’s verse” (RG-DG 24/10/73). (It is interesting that Gormack here went against his natural inclination for decoration, but it demonstrates the importance of the consideration of presentation as to how a book, and especially one of poetry, is perceived.)

On the fifth of November, Gormack sent the consignment to Glover, Curnow and the distributors, Unity Books of Wellington, along with a separate typographic commentary for Glover. Gormack was a little concerned that, due to his “crumbly . . . broomsticks of rollers” (5/11/73), the inking was not black enough, and that, constrained by the one-size type scheme, he had had trouble with the title page. Most telling of his own typographical style was his cover design, or at least his initial plan for it: “I thought originally of filling up all the lower part of the cover with massed ornaments in colour, then made the bold (for me) decision to leave it stark Wm. Caslon” (5/11/73).

This very much accorded with Glover’s more classical approach to typographic design, which he had outlined in the detailed typographic summary, written for Gormack’s benefit, of the project he had supervised: “Private presses let themselves down by indulging fearful fancies of decoration, as if they were in competition with Woolworths ads” (7/11/73). His overall response to Gormack’s concerns was one of appreciation and praise for his efforts, as evidenced

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25 This is a reference to the acquisition, for its sole use, of the Monotype setting service mentioned earlier. “Matts” refers to the type matrices from which this particular fount was cast.
by this analysis of the "problem" of inking: "I find your inking not bad at all, if not perfect. Just like Caslon Old Face, which is so enduringly perfect in its rugged imperfections. Those who know will know your limitations, and admire your coping with them" (7/11/73). Not only did he cope with them, but he produced a book in three months from proposal to publication; for a commercial publisher this would have been a Herculean effort, and when one considers Gormack's resources, it is doubly impressive. By way of comparison, Dowling's third book, mentioned earlier, was published almost at the same time, having taken eighteen months to complete (RG-DG 24/10/73).

In fact, the response to the Dowling book was not particularly encouraging, and a circular put out to attract interest had had disappointing results (RG-DG 7/11/73). Glover suggested using Unity Books, who handled the Curnow volume, as distributors. He told Gormack: "They hold you in high repute, and specialise in this sort of product." Although their margin of 45% was high, Glover considered it a better investment than the standard 33 1/3% paid to "the lousy little one-at-a-time 'booksellers'" (11/11/73), like Whitcoulls for whom he reserved special scorn. By contrast, Glover had nothing but praise for Gormack's efforts as a printer and poet, and, having recently heard a reading of "The Ballad of Kaka Thompson" on the radio, he exhorted, "concentrate on Gormackry. Devote yr potty little press to exclusive egotism: yrself. We want more Barnego, more ballads. Now Nag's Head has the Name, you should concentrate on yrself. Caxton & Walpole & Morris & Gill & Gibbings all knew this" (23/11/73). In the same letter he related that he would try to interest Albion Wright in publishing some of Gormack's material. Although it does not appear that this ever had tangible results ex

26 Glover was not overly impressed with Whitcombe and Tombs' (as it then was, the name change consequently suffering some intolerant variations: "Titweeds or Coultombs or whatever the muddle merger is" [10/8/73]) distribution services for Caxton books, which, no doubt because of their small numbers, were not given high priority. With his typically acerbic humour, he wrote the following to Gormack as regards Curnow's book:

Christ, Whippools here actually ordered 12. Heretofore all orders had to be routed through yr Flatville, then doled out via Stewart Island and the Chathams so that a year later some dribble-drabble failed School Cert little slut will have sold her one copy and will be able to tell anyone that the book is O/P [out-of-print], and wd they be interested in a hockey stick or a bunch of chocies. Another single copy in Taumaranui or some such will be avidly if lazily perused by blowflies in a sultry window. (23/11/73)
Pegasus, it did perhaps encourage Gormack to publish extracts initially,27 and eventually the entirety of his wartime student diaries, “a document perhaps better described as my personal and very occasionally literary journal” (62).

These diaries provide an interesting indication of literary aspirations that could be taken as typical of the period:

After one hundred years of New Zealand history it is time we were producing a race of New Zealanders, proud of the advances they have made on the old world . . . proud of being different from Englishmen. And it is my task as an artist to trace this development, to praise my countrymen and my country’s possibilities, not to slavishly follow old models. I feel there will come a time when the creativeness of nature as harnessed in the New Zealand landscape will produce men in harmony with that landscape, and such men (and women) must be the subjects of my art. (Diary for 1940 31-32)

It is interesting to note that there is little trace here of the preoccupation with isolation and distance that so possessed those of the Caxton school, and overall the tone is more positive and less judgemental. The young, perhaps slightly naive Gormack’s concern seems to have been to examine New Zealand experience (as opposed to “The New Zealand Experience”) on its own terms, and not by some overseas yardstick. Although this extract reflects the sort of high-minded idealism that Gormack was later to satirise, it is evident that not everyone conceived the role of artist to be as far removed from the everyday as did the likes of Curnow and Holcroft. Gormack’s approach, then, seems to have more in common with that exhibited by the Group artists in Christchurch, who were content with the creative material afforded by the local landscape. Similarly, he sought to achieve his aims without adhering to a rigidly defined manifesto. The result was the evocation of a richly human landscape that could be said to highlight the tendency of some Caxton authors to address some sort of Hyperborean

27 The first extract covers a consecutive record of one hundred days in the middle of 1942 and was picked out for its continuity; the large amount of hand-setting involved necessitated it being printed in two volumes. The next extract did not appear until 1986, the remainder appearing sporadically in 1988, 1990 and, finally, 1991.
audience, giving the impression of "some no man's land of the spirit." 28

The publication of the two volumes of Diary of a Hundred Days, however, proved to be an expensive exercise, especially with the complication of provisional tax which meant that Gormack had to sell out complete editions of his next two books (RG-DG 22/31/76). Gormack's decision to publish a series of sports books was perhaps an attempt to attract a wider audience through more accessible material, but there was another reason for this apparent change of focus: the books differed from the standard Nag's Head format - which was generally narrow duodecimo on imported Glastonbury paper - as they were conceived as ways of utilising small-size paper offcuts (63-4). Predominantly of historic cricket matches, and complete with period wooden type, these generally sold very well, being of interest to cricket enthusiasts as well as book collectors. The exception in terms of sales as well as subject was a similar project on rugby. Its reception was not as enthusiastic, but this had been anticipated by Gormack who had left one third of the edition unbound in sheets (79), his foresight perhaps explained by his somewhat wry choice of subject - the infamous Wales Test of 1905. This serves to demonstrate how fickle the book-buying public could be, and the fine margins (in terms of subject matter) between a successful and an unsuccessful book.

Other books of note from the the end of the 1970s included a book of sonnets, some previously unpublished, by D'Arcy Cresswell. It was edited by Helen Shaw, who, in 1981, had her own volume of poetry, Ambitions of Clouds, published by the Nag's Head Press. Part seven of Barnegro Flat also appeared in the same year and featured a cover illustration by well-known Group artist Bill Sutton. This volume also elicited another extended typographical criticism from Denis Glover, which more than anything demonstrated a genuine interest on his part, rather than any desire to correct Gormack: "Title Pge. I don't go much on the railway lines at the top. That train doesn't lead to Caslonville . . . This is from a printer. I join your addicts for the discursive narrative" (22/12/76). It would seem that essentially his quibbles were over mat-

28 See John Summers comments on page 85 of this thesis.
ters of style and he enjoyed having someone knowledgeable with whom to discuss them.

John Summers, too, reappeared, this time under the new imprint of Pisces Print in 1977. He provided a number of new pieces for Gormack, the first of which was an extract from his unusual novella written entirely in Lowland Scots dialect. (The completed project finally appeared in 1984.) One of the last books in this period before Gormack’s retirement from Whitcoulls was a collection of Glover’s verse written on his return from Russia, where he had been honoured for his war services. Initially to be a prose and poetry combination, it was described by Glover to Gormack as “[t]he sort of offbeat material (am I right?) that might not otherwise find a publisher” (6/8/76).

As the work of a friend who shared his enthusiasm for typography, it was only fitting that Glover’s volume should be accorded a new font format - Poliphilus with Blado Italic (incidentally a combination used by Alan Loney in his reprint of the Beaglehole essay for the Alexander Turnbull Trust). Gormack was later able to re-use some of this trade-set type along with some small founts of Poliphilus acquired on his retirement to reduce the load on his ageing Caslon, which was wearing out. Also, for a number of his early texts, he had doctored a number of “f’s” to make them look like the traditional long “f” (successfully enough to confuse private press expert Roderick Cave as to the origin of his “unusual” fount [Cave, “Nag’s” 141]) and, consequently, he was running short of that particular letter.

With his retirement from Whitcoulls, Gormack was able to take up Glover’s advice and devote more time to his “potty press” (23/11/73) in the 1980s. The fact that the number of books printed or published each year did not greatly increase was perhaps more an indication of Gormack’s extraordinary effort while holding down a full-time editing job; however, there was an increase in the length of books, with a greater proportion consisting of more than 100

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pages. Indirectly, there was further answer to Glover's pleas when part nine of Barnego Flat appeared in 1982. It would seem that something of Gormack's enthusiasm for the series was lost when Bob Lamb died in the same year. However, as a tribute to his friend and Barnego enthusiast, part nine was dedicated to him (73).

Commissions from James Dally's Sullivan's Cove imprint made up almost half the books printed by Gormack in the decade of his "retirement," although this was to the detriment of his own personal literary contributions. The Australian publisher also came to be more specific in his requirements during this period, and beginning with the 1982 reprint, The Settler in Tasmania, he began the practice of requiring a number of copies, unbound in signatures, for special binding. (For a time these were bound in leather by Sangorski & Sutcliffe of England, until, in 1986, the cost became prohibitive [86].) The following year Dally also began to specify his own typographic requirements, specifically the Poliphilus type, as well as most other design elements (76).

The fiftieth published item from the Nag's Head Press was another historical item, this time in the form of an unusual 1890 horse race, The Midnight Steeplechase. The source of the clipping on which the booklet was based was graphic artist Robert Brett, who had worked for Pegasus and now had his own small hobby press. He had at one time intended to print it himself and had had a couple of lineblocks made up for that purpose. However, he failed to follow through on his idea and Gormack explained how he came to print it: "I think what held him back from final printing was how to market, etc., a one-off edition or title. This was a facility that I could provide at the NHP and as it turned out Brett, I'm sure, was happy to let me take the item off his hands" (75). Distribution was obviously a key factor and has been the downfall of a number of equally worthy, if overly idealistic, publications (particularly of the Little Review type). Many one-off publishers simply did not have access to a reliable network of distribution, and as the potential market for such books was limited, any failure to inform prospective buyers, no matter how few in number, would almost certainly guarantee that a
first book would also be the last. By contrast, Gormack's press was well established in private press circles and his imprint was sought after by collectors, so it was not surprising that distribution should have been less of a problem for him. Just as in the more commercial publishing field, Caxton's high standards of design distinguished it from its competitors, so too did the Nag's Head Press's constancy differentiate it from its more transient rivals.

Although Gormack never intended the Nag's Head Press as a full-time private press, it is interesting to make a contrast with Loney's struggles to market his work. Whereas Gormack was more workmanlike in his approach and, presumably through his commercial publishing experience, more amenable to what Glover described as "compromise that does not have to exclude expertise" (DG-RG 10/8/73), Loney strove for the highest standards possible and perhaps put his work beyond the reach of this rather limited market, especially locally. Gormack had also developed a reputation for historical reprints, many at his own initiative (but often with the practical support of Bob Lamb), which seemed eminently suitable to the anachronism of private press printing.

Conversely, and Loney was the first to admit this, books of poetry were low priority with collectors, who were obviously more interested in a book's historic value (and certainly, as evidence of this, the Beaglehole commission was one of Loney's more successful efforts). Gormack's forays into literature, with their gentle good humour, appeared to be less of the driving force of the press and seemed to be approached in a considerably more leisurely way, as something of a pleasurable, albeit sincere indulgence. The difference, perhaps, was between the small business pursued for pleasure but mindful of practicalities, and the purist's craft ideal as a kind of investigative process into the function of the book itself. This questioning on Loney's part seems to have been brought about by the dissipation of a book culture, of which Gormack's books are so much a part and to which his audience can more strongly lay claim.

John Caselberg, who, it has already been noted, was instrumental in arranging material for a
number of Nag’s Head publications, had also spent a considerable amount of his own time compiling a biography of R.A.K. Mason. When asked by Gormack if he had come across anything suitable for limited edition printing, he came up with an unposted diary-style letter to the flamboyant Count Potoki de Montalk (who had himself run the Mélissa Press from the South of France [85]). It was slightly ironic that this informal glimpse of the literary past was one of the first books printed with the aid of Bob Gormack’s son, Nick, who was later to introduce three younger, more contemporary poets to the Nag’s Head list: Kathleen Gallagher (1987), Bill Direen (1988) and Julia Allen (1990). This influx of young blood appeared to allow Gormack senior to revisit his own youth in the form of his student diaries (see note 27).

In the foreword to Diary for 1940 (1986), Gormack explained that the initial intent of the diaries had been literary, but that the pressure of events had made their orientation factual; he concluded “it exists as some sort of record, and for fun and nostalgia (or vanity) was adjudged printable - private-press printable” (8). However, more than a record of turbulent times, the diaries provided a kind of rare literary record of an aspiring littérature, someone who wrote candidly of his influences and ambitions, and who thereby provided a most interesting contrast with the figure of “The New Zealand Author,” as promulgated by the Caxton school. With a mixture of youthful vanity and honesty, the young Bob Gormack revealed his own literary heritage in which the Romantic and Georgian traditions played an important and active part, as well as figures like Lawrence, Joyce and Proust. Added to this were brief observations of prominent figures on the Christchurch literary scene, such as Denis Glover and Allen Curnow.

As mentioned above, Gormack’s diaries took the Nag’s Head Press into the 1990s, but the first book published in this decade was son-in-law Terry Duval’s Clay Pigeons. This particular volume had a further “family” connection, in that Gormack utilised some printers’ ornaments which he obtained from the demise of the Pegasus Press in 1987, many of which he remembered using when he worked there in the 1950s. To complete this cultural circuit, Peter Low,
the factory manager at Pegasus, had, as a young printer, helped Gormack to run off "Swagger Jack," the third volume of the Bookie series (95). The ninety-second book published by the Nag's Head Press was - most opportune for this thesis - The Nag's Head Press: An Outline History and Descriptive Checklist of Publications to June 1992. This seemingly summary text tends to suggest a winding down of the Nag's Head's operations, and certainly one could not have blamed Gormack, at seventy-five years of age, for wishing to ease up on his printing workload. However, to employ a cricketing analogy, this appears mainly to have been a case of the "nervous nineties" (including the Bookie series, Gormack had published ninety-five books to that date). Gormack continued to accumulate and Barnego Flat, which had - somewhat unusually - been left high and dry along with its readers, meandered to the milestone of its tenth part, and the Press's ninety-ninth book. Others to make up the "nineties" were a book of verse by John Caselberg which sat alongside one by Kathleen Gallagher (which included drawings by David Nepia). There were also two more reprints, including another under the Sullivan's Cove imprint.

In what he described as a gift to his grandchildren (Interview 1995), Gormack produced The NHP ABC, which displays (and perhaps passes on to a further generation) his appreciation for the aesthetics of letterforms and the associated contents of a printer's typecase. The one-hundred-and-fouth book to appear will be a collection of John Summers's unpublished poetry entitled Capricorn's Farewell, a suitable epitaph for the eccentric Christchurch bookseller, who was one of the many people to encourage and enliven the Christchurch book culture.

Not surprisingly, the one hundredth publication (by checklist count) was not marked by any especial presentation, appearing modestly in the company of three other books published in 1995. These included two further books of poetry, one by prominent Christchurch poet David Howard and the other by musician/writer Bill Direen, which suggest the influence of a younger generation of Gormacks. If one includes the Bookie series in the count, Gormack achieved a century of publications with Tenth Wicket, which recorded the marathon triple
century of R. Blunt. This model of application and accumulation applied equally to Cormack’s efforts, which were produced with a true Test grit and determination, fought out over a long period of time (forty-seven years).

However, whatever the future holds, Bob Cormack’s present legacy is considerable, and this has been acknowledged by New Zealand and international private press expert Roderick Cave, who wrote a substantial article on the Nag’s Head Press for the U.K. review for printers and bibliophiles, *Matrix*. After examining Cormack’s achievement in the article, he concluded:

> It would be idle to claim that in its work the Nag’s Head Press has advanced the Art of the Book, and Bob Cormack would be the last man to suggest any such thing. He is not a printer intent on producing masterpieces of design, using only the best possible materials and anticipating posthumous fame. There is nothing of this in his work: he is content to remain the printer as craftsman, producing modest books at modest prices; books to be read and enjoyed rather than admired. The private press world could do with more printers of this kind. (142)

The vitality of his own press, which was less constrained by the rigorous financial strictures of a commercial publishing house, was amply demonstrated by the variety of works that flowed from it. Many of these publications are a celebration of the medium, of the making available an outlet for offbeat material. In this way, Cormack’s wilfully eclectic approach is a far cry from the discriminating and refined attitude projected by the other two literary presses operating in Christchurch. The humour and Rabelaisian circumlocution of his *Barnego Flat* series are in marked contrast to the previously dominant mode of taciturn realism. In fact, the description of Rabelais as “the man for whom words call up associations, in contrast to the man who employs them to express previously conceived notions” (Cohen 17) seems an apt description for Cormack, who was less concerned with transcendental meaning and literary nationalism and more concerned with the language and its representation.

An examination of the physical presentation of his texts helps to provide a better understand-
ing of their conceptual justification. His use of illustrations and decorative devices, such as fleurons, demonstrates a willingness to utilise the descriptive possibilities of the printing medium, and in so doing to celebrate the activity itself. This, in turn, acknowledges both his debt to literature in general and the particular history of its concomitant embodiment in bookform, and thereby re-asserts the fundamentally social nature of the literary work. Whereas Glover’s (by way of Beatrice Warde) maxim of “invisible typography”30 assumed the function of literature to be the direct communication between author and reader, Gormack eschewed such notions of “pure” typography, favouring a less didactic and more animated and encompassing mode. The desire expressed in Bookie 2 that “all standard Nag’s Head literary works . . . be available in small uniform editions printed in as many different type-faces as there are psychological groups among human beings” (60) neatly draws attention to the necessary homogeneity of the intended audience in order to achieve an effectively “invisible” typography.

In the light of the somewhat moribund state of the publishing industry at the end of the 1960s,31 Gormack’s efforts can be taken as a model for a generation of disaffected writers, who established a number of small presses to combat the collaborative inertias evident in New Zealand. It has generally been acknowledged that this group, loosely based around Arthur Baysting’s Young New Zealand Poets anthology, took their conceptual lead from American models, but they also adopted similar alternative means of production. Jerome McGann notes that “[o]ne of the most salient characteristics of the [L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E] movement has been its determination to disseminate itself outside the traditional institutional structures” (Social 267), notably by the establishment of small presses devoted to fostering experimental work. This, in turn, led to the development of its own sustaining infrastructure, formulated around its own particular theoretical concerns. Although the economies of scale did not allow

30 Glover wrote in his article “Some Notes on Typography”: “The best type is the type that is never noticed” (172).

31 The New Zealand Official Yearbook 1969 recorded the lowest number of both publishing houses (480) and publications of literature (1006-07).
a comparable stability in the New Zealand context, the efforts of a small number of practi-
tioners, notably Alan Loney, were to have a marked effect on the direction of New Zealand
literature.

It is clear that Gormack differs considerably from someone like Alan Loney in his approach to
both writing and printing - in many ways they are almost exact opposites - but that in no way
lessens Gormack's achievement. His dogged perseverance with limited materials and resources,32
as well as other, considerable commitments, can perhaps be attributed to his practical printing
and publishing experience, as it is under similar conditions that many commercial printers
have worked33 (at least for the early part of its existence, this was certainly the case with the
Caxton Press) and still continue to work. Glover acknowledged the value of Gormack's prac-
tical training when he wrote to Pegasus director Albion Wright: "Bob G. has sense, among
private press, because he has been well trained" (7/3/67), and no doubt, in Glover's estimation,
this "sense" also included an eye for restrained design that could only be acquired through the
continued workaday application of his printing skills.34 Certainly, in terms of the continuity
and consistency of output, Gormack has no peers in New Zealand, where private, or even
small press printing is characterised only by being consistently transient. Even by comparison
with considerably larger publishing operations, the Nag's Head form - in terms of overseas
sales, production of local literature and success in a niche market - was impressive, and no-
where is this more evident (and the comparison more appropriate) than in the fact that the
plodder Nag even saw out the "mythical," fleet-footed Pegasus.

32 Roderick Cave has commented: "When one looks at the equipment of the private press printer, it sometimes
seems to be a rule that his productivity will be in inverse proportion to the typographical resources he can
command" ('Nag's' 139).

33 Competitive costing makes compromise and making do a necessity of financial survival. (See the description
of printers that appears in Robin Muir's novel and is reproduced at the beginning of chapter six.)

34 As has already been pointed out, Glover was something of a printing classicist, rejecting decoration in favour
of restraint. In general, private presses tend to favour decoration for decoration's sake, but sometimes, especially
with tyros, there is also a desire to utilise all the type at their disposal. A relevant contemporary example is that of
desktop publishing, where the wide array of design elements available can overwhelm the amateur, enticing
them into creating overburdened, and consequently confusing design (although there has been considerable
exploitation of this phenomenon in the name of typographical deconstruction. This has created intense debate
[see Smythe] and resulted in an identifiably different computer-oriented design style).
Despite their differences - and they are considerable - only Alan Loney comes close to Gormack in terms of publishing persistence (although their very difference is evidence for Loney's assertion of the potential for variety and vitality from private presses ["Fine Printing"]). Where Loney's subject is tightly focussed, Gormack is content to touch on a variety of topics; where Loney's writing style is spare, pared of all irrelevancies, and with the emphasis often placed on shifts in tone, Gormack's is (with Barnego Flat at least) discursive and circuitous, more in the nature of a sophisticated pub yarn, but with sufficient elements of satire and literary allusion, particularly French, to lift the Barnego series above simple comedy. However, perhaps the most obvious difference makes the most interesting comparison: both Loney's approach to his work and his poetry itself is characterised by the seriousness with which he treats what he sees as the central issue of language (although there are rare touches of wry humour in his work), whereas it would seem that Gormack finds more material in the comedy of language and life. The tendency with Gormack's work has been for critics to dismiss it, confusing the absence of seriousness in effect with intent (itself an indication of the dangers of attributing authorial intent without examining a work's material conditions); correspondingly, the danger, as with all humour, is that to analyse it too closely is to lose the humour that is central to it.

Nevertheless, it is something of an axiom that the ability to laugh at oneself is a sign of maturity, and when one considers the seriousness with which a young New Zealand literature was taken in the 1930s and 1940s, it can, in retrospect, appear to be somewhat over-earnest. (Glover, perhaps, was one of the few to recognise this and, it could be said, over-compensated in his own work.) It is not difficult to imagine Gormack reacting against such a formative literary climate of high seriousness, but it is an even healthier sign for literature when it can recognise and accept such reactions. It was perhaps appropriate, then, that readings of Gormack's work both opened and closed the festival held in honour of one of the most high-minded

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35 Robin Dudding, in soliciting an article for his newly established journal, Islands, wrote Glover: "Saving your presence, I've felt for years that Bob, bless him, is our leading humorist. Barnego Flat is as funny as a fight and ten times as sophisticated."
individuals of that period - Charles Brasch. The ending of the programme for the Brasch Festival in 1976 involved an extract from Barnego Flat concluding with bagpipes, and had, according to Denis Glover, a "[t]errific effect. A suitable climax to a notable 'festival'" (DG-RG 28/7/76). Aside from the simple entertainment value and the recognition of the need for levity in what could have been an all too serious event, this suggested the acceptance of a more embracing literature, that had come of age and that could laugh at itself.

As with most histories, literary histories tend to deal with the success stories, those characters often categorised as "The Inspired" rather than the aspiring. Bob Gormack provides a unique example of someone participating in the literary process - and by no means unsuccessfully - whose work was not judged to be "successful" by the standards of the day (one of the few respects in which he is similar to Alan Loney), but who, thereby, provides a unique insight into just how those standards operated. It could certainly be argued that Gormack's Entwhistle has as much claim to representation of the Kiwi joker as Mulgan's Man Alone, Sargeson's Jack or Hulme's Kerewin, if not more on a visit to most New Zealand pubs, where you are more likely to encounter Man Alaugh than Man Alone. In more ways than one, Gormack's example serves as a timely reminder of the importance of re-examining our past, whether it be literary or otherwise, in order to understand the power of those controlling the dissemination of information, and also to be wary of attaching too great - or too serious - a significance to what are essentially re-interpreted events. However, more than this, he reveals the potential for achievement in the dedicated individual, whether it be recognised or not.
Ampersand Alan and the Flight of the Hawk:

**Hawk Press**

extending the discussion

"At least a small monument in some unused public square would seem an entirely just reward"

(Creeley 467)
Ampersand Alan and the Flight of the Hawk:

HAWK PRESS

extending the discussion

Writing to Leo Bensemann in 1978, the year that was essentially the end of the Caxton dynasty, Glover declared, "I have in mind to feed things to Alan Loney, The Hawk Press, who has the real feel for print." For the demanding Glover, who, in later years, could be particularly acerbic, this was indeed high praise. It seems most fitting that the person who could be said to be Glover's heir apparent as New Zealand master typographer\(^2\) should be the person considered most qualified to write an article on Caxton typography in the 1950s, for what was the first issue of *Landfall* published by new publishers, Oxford University Press.\(^3\) In this article Loney's assessment of the crucial transition period of the fifties, which saw the departure of Glover and the emergence from his shadow of Bensemann, clearly placed Caxton in a specifically English cultural context, particularly in terms of its fine printing, which, as Loney pointed out, included no New Zealand authors (148). He observed that the authors selected by Caxton for "fine" printing form "a list which could almost have been plucked from the publications of the Nonesuch Press" (148). By contrast, the list of authors for the fine, limited editions of his own Hawk Press was almost entirely made up of New Zealanders, and appeared within a cultural context that owed more to the America of the fifties and sixties than to inter-war England.

1 "Ampersand Alan" was Bensemann's soubriquet for Loney, whose typographical anarchy he would not permit in *Landfall* (Loney, &), although Glover also used it as a form of address (DG-AL 15/11178). "Flight of the Hawk" is the title of Loney's unpublished memoirs. See also footnote 7.

2 In his article "On the Margins?", Mark Williams commented that "[m]ore than any other editor in this country Loney kept alive into the 1970s and '80s the Glover tradition of fine craftsmanship, of dedicated attention to book presentation in the face of public indifference to quality and the publisher preoccupation with cost-cutting" (84).

3 Loney's article was entitled "'Something of Moment': Caxton Press Typography in the 1950s," and appeared in *Landfall* 185.
In the preface to *The New Poets* anthology, editors Murray Edmond and Mary Paul confront the publishing realities of the 1980s:

Poetry is low priority in the market place. Two options have arisen over the last ten years to combat poetry being squeezed into the void by more-market publishing. The first has been the continuation of that New Zealand tradition of the hand press in the back shed . . . Although hobbyist in economics, this option has aimed for professional standards in craft and production. Alan Loney's now-defunct Hawk Press has been the most notable recent example. (xiii)

What was perhaps so noticeable about Loney's particular efforts was that he combined Glover's determination to undermine and challenge the dominant literary discourse with Gormack's resistance to the capital-intensive industrialisation of the printing industry. High-speed, large-volume printing technologies left little room for poetry, and the collaborative inertias resulting from the impact of new offset printing technologies presented a barrier to new writers and new forms of writing, while at the same time entrenching the position of established writers and writing practices. Fortunately, the rush to embrace new technologies resulted in the increased availability of the now doubly-anachronistic handpresses, which, while labour-intensive, were considerably cheaper to set up and operate. They also had the added advantage of giving their operators intimate control over the production and presentation of their texts.

Unlike similar ventures, Loney's one-man printing and publishing operation demonstrated remarkable resilience and durability in continuing to print - to a very high standard - and publish for eight years. Loney's assault, both typographic and poetic, on the entrenched conservatism of the small literary publishing industry may have been "hobbyist in economics," but it was a full-time occupation - though not employment - for its operator. Like Glover before him, Loney had no formal training in the printing trade, but had instead an increasingly insatiable desire to print to the best of his abilities to combat the situation as he saw it in 1974: "I was then convinced that normal commercial publishing tended to undervalue the poet's work in general, and generally put little effort into the design of books of poetry" (AL-
Allen). He specifically expressed his intention to become a good printer and typographer "in Stanley Morison's sense of typography as being 'the craft of rightly disposing printing material in accordance with specific purpose; of so arranging the letters, distributing the space and controlling the type as to aid to the maximum the reader's comprehension of the text'" (AL-Jarman). Unlike Glover, and because of the anachronism of his chosen means of production, he did not have access to a relatively constant, and eventually lucrative trade of jobbing printing; nevertheless, with limited resources and in straitened financial circumstances, Alan Loney was responsible for the publication of twenty-five volumes of poetry, two reprints of scholarly essays by J.C. Beaglehole, and three books comprising both text and illustration; of this impressive total of thirty books, the first eight were printed in Christchurch.

Among the poetry were names such as Ian Wedde, Anne Donovan, Michael Harlow, Joanna Paul, Murray Edmond, Bill Manhire and Elizabeth Smither. Many were poets who had come to prominence in Arthur Baysting's *The Young New Zealand Poets* anthology, but who, without that kind of united front, had a weaker impact on the literary scene. This did not mean that they were lesser poets; it simply meant that, individually, they did not represent as much of a challenge to the literary orthodoxy, and consequently their case for publication could be more readily overlooked by a publishing industry needing few excuses not to publish verse. However, Alan Loney made certain that these poets were not only noticed, but that they were also an effective challenge to a literary orthodoxy that had not been seriously challenged since the Caxton Press de-flowered Georgianism in the 1930s. He achieved both these coups in the same way Glover and company challenged the dominant Georgian influence in verse - visually, and specifically, typographically.

In his book *The AMPERSAND* Loney asks the question: "What of the printers, then? That is, those who . . . transmitted our culture with care, skill and intelligence to where we would have access to the past, whether profound, silly or boring, it doesn't all that much matter, so long as it is access that we have." Access has been a contentious issue for Alan Loney,
having himself been excluded from certain literary outlets. In an interview with Leigh Davis, he remembers,

In the early seventies we were trying to get in Islands and Landfall and being knocked back . . . We were furious. There was a set against the kind of writing we were making. Apart from the question of it being any good or not. This is the political struggle that writers have had to actually get past certain kinds of editorial prejudices. ("Talking" 58)

Loney's response seemed to be straightforward - to start his own press and publish those poets he considered worthwhile and who, otherwise, may have been neglected. With hindsight, it would seem that his decision to become a transmitter of culture (as well as a producer) was not only a correct one, but a necessary one; for it is in a large part due to his Hawk Press that we now have access to a strain of our literary history that could well have been ignored.

It is impossible to talk about Alan Loney the printer without talking about Alan Loney the poet; the two are so inter-related and the achievement in both fields so impressive. Although Christchurch is one of the defining parameters of this thesis, it is necessary to briefly remove a little further South, to Dunedin, to examine the origins of both these aspects of Alan Loney.4 With a copy of Babette Deutsch's Poetry Handbook: A Dictionary of Terms as his guide, he began to write poetry at the age of twenty-three, and, as this choice of text suggests, from the beginning there was a very strong craft basis to his poetry. Loney himself is more explicit: "The minute any writer puts one word after another, you're involved in matters about craft" (Personal). His grounding in traditional stanza forms led to an appreciation of the importance of the breath and stresses placed on words, perhaps made more keen by his background as a jazz musician.5 His interest in technique, more than any great reverence, drew him to New

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4 Most of the following details are taken from a address given by Alan Loney to Albert Wendt's Creative Writing class at Auckland University on 22 September 1992.

5 Loney wrote in reply to Rob Jackaman's charge that jazz and blues rhythms were "grotesque" ("Survey" Introduction 100) in New Zealand: "Jazz has been an active part of many N.Z. lives for decades. No-one who has, as I have, been a jazz musician, or been the white boy in a Maori rock and blues group that played the toughest Wellington dance-hall of the late 50s and early 60s, can remain untouched by that experience" (Response 120).
Zealand poets like Baxter, Curnow and Doyle, and he admitted that he still scanned his own poetry in the early seventies, although, increasingly, if it resembled traditional verse forms, he would deliberately change it. However, poetically, his major turning point was the discovery in 1971 of Charles Olson's The Maximus Poems. These he considered a major breakthrough, on account of Olson's ability to include a wide range of materials in a single poem, and perhaps more pertinently for this thesis, how the manner in which material was laid out was a guide to interpreting the poem.

The abbreviations, irregular spacing and line-breaks which were common to a new generation of writers influenced by American-derived "open form" poetry were generally perceived by traditional critics as distracting weaknesses, but such structural arrangements were anything but careless or random interruptions to the text. Rather, it was the editorial inattention, or deliberate alteration, which these spatial nuances often suffered which led many writers of this period to have recourse to handpresses. What had been correctly interpreted by the critics was the challenge to the literary orthodoxy that such work represented. The rise of a new activist and contestatory poetics that was intent on, in Robert Creeley's words, "hammering at the presumptions" (RC-AL 6/9/78) sought to establish itself outside the traditional institutions of literature production.6 In the same letter, Creeley elaborated on these "presumptions," expressing the frustration felt by many young New Zealand poets: "it's as though people are still reluctant to take responsibility for the literal prosody and language possibilities, and won't for whatever reason read — so use a rather drab and mechanical 'idea' of how poems 'should' look & move & sound." Loney clearly echoed these sentiments, opting to take control of the shape of his language: "any variation of margin has automatically the effect of producing emphasis, or at the least an interruption, however slight, in the flow of reading. And the lines so varied have got to be able to bear that placement"; he concluded: "I cannot myself see any other

6 Jerome McGann's description of the division in the American poetry scene in the early 1970s applies equally well to the split that was emerging in New Zealand in the same period. He described, on the one hand, an older generation who produced "a localised verse with moderated surface urbanity," which "defined social and political' within a limited, even personal horizon," and, on the other, a post-structural writing which was experimental and generally practised outside the academy, favouring a more oppositional politics (Social Values 198).
function for typographical variation in a poem, than a guide to how the thing is to be read" (AL-Davidson). By means of the Hawk Press, he sought to offer an outlet that would both countenance and keep faithful to such writing activities, and thereby challenge accepted notions of what poetry “should” be.

Two other experiences in Dunedin are of interest for present purposes. It was here that Loney extended his involvement in literature into the field of production, by becoming informally involved in the early days of Caveman Press, set up by Trevor Reeves and his brother, Graeme. For Caveman, he liaised with the commercial printer who printed Stanley Palmer’s graphics in Tony Beyer’s Jesus Hobo; he also handset most of his first volume of poems, *The Bare Remembrance* (1971) except for two pages (“There are other elements” and “may i add to yr information. . .”), and this marked the beginning of a unique involvement with the production of his own texts (AL-Author 14/10/92). In terms of the broader poetry scene, Caveman was itself a part of a reaction against a conservative and seemingly moribund literature institution: “We knew that we were never going to get in there . . . we did not belong and so we found other means of publication, & of course, that was part of the reason for the development of Caveman Press” (Personal). Hawk Press was to form another, very distinctive, part of these “alternative publishing structures” (Personal) that began to spring up during this period.

However, Loney made a further contribution to the awareness of a new dynamic in poetry by importing books of - predominantly American - poetry (see catalogue in appendix) by authors he and many of his contemporaries considered to be “real,” (AL-Author 26/10/92) poets such as Gary Snyder, Basil Bunting, Robert Duncan, Robert Bly and Robert Creeley, “who were not generally obtainable elsewhere” (see Figure 21). Garret Books, or The Poetry Shop as it was later known, operated out of Port Chalmers for over a year, between 1972-4, selling its books mostly by mail-order (AL-Author 26/10/92). This completes the Dunedin connection, but in these humble beginnings can be seen the foundations of much of the work he was to do
as poet, printer and publisher, and, in many ways, his desire to "extend the discussion" of poetics seems to have made the broad scope of his later activities almost inevitable.

Fig. 21. Advertisement for The Poetry Shop, tipped into Islands 8 (1974).

Considering Loney's approach to the craft of poetry, it is not surprising that inspiration for Hawk Press was derived from Blake, whose idea of making a book from writing through to the finished item, as a total concept, very much appealed to Loney. However, it was a telegram from Don Long in Christchurch that provided the material dimensions for this idea, in the form of a sixty-year-old Arab treadle platen that was for sale (Personal). This was duly bought for $100, shipped to Dunedin, and then, when Loney decided not long after to move to Christchurch, returned to its point of sale. At this point Loney had $90 in the bank and a friend had given him $200 to initiate the endeavour. He was to receive a further $745 in the first year from friends and anonymous donors, who displayed the same willingness to make a cultural, rather than financial, investment that marked the beginnings of both Caxton and Pegasus (AL-Bruce). So, in Christchurch, in circumstances much reminiscent of Glover al-

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7 In an interview with the present author, Loney used this phrase in relation to the Book Arts Society, of which he was president and founder, in the sense that he wished to broaden the group's activities beyond a small group of aficionados into the wider community. In order to do this, he felt that it was necessary to challenge and extend the limits of the field. This is also what he appears to be doing in terms of his own poetics.
most forty years earlier, Alan Loney set up his small platen press; this time it was not in disused stables, but in a garage at Taylors Mistake that let in the rain, and had four kerosene lamps hung from the ceiling so that he could work at night ("Flight" 1). Although this paints a somewhat romantic picture, the effect of such conditions was not conducive to technical mastery:

Otherwise the books do show the problems I've had working in old draughty sheds, summer and winter, with no chance of controlling humidity . . . It's probably true to say that I set this particular Hawk in flight in all the most disadvantageous circumstances possible — an undernourished bird in a hurricane or some such analogy. (AL-Carter)

It is not surprising then that, some years later, Loney, was to describe this as the "beginning of nine years of a rather obsessive devotion" ("Flight" 1).

Ironically, his obsession with the anachronism of hand-printing was not shared by Glover: “I applaud machine setting when the right face is available. Hand setting (and dissing) is too ludicrously quaint except as occupational therapy” (DG-AL 20/8/79). Clearly Glover favoured utilising existing technology where possible, recognising from experience that this offered the only hope of achieving some sort of semi-commercial permanence. However, right from the start, Loney was explicit in his belief that “Hawk Press will never become a company, nor a commercial venture, & all its books will be designed, hand-set, printed and bound by its present sole human component” (AL-Jarman). It would seem that his desire to have control over his creative output necessitated such an uncompromising position, but it meant that the basis of the press was always tenuous,8 with little chance of ever becoming self-sufficient. Nevertheless, Loney's motivations for establishing the press share much in common with Glover's early stated aims for Caxton (see pg. 47). Loney explained his motivations thus: "The idea was simple: to publish poetry by writers having difficulty getting accepted by established

8 The author John Male offered the somewhat unflattering comparison for the Hawk Press: "There are faint elements of deja vu, though I'm sure your foundations are sounder and differently based than my old cobber Bob Lowry, who seemed to spend his life in desperate straits and deep water" (JM-AL).
trade publishers, and which in my view ought to be published; and to produce books better
designed than many of those that were being published” (“Flight” 1).

Initially a part-time operation, Hawk Press became full-time for Loney in August 1975, and,
amazingly considering its meagre returns, it was to be his sole source of income for the next
five years. Although a little clichéd, the title of an article published in The Press about Loney
and his press would seem to provide the best description of his occupation: “Poet, printer,
publisher - ‘labour of love’” (Coates). Although he moved to Christchurch for personal rea­
sons, he was, at the same time, aware of the Christchurch publishing scene, evident in the fact
that the offset printing of the cover (a print by Ralph Hotere) to the first book published by
his press, Ian Wedde's Pathway to the Sea, was done by Pegasus Press. He also paid a visit to
Bob Gormack, who was then working at Whitcombe and Tombs, but little seems to have
come of the meeting (AL-author 14/10/92). Other than sharing a tradition of poetry publish­
ing with Pegasus, and private press printing with the Nag's Head Press, Loney was pursuing
his own rigorous course. His independence, however, did not mean that he could avoid the
jobbing printing that had been a necessary condition of all his precursors. Hawk Press relied
on jobbing work to keep itself afloat, although, for obvious reasons, this never proved as
lucrative as for either Caxton or Pegasus.

Despite these rather tenuous connections, there was really little by the way of local example
for what Loney was trying to do with the Hawk Press. In Wellington, there was D.F. McKenzie's
Wai-te-ata Press attached to Victoria University, but, surprisingly, it was in the Christchurch
Public Library that Loney obtained his most practical help in the form of a trade edition of
Lewis Allen's Printing with the Handpress (“Flight” 2). Armed only with this and the memory
of an attractive book of poems by Edward Dorn seen in Wellington's Unity Bookshop, he set
out to publish poets he considered to be worthy and “to print literature in typographic form
appropriate to its content” (AL-Traue [1787]). Developing the high level of skill necessary to
achieve these lofty ideals in this relative isolation was largely a matter of trial and error, but one
in which he achieved a considerable measure of success. In this respect, Loney considered the jobbing printing mentioned earlier not simply a valuable source of extra income, but a stimulating source of design and technical challenges, such was his desire to improve his skills ("Flight" 3). In general terms, however, the books usually followed a similar formula: the texts were of poetry, printed in Perpetua and Centaur types on machine-made papers, bound in a single signature handsewn into card with a wraparound cover. Nevertheless, this seemingly simple format was to contain a wide range of innovative poetry and typography that defied conventional expectations.

On leaving Christchurch some two years later, Loney considered Pathway to the Sea⁹ typographically his most successful book (Coates), even though the press at this time consisted of only two fonts - ten-point and twelve-point - of Eric Gill's Perpetua type, along with a small collection of "sorts" from Express Typesetters. Although Loney described this limited range of faces as "a measure of as great freedom as it is of discipline," he acknowledged the need for improvement and admitted a major problem with "registration, & unevenness of impression in the text" due to the poor state of the inking rollers on his press (AL-Jarman). He, thus, sought to augment his scant resources by recourse to the New Zealand Literary Fund Advisory Committee. He requested a total of $700 for repairs to the press and the purchase of type and type-cases, the bulk of this sum ($468) being for the purchase of a full range of large-size display types (AL-Jarman). On the fifteenth of September the following year, he received the sum of $200 from the Literary Fund (Jarman-AL).

Following in something of a publishing tradition, the third book to be produced by the Hawk Press was by the publisher himself: dear Mondrian. Loney's second volume of verse could perhaps be seen as the publisher's perk (an indulgence more frequently associated with anthologists), and indeed, considering the unsympathetic literary climate of that period for

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⁹ This was printed in an edition of two hundred copies at Wedde's request, although subsequent volumes, such as Stephen Oliver's Henwise, were generally in editions of three hundred (AL-Jarman).
works of this nature, it was an opportunity that otherwise would probably not have been available. Nevertheless, in some quarters at least, it was received as a very necessary and vital expression of a new poetic, which, to a large extent, had been ignored in New Zealand. As Alistair Paterson wrote most enthusiastically in the New Zealand/Israeli double issue of Pilgrims in 1978, “of all the books so far issued from the Hawk Press, however, the most outstanding is undoubtedly that written by the Loney himself. dear Mondrian is plainly a major tour de force which successfully marries techniques and skills borrowed from American writers with an acute New Zealand sensibility” (125). But perhaps more interestingly, and certainly more flattering, is the following review by American source poet, Robert Creeley: “Alan Loney’s Dear Mondrian [sic] is work of complex and significant order ‘for New Zealand’ in many senses indeed . . . Loney’s mastery at ‘this stage of the problem’ [that is, as physical book] is such that at least a small monument in some unused public square would seem an entirely just reward” (Creeley 467). Although he never quite gained such recognition, dear Mondrian did not go entirely unnoticed, and, in fact, was the co-winner of the poetry section of the New Zealand Book Awards in 1977. (A more critical reviewer of the technical standards of this book admitted “the production of the book is very good, but not excellent,” noting that “whilst the text of the book is of fine standard, the bold titling on the title page is under-inked and the pressures between the black title and the blue inking varies. There are also one or two damaged letters” [Booth-AL].10)

“This stage of the problem” is essentially the subject of this thesis, but to examine why it merits such attention (not to mention praise) at this particular juncture, it is necessary to look a little more closely at the poetics informing Loney’s work. As mentioned earlier, the discovery of Olson’s Maximus Poems was something of a poetic revelation for Loney, and provided him with access to a whole raft of contemporary American poets, as well as the means to incorpo-

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10 In his letter, Martin Booth stressed the very rigorous international private press standards, describing the English market as “tight, vicious and cruel.” This more detailed criticism recalls Glover’s comment - “[w]e get too much ignorant praise and not enough useful criticism” (DG-CB 21/10/45) - which could equally have been applied to Hawk Press.
rate a variety of material in a single poem. The three tenets of what Olson called "Projective Verse" provide useful background: these were "1) the kinetics of the thing: A poem is energy transferred from where the poet got it (he will have some several causations), by way of the poem itself to, all the way over to, the reader ... 2) is the principle: ... FORM IS NEVER MORE THAN AN EXTENSION OF CONTENT; [Olson, like Creeley, was not concerned with how a poem 'should' look, merely that it aided comprehension] and 3) process: ... ONE PERCEPTION MUST IMMEDIATELY AND DIRECTLY LEAD TO A FURTHER PERCEPTION (Olson, "Projective Verse" 52). When combined these elements seem to provide almost unlimited scope for poetic endeavour, and the opportunity for the poet to be both challenging and innovative. The notion of composition by field, whereby the poet makes him or herself "open" to a variety of influences, is tempered only by their relationship to the poet: "the poet cannot afford to traffick in any other 'sign' than his one, his self; the man or woman he is" (Olson, "Against" 69). So, if the poet is a member of the Hell's Angels, it is that person's experiences as a biker that will be the subject of their poetry and not some more symbolic "poetical" world; hence "there are only his [the poet's] own composed forms" (Olson, "Against" 69). This was in sharp contrast to the broad social commentary contained in much other writing of the period, which drew on a particularly Anglocentric tradition.

Loney was committed to recording the details and particulars of the concrete world around him without resort to what he considered the fantasy world of the imagination - "the particular is enough" (AL-Gregory) he concluded. He had a particular aversion to the generalisa-

11 Bill Griffiths, an English poet with whom Loney used to correspond in the mid-seventies, combined his experiences as a Hell's Angel with extracts from Gilgamesh (AL-BG 31/12/77). Locally, Peter Olds used a similar background in his poetry.

12 Iain Sharp's poem "Jiving with Charles Brasch" neatly satirises this abstract poetic of the imagination represented by the older generation of writers:

You prefer to walk invisible through the city of nowhere, the grey semblance, the fragments we mistake for life, muttering about dreams, shadows, veils, the air, the sky, the pure light of heaven? (Pierrot 12)
tions which he felt characterised New Zealand poetry of the previous forty years and appeared most frequently under the guise of conventional and, to his mind, uncritical similes. He wanted poems to “place us in the presence of images not as if for the first time, but for the first time . . . It just seems to me that everything is only and ever ‘like’ itself. Nothing is quite like any other thing. Yet every other thing is completely bound up with and responds to every other thing” (AL-Pascoe).13 It comes as little surprise, then, that the poetry which he published was generally misunderstood by traditional critics, who read it for explication of a prior reality, rather than an active and ongoing exploration of language possibilities.

Finally, there was the importance of “breath” (Olson, “Projective” 54) such that composition should be undertaken “as though verse was to have the reading its writing involved, as though not the eyes but the ear was to be its measure” (59). It may seem something of a contradiction to stress the importance of the ear to the written text, but as Cal Swann in his book Language and Typography points out, “[t]he manipulation of the visual language as a visual ‘tone of voice’ needs to be taken into account” (52); he explains further:

In speech variations in pitch, loudness, and speed are referred to as ‘prosody.’ In print different letter forms have been used to signify stress or emphasis since the end of the nineteenth century . . . Used consistently, they represent different levels of discourse to be communicated between author and reader . . . all visual equivalents of the prosodic cues that can be mustered are invaluable aids to communication. (48)

“Voice,” then, can be seen as another important aspect of the craft of poetry, one that, far from

13 A poem that serves as both explanation and example is David Bromige’s “If wants to Be the Same” (Desire 151):

The mounting excitement
as we move
step by step
of difference
off the same

if wants to be the same

the same as is
being lost in the craft of printing, can be a valuable accompaniment; in fact, prosody\textsuperscript{14} has been described as “a kind of musical accompaniment to speech” (54) by Swann and this is perhaps a useful analogy for Loney’s poetry with his background as a jazz musician and the sense of poetry as a “place to be.”\textsuperscript{15}

In terms of the broader New Zealand poetry scene, the culmination of American poetic influences can be seen in Arthur Baysting’s anthology, \textit{The Young New Zealand Poets}, to which Alan Loney was a contributor. This came in for a certain amount of criticism, precisely because of the predominance of these American influences. Vincent O’Sullivan, for example, saw these trends as leading to a “verse of a limited, and possibly boring, kind” \textit{(NZ Poetry} 27), and Rob Jackaman spoke of “inappropriate cultural conventions” (100) in an introduction to a writers’ symposium in \textit{Landfall}.\textsuperscript{16} It was left to one of these “inappropriate” influences, Robert Creeley, to answer these charges:

There is certainly no use in importing, wholesale, chunks of American ‘temper’ and preoccupation into the charming isles of New Zealand. . . . Loney is poet of far different kind. He \textit{reads}, carefully, skilfully, literally. Thus he can give the New Zealand native an extraordinary assimilation of what he has learned from the several poets he clearly respects, e.g., Louis Zukofsky and the late Charles Olson (who, as Loney, were, and to a sad extent still are, unsung prophets in their native land). (467)

Critical intolerance for the writing practices adopted from the United States stemmed from the challenge they represented to the dominant English cultural matrix, which had been firmly embedded at the bibliographic level since the Caxton Press established the pattern in New

\textsuperscript{14} “The style of the letterforms, size, weight and spatial distribution are the visual counterparts to the prosodic cues and paralinguistics” (Swann 54).

\textsuperscript{15} See the “tree/party” distinctions of a poem elaborated by Ian Wedde in Peter Simpson’s article “Nine Poets: ‘It’s a party, thass all’” (399).

\textsuperscript{16} Loney’s extensive seven-page reply (“Response”) to the charge of “influence” makes particularly interesting reading, as does his article on “The Influence of American Poetry on Contemporary Poetic Practice.”
Zealand in the 1930s. The literary institution’s inability to encompass new modes was indicative of a certain degree of calcification, particularly in terms of its critical terms of reference. From Loney’s perspective, this situation was not conducive to a dynamic literary scene: “Other magazines and businesses involve what I call ‘the shouting monad machine’ - where there is no dialogue, and no sense of companionableness - no sense, no genuine active sense, of a community of concern among writers” (AL-Cooper). There was a sense that new forms of literary expression, rather than being accepted on their own terms, were simply having outmoded critical concerns imposed on them: “the actual work of these people is not enough or deeply enough, discussed. Any discussion which accepts the need to somehow justify the work of our artists as being acceptable because of some ‘N.Z.’ character one can attach to the work, is doing something very strange” (AL-Brown).

Ironically, those that shared Loney’s views were probably viewed by the establishment as something of a “shouting monad machine” themselves. It would seem that, in order to make themselves heard, they, too, had to shout. Rather, like Gormack before him, Loney had simply sought to broaden the scope of literary expression, aware of both the dangers and the precedent of too narrowly formulating literary prescriptions: “I’m not saying that all writing should now take on this or that character along the lines of some innovation that I’d like to see other people perform, so that I, in turn, can give it some public critical acclaim (a familiar pattern, eh?)” (AL-Oliver). Instead, he chose to utilise his press as a critical apparatus.

C.K. Stead described (the word is) Freed, in which appeared many of Loney’s contemporaries, as “a magazine which manages to conceal its literary merits behind a welter of ugly and irrelevant typesetting” (“Lively Crowd” 36). Again, this criticism reveals a failure to come to terms with what amounted to deliberate provocation of the literary establishment by the so-called “Freed generation.” They specifically rejected the kind of institutionalisation they saw as

Loney put it this way in an interview: “There was a kind of publishing - and Caxton was part of that ... [which] was very strong in New Zealand Letters for a long time...you really made it as a writer if you were published in this particular kind of way” (Personal).
being represented by the refined standard of book production established by Caxton and Pegasus Presses. With his finely developed bibliographic sensibility, Loney offers a revealing insight into this phenomenon:

When I was a younger writer, somehow or other, if you were published by a particular publisher, who took care over what they did & produced sort of dignified looking books, then this meant that yr work was somehow equally worthy & dignified. It didn't legitimise it so much as to . . . canonise it. This was partly how the canon was built. Texts that achieved such-and-such status as books tended to be admissible into the canon . . . It meant that you were a real . . . a real poet. (Personal)

Stead had reacted to the visual challenge offered by Freed, but the magazine demonstrated that this sort of typesetting was far from irrelevant. Once again Creeley cited Loney's dear Mondrian as proof of the inextricability of a book's layout from its meaning:

as physical book, it demonstrates that a text set with appropriate distinctions as to spacings, type-face, and the 'field' that particular poem may require is 'a thing of beauty and a joy forever' - not just a passing, pretty book, etc. One cannot translate the visual texts of poems into their active condition of sounds and rhythms unless the physical setting allows it. (467)

In terms of the new poetic theory - specifically "voice" and the concern with form outlined above - the book itself takes on a greater, acknowledged importance.

Regarding The Young New Zealand Poets, Stead also noted, "[i]t is this movement away from the poem as statement to its form as an art that I find most interesting in the best of these poets" ("Lively Crowd" 36). There certainly seems to have been a move away from the more overtly political message poems of the 1960s and the notion of poetry as a form of speaking unconscious towards a closer, more self-critical examination of language and the craft of poetry. Again Creeley's comments are pertinent:

The point is, that poetry is a craft, i.e., it involves knowing how to do something specifically. It is not simply a conveyor belt for the transfer of 'communication' . . . In
short, this book is a place to be, not one merely to get through. Its subtleties of sounds, or shifts and shadings of feeling, of things thought, are continuing, provocative wonder. (469)

It was these “subtleties of sounds, or shifts and shadings of feeling” that, with the aid of his unique typographical talent, Loney was so adept, and skilled, in evoking. Not simply a matter of personal preference, typography in such situations (or, it could be argued, in all situations) has a special part to play in effecting subtleties and shifts in language. As Cal Swann states in Language & Typography, “[t]he small variations in weight or style of type may have little effect on the legibility of the visible language, but they can have an important effect on the tone and attitudes which the author wishes to convey” (48). In this same book, he proposes a problem that Alan Loney, in his endeavours, seems to have attempted to answer: Swann states, “[i]n almost all research, the varieties of letterforms have been investigated by testing styles of alphabet against associations with emotive words”, and then proposes, “[w]hat would be interesting would be to approach the evaluation from the opposite end to discover the extent to which meaning may be affected by style” (57).

I have devoted special attention to Loney’s poetry, examining it in terms of both content and form, because it is representative of many of the concerns of the poets he chose to publish. There was also a third area of equal importance to printer and poet, that of context, evident in his strict insistence on “companionableness.” As mentioned earlier, Loney explicitly rejected the idea of poetry as a form of speaking unconscious, suggesting that another possibility was that “your tribe is speaking,” or that “[w]hat you are writing, without thinking about it, is in fact already socially determined” (Personal). With the aid of his printing press, he set out to

18 “Content and form are essential elements in making a message. A similar distinction has been made between a ‘digital’ code (in this case words) and an ‘analogic’ code which expresses and elicits feelings about the message (paralinguistic and iconic). Placed in an appropriate context as the important third element, communication can take place” (Swann 54).

19 He wished his own work to appear only alongside work that shared his theoretical concerns and that made its critical parameters explicit (Personal). It was this stand that led him to reject Mark Williams offer to appear in The Caxton Press Anthology: New Zealand Poetry 1972-86 (AL-MW).
explore this socialisation of text and auditor/reader by careful, critical examination of his own, and others’ writing. In composing by hand, he came to have a very intimate association with words, literally weighing up the effect and relative importance of each one (and this applied not only to his own writing but to those he published), such that “every word must really count” (Coates).

As with all good typographers, he was acutely aware of spacing and how the text actually lay on the page. Through this close association with the document, he came to realise the importance of culture in the interpretation of visual codes as well as language codes. As Cal Swann explains: “[v]isual perception involves more than the ergonomics of legibility, it incorporates a deeply embedded culture-dependent interpretative activity . . . the character of the letterforms and the way in which they are arranged within a rectangular frame imparts a ‘personality’ to the words and affects their interpretation” (93). McGann would go a step further and suggest that: “different texts, in the bibliographic sense, embody different poems (in the aesthetic sense) despite the fact that both are linguistically identical” (Beauty 117). Alan Loney’s adoption of craft principles in the face of an increasingly industrialised printing and publishing industry allowed him the opportunity to examine and manipulate this aspect of his poetry, and to create a unique personality for his own works, and those that he published. Clearly, the physical book was very much “a stage of the problem” for Loney, and one that he was in a unique position to deal with.

The fourth book to emerge from Hawk Press was Alan Brunton’s Black and White Anthology, which was, in appearance, something of a homage to the Edward Dorn book of love poems that had so impressed Loney in Wellington at the very start of his printing and publishing ventures. It was the model for Brunton’s book, and all the numbering and colours were the same (Personal). For his part, Brunton valued Loney’s efforts and what they had done for the poems, but he had one reservation: “i really do appreciate the care you gave the text, not just to make a beautiful book but to make a book that in many ways illuminates the text . . . It
looks beautiful although I shake a little at having to hit all my buddies for $6-00” (AB-AL). Because of Loney’s antiquated production methods this problem continued to dog the press, despite the fact that such a price clearly did not reflect the true labour cost of the book.

In another instance, the English poet Bill Griffiths even turned down Loney’s offer to publish him: “this is my main worry: that you would print so good a volume that no one will be able to buy it” (BG-AL). Although this disparity - between what efforts Loney thought poetry was worth and what the public was willing to pay for an individual book of poetry - was problematic, his efforts are in many ways an act of resistance against what Diane and Peter Beatson explain as the “shift from use to exchange criteria” (Arts 246) for assessing the social function of art. The extent to which Loney had isolated himself from the publishing institutions again seems to make the analogy with Blake very appropriate: “Blake’s decision to seek complete freedom from that [literary] institution, though futile, is nonetheless an important limiting case, for it sharply underscores the determining authority of the institution” (McGann Critique 53).

Following Brunton’s book was Graham Lindsay’s Thousand-Eyed Eel, a sequence of poems from the 1975 Maori land march. However, the next book, which Loney described as a “privilege” to print (“Flight” 6), was one of the few books published by Hawk written by a non-New Zealand author. This was Hello by American Robert Creeley, a poet whom Loney clearly respected (and it would seem that this respect was mutual). The poems in this volume were taken from the notebook written during his tour of New Zealand in March 1976 (see appendix), and in fact, the actual physical dimensions of Hello were exactly the same as that very notebook. The exceedingly large (for Hawk) run of 750 copies mostly went to the United States and were sold through book people in San Francisco (AL-author 14/10/92). There were also a further fifty limited edition copies, printed on antique laid paper, and numbered and

20 Loney’s reply to Griffiths’s reservations was uncompromising: “I’m afraid I’m one of those bull-headed bastards … who think that certain forms require certain treatments and responses” (22/2/78).
signed by the poet. Creeley willingly waived royalties, enthusing “I feel so well ‘paid’ by hav­
ing such a lovely thing made of those poems, and that’s really beyond any ‘payment’” (RC-AL 12/3/77). This publication was something of a coup for a New Zealand publisher, but it seemed to pass largely unnoticed, probably due to a still relatively strong resistance to the supposedly pernicious American influence in established New Zealand Letters. Loney and his contempo­raries were often criticised for being slavishly imitative, but, ironically, they regarded the influ­ence of figures like Olson as a means of liberating their own material, providing “a high­energy context for the unfolding of their own activity, their own poetics, their own sense of the possible, their own poems” (Loney, “Influence” 5). It would seem that the appearance of Creeley confirmed this as being true in the United States at least.

The first book of poems for 1977 was Pat White’s Signposts, printed for Michael Harlow’s Frontiers Press. This, like Loney’s own volume of verse, was accompanied by artwork in the form of a hand-painted cover by Julia Morison (dear Mondrian contained drawings by Robin Neate alongside the text). On a less than positive note, the final book to appear from the Hawk Press based in Christchurch was Rhys Pasley’s Cafe Life & the Train: one hundred of a total three hundred copies were withdrawn from publication because of lack of interest and destroyed (Loney, “Flight” 8). However, in a little over two years Loney had produced an impressive - for a one-man, self-taught operation - eight books, amongst which the ever­critical Loney could no doubt find faults, but which, on the whole, show few signs of the novice and plenty of indication of the dedicated craftsman. He had also published a number of poets, like Wedde, Brunton and Pasley, who probably would not have been published otherwise, and certainly not in such a sympathetic style. It is a tribute to Alan Loney’s percep­tion that many of these poets subsequently became prominent in the new, more heterogene­ous poetry scene that developed in New Zealand in the 1980s, justifying Roger Robinson’s claim that “[t]he perceptive and courageous idiosyncracy of Hawk’s list made publishing into a critical act” (RR-AL). This revival (or simple awakening) was due in no small part to the work of a number of small presses, of which the Hawk Press, if not the precursor, was certainly one of the most significant, and not simply in terms of its technical accomplishments.
Of course, this significant beginning in Christchurch was just that - a beginning. Alan Loney went on to publish another 22 books under the Hawk Press imprint in Wellington, which, although they are beyond the confines of this thesis, require at least a brief overview. He continued to publish an impressive array of contemporary poetry, and was drawn increasingly into the two seemingly opposite worlds of international private press printing and contemporary poetics and postmodern literary theory. The former was represented by four truly "private press" books: two reprints of essays by J.C. Beaglehole, a collaboration with the great English bookbinder Edgar Mansfield (11.2.80 on Creation), and finally, (and fittingly, for the Hawk Press) Loney's own Squeezing the Bones. The latter took the form of postmodern journals like Morepork and Parallax, and, of course, the development of Loney's own poetry.21 There was also an increasing move towards the visual arts in response to a resurgence of institutional resistance to the writing practices he advocated: "One of the things happening here seems to be a sort of conservative backlash from the work of the late 60s & early 70s, where poets are reverting to old forms & syntactical arrangements, & no-one seems to have otherwise noticed" (AL-Spanos). Collaborations between artist and writer, "so the work grows out of their talk" (AL-Spanos) were pursued with Marilyn Webb, Andrew Drummond and Ralph Hotere.

However, despite the press being his only source of income for its first five years, Loney finally had to call it a day in the middle of 1983, his dream of a full-time private press thwarted by the vicissitudes of publishing that had accounted for many others before him in New Zealand literary history, and most after a much shorter duration and leaving behind a much less impressive legacy. After six years, he had not made a profit from any of the books he had published, and had accrued debts totalling almost $6000 (the majority of this sum had accumulated in the last two years of the press as he had turned his attention to producing fine, limited editions [AL-Traue 15/8/81]).

21 A most useful account of this development is given in the article entitled "The influence of American poetry on contemporary poetic practice in New Zealand."
Nevertheless, far from disappearing from the literary scene like many of his contemporaries from the 1970s, Loney has doggedly persisted in working away at the boundaries\textsuperscript{22} of poetics, seeking to “extend the discussion.” That he has succeeded in doing so is perhaps best demonstrated by an article reviewing his work in \textit{Art New Zealand} (not least in the fact that his works of literature were reviewed in an art journal). In describing \textit{Squeezing the Bones}, Gregory O’Brien states, “[v]isual and verbal aren’t aimed at hitting the same register - they create a new, original register” (70). In terms of spanning more than one “code” or “register,” perhaps the only comparable figure in New Zealand was Leo Bensemann. In the same review O’Brien suggests a fittingly open-ended conclusion concerning Loney’s work: “There’s a sense of ongoing discovery . . . of the artist learning about the world as well as about his craft, the book-making process itself engaging him in this unfolding and manifestation of possibilities” (70).

Just as he had sought to disrupt conventional writing and reading patterns, so too did he want to break up what he saw as the closed shop of New Zealand writing. What Loney’s actions (and others of his generation) had succeeded in doing was to challenge the institutional inertia that had taken hold in New Zealand literature, which was as much a function of the increased industrialisation of the printing and publishing industry as it was of a theoretical siege mentality. In the context of an increasingly competitive and capital-intensive industry, there was an understandable unwillingness to accept the added burden of extending patronage to a new generation of authors. Hawk Press, then, can be seen as an act of faith in the ability of a number of new writers to re-vitalise New Zealand literature.

\textsuperscript{22} In 1973, when Loney began to get interested in the term “poetics,” one of the first magazines he subscribed to was \textit{Boundary 2}, edited by William V. Spanos (Loney, “Influence” 5).
Harry's office was empty. He's left it spic and span, he thought. And he's been changing the pictures about. He looked at the framed broadsheet that used to hang behind the door. THIS IS A PRINTING OFFICE. The number of places I've seen that, he thought. CROSS-ROADS OF CIVILISATION. Nearly every printing shop you go into. Behind glass on the mahogany veneer or stuck on the pinex between the pin-up girl calendar and the list of phone numbers. REFUGE OF ALL THE ARTS AGAINST THE RAVAGES OF TIME. I like printers, he thought. They're so pathetically eager to please. They want to turn out a Good Job, even if it doesn't pay; even if it's really plain awful. They grizzle and groan about it being a mug's game but they still put in quotes below cost. ARMOURY OF FEARLESS TRUTH AGAINST WHISPERING RUMOUR. No other business is so subject to human error, he thought, or has its mistakes so long preserved. INCESSANT TRUMPET OF TRADE. Leaflets, licences, literature, letterheads, ledger-cards, labels, leaders, legislation, laundry and lottery tickets. It's all printing, isn't it? All part of the paper war. FROM THIS PLACE WORDS MAY FLY ABROAD. All the old publishers were printers too, he thought. That's the way it ought to be. NOT TO PERISH ON WAVES OF SOUND: NOT TO VARY WITH THE WRITER'S HAND. They're always surprised when they see it in type. BUT FIXED IN TIME. HAVING BEEN VERIFIED BY PROOF... FRIEND, YOU STAND ON HALLOWED GROUND: THIS IS A PRINTING OFFICE.

(Muir, Word 284-5)
HAZARD PRESS

"Rising production and printing costs have made the publishing of poetry more hazardous than ever. Very few new books of poetry can be published today without a substantial grant or subsidy from some source or another" ("Printing"). So replied Albion Wright to a questionnaire in 1981, concerning the future of literature publishing, particularly poetry, in New Zealand. Pegasus Press had by this stage all but ceased being a publisher of literature. Other publishers too had cut back on their New Zealand lists. In Christchurch, Caxton published sporadically, but this was by now only a very minor aspect of its primary function of commercial printing. Printing and publishing had proved incompatible and most had abandoned this "hazardous" enterprise for the merely uncertain world of publishing alone. Substantial restructuring within the industry throughout the 1980s had resulted in a much pared-back field of operations, where all editorial decisions were tempered by extreme caution and the ever-present threat of retrenchment. The old style generalist approach was on the decline: with a reduced editorial staff, publishing companies simply did not have the resources available to cope with the different requirements of, for example, a biology textbook and a volume of poetry. Although the initial result of this was negative - a narrowing of focus and more restrictive publishing lists - it did mean that certain companies developed defined areas of interest which they specialised in to the benefit of both author and reading public. This, in turn, opened up opportunities for a number of niche-oriented small publishers, who, with the aid of relatively inexpensive computer software, could take advantage of the gaps left by the retraction of some of the larger companies and still remain competitive. One such person ignored the caution traditionally exercised by the larger publishers regarding the arts, and chose not only to concentrate his energies in this area, but to announce his temerarious intentions by naming his venture Hazard Press.

Quentin Wilson's decision to enter the field of publishing had that same combination of
chance and risk that accompanies the consideration of every new manuscript, and which he chose to view in the sense of enjoyable challenges rather than potential calamities. While on a national tour with a production of The Pirates of Penzance in 1987, Wilson met musician Andrew Fagan and became acquainted with his difficulties in trying to get a volume of his poetry (Salt Rhythms) published. After being warned of the unlikely prospects of such a venture, Wilson chose to embark on it anyway, surpassing industry expectations by four hundred percent (Personal).1 His success can in part be attributed to Fagan’s more public profile as a musician. (In this respect Fagan is more akin to the performance poets of the 1970s like Sam Hunt and Gary McCormick, with whom Alister Taylor claimed to have had so much success.) However, Wilson’s intentions were far less exploitative and, in fact, until the unsolicited manuscripts began to arrive, were confined to publishing his own thesis. When he did again embrace publishing, far from adopting Taylor’s infamous scorched earth policy, he sought instead to exploit the gap in the market exposed by the conservatism that gripped the mainstream publishers.

Aware of the tradition of quality publishing (he possesses an original copy of Alistair Campbell’s Mine Eyes Dazzle), Wilson felt there was a significant gap in the local Christchurch market with the departure of Pegasus and the virtual withdrawal of Caxton Press from the literary scene. He was especially keen to utilise the existing infrastructure in Canterbury that was the legacy of their efforts:

There are lots of benefits [in setting up in Christchurch]. In part it’s a principle to keep it here, that the craftsmanship does exist here, and the machinery exists and so on. I like the idea that ... most of what Hazard does, apart from one or two things, is very local - local in the sense of Canterbury - and so keeping the printing here adds a dimension that’s quite nice. (Personal)

1 He had been warned by people in the trade that he would never be able to sell more than 100 copies, but managed to sell over 400 (Personal). (Much of the following information about the press was obtained in interviews with Wilson by the present author. Unless otherwise stated, “Personal” refers to the first of these interviews, which took place on 12 May 1994.)
This emphasis on the regional and the local was again in keeping with tradition, and as its operation grew, the reward for Hazard's perseverance, as it was for Caxton and Pegasus, was a constructive community for the exchange of ideas. Also, by choosing not to send its printing offshore - even as far as the North Island - Hazard Press could maintain a much stricter quality control, down to a particular image on a particular page. This control was much the same as they would have had, had they been operating their own printery - but without the cost of maintaining such a cost-intensive operation. The second factor arising out of local production was the speed with which Hazard could release a book, which, as a small operation, often proved to be critical: “You’re always running behind the eight-ball in terms of both finance and time. Being able to print here is a major bonus in that sense, because offshore you have to allow three months after sending the material away before getting it back” (Personal). By contrast, Hazard’s turnaround time from print to launch averaged three weeks, with a best time of a mere eight days.

In particular, he felt that with the phasing out of the Caxton Poets series and the uncertainty over the future of Landfall, the opportunities for writers who had not established themselves to appear in book form were limited. University presses too tended to favour more established authors, and, locally, Canterbury was almost exclusively academic in scope. His own “agenda” was determined as much by the idea of serendipity implicit in the name of the press, as by any desire to see a particular group of authors or literary movement represented in print. However, Wilson’s attitude was not as dispassionate or indiscriminate as this ethos might at first suggest, as he explained when he expressed his belief in “[t]he idea of being able to see people in print who are exploring new ideas . . . [and] who simply wouldn’t get there unless someone were doing it. There are too many good poets, I think, who are being left out because of the commercially-driven aspect of it” (Personal). His own approach was certainly not to print poetry at any cost, but he admitted to temporarily putting aside commercial considerations and trusting to other, less materialistic motives: “The poetry series isn’t profit-driven. The art books aren’t profit-driven. I have tended to publish books that I knew damn well would never
break even, but I guess I do them because I believe in them in some sense. So there's a lot of idealism tied in with them as well” (Personal).

This idealism was characteristic of all the publishing ventures that have been examined in this study and which preceded, and provided a context for, Hazard's effort. This sense of an idealistic continuity provided a material continuum for New Zealand literature and art that is virtually unmatched by any other city. Compared to the substantial groupings of internationally-backed publishing companies on Auckland's North Shore, the small Christchurch publishing community was seemingly less protective and more co-operative in their approach to one another. In this way they were perhaps more like the old English style of publishing. Wilson was emphatic that this conducive climate was a local manifestation: “I think that Christchurch has always had that ambience, that really helps, that whole vibrant, vital sort of sense of what's going on and what can be ... there's a lot of idealism” (Personal).

This combination of the availability of high quality reproduction and a sense of idealism would seem to have made the publication of art books almost inevitable (not to mention something of a historical necessity in Christchurch). However, the art books were to serve the further, less philanthropic function of establishing the profile of the press as a quality publisher with a professional approach. In this way they could be said to function in much the same way as Caxton's type specimen books, bespeaking a commitment to vocation backed up by a demonstrable technical expertise. For Wilson, who was without a background in the publishing industry, the necessity of establishing the press relatively early and quickly in this way was crucial: “Going to the Keri Hulmes\(^2\) of the world or the Marilyn Duckworths or whoever was virtually impossible without a reputation of some sort behind you, so ... the art books, in particular Heather's [Busch] and so on, were really the flagship, if you like, of what we could do, and getting noticed for that sort of thing” (Personal).

\(^2\) This approach proved successful, in that when Keri Hulme later agreed to provide a contribution for the Hazard short fiction series, she commented that she had a number of Hazard books including that of Heather Busch (Wilson, Personal).
Certainly, by having three of its first seven publications feature accomplished but not widely recognised New Zealand artists in a commanding format, the Hazard list drew attention to itself as conspicuously unorthodox. The first of these “flagships” - and Hazard’s second publication - was a book of photographs by Keith Nicholson called Body Silent. The subject of the book is a series of starkly presented black-and-white nudes. There is no commentary (the body silent of the title?), and the only text is a brief, dustjacket-style artist’s biography, which is printed negatively, white on a black background. The numbering system is presented in a column of parallel diagonal bars on the right-hand, outer edge of the page, which represents graphically (as well as numerically) that the forty pages of photographs are divided into eleven series. The book achieves a clarity of purpose through its tight focus on its subject - the nude - and the corresponding absence of any distracting peripheral material. In its visual austerity, then, it is similar to Glover’s classical approach to typography; only, in this case, the content is purely visual.

But it was Hazard’s second art book and their fifth publication that stands out bibliographically. Its contents could be described as slight, in that it consists of only five pages of text by humorist A.K. Grant and fourteen reduced reproductions of etchings by Barry Cleavin. Entitled A Series of Allegations or Taking Allegations Seriously, it plays on the pun of alligators/allegations with Cleavin’s prints incorporating alligator skeletons. In this way Grant’s and Cleavin’s breed of allegations demonstrates both the reality and the illusory nature of their existence. The book is a skilful combination of text and image which ably displays the talents of one of New Zealand’s leading printmakers who has long had a reputation for word-play3 and technical detail. The book’s achievement is a result of a thoughtful approach to production, that includes quality paper and a generous allocation of white space, even to the extent of blank versos opposite each of the reproductions.

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3 The blurring of definitions is continued even onto the flyleaf of the book, where it states that Cleavin produced the series of etchings, “which he then asked Grant to illustrate with words.”
Perhaps what is most noticeable is the utilisation of a computer-generated layout that gives equal weight to text and image: each page of text (which is in two columns) is balanced on "allegation," around which the central image of the text wraps. The layout distinguishes itself from the traditionally dominant centre-aligned model that was so closely associated with the Caxton Press (and the letterpress method of printing), and is, instead, left-aligned in a narrow strip. This is reflected on the contents page, where the contents appears in a shaded strip of the same dimensions. In a further departure, traditional page numbering is dispensed with, thereby allowing for the integrity of the individual print within the series, as well as avoiding the practical difficulty of numbering the blank versos.

All was not a break from tradition, however, and in some ways Hazard's efforts can be seen as a return to Caxton's initial, more free-ranging style (under Glover). It was as if Wilson had taken on board the publishing imperative of remaining solvent, as represented by the success of both Caxton and Pegasus, but at the same time he had absorbed the benefit enjoyed by the smaller presses of retaining a considerable degree of flexibility (an option made possible to a large extent by the new computer technology). Wilson acknowledged this when he outlined his view of the publishing scene in New Zealand:

University presses are constrained by their boards, and the multinational publishers are constrained by their head offices, and the independents, like Bateman and Tandem, are constrained by what I feel are the reasons they are there in the first place; and there aren't really many who sit in what is for me an absolutely delightful area of being able to range across the slightly different. (Personal)

A more personal connection to early Caxton Press work was established by the presence of Barry Cleavin, who had long been an admirer of Leo Bensemann's neglected but nevertheless

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4 Textwrap is a feature made very accessible with the advent of desktop publishing. See Figure 22.
impressive artistic vision. They both shared a surreal black humour, and the satirical aspect of A Series of Allegations has much in common with many of Glover’s efforts to poke fun at pomposity.

Not surprisingly, Wilson singled out Heather Busch’s book Within and Beyond (1989) as central to establishing the profile of Hazard Press. Although this was in many respects a more conventional art book, it is its scope - forty-eight high-quality colour reproductions of Busch’s paintings and three essays on the artist in a large format hardback - that immediately attracts attention. There would be very few established artists in New Zealand who had benefited from such a generous and lavish representation of their work, particularly one in which the artist “[a]t every stage in the production . . . has been able to check that the colour and quality of the reproduction is as faithful as possible to that of the original” (dust jacket). The result is an unconventional form of the most conventional coffee-table book where, instead of large colour spreads of New Zealand landscape, Heather Busch’s internal landscape is laid out. That this is the case is established most forcefully by the cover, which is dominated by the painting Complexities. The reader/viewer is confronted with the “penetrating gaze” (Bett, Afterword 112) of what is described in the book as a psychological self-portrait of the artist. The artist’s name is the dominant text, and below this, in a smaller, more personal script, is the title of the book. These visual elements all combine to suggest that the book will take the reader “within and beyond” the artist, Heather Busch, and this is very much in line with the emphasis placed on psychological exploration in the book.

Similarly, the essays that accompany the reproductions tend to be concerned with “reading”

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5 This inversion of such a commonplace domestic item is very much in accord with Busch’s approach elsewhere in the book, where china cabinets, sofas and wallpaper take on much more sinister hues.

6 Patrick Hutchings writes in his essay: “We imagine what it is she is about to tell us. Busch herself imagines, and paints; and so she tells all, in perspicuous images such as this” (10).

7 The book is prefaced with a quotation from Jung, while Freud, Nietzsche, Reich and Viktor Frankl are all referred to in the essays.
the images in terms of their symbolic content, and there is very little formalist critical examination of Busch's painting technique. (There is also a marked resistance to any art theoretical approach in their criticisms.) It must be said that Busch's works explicitly lend themselves to such interpretations and are not simply about paint in the sense of some contemporary New Zealand painting; with their strong narrative drive, they are, therefore, particularly suitable to being "read" in book form in a way that much contemporary art is not. In light of this, the choice of Busch was an astute one, and suggests that the book succeeds in its two implicit aims: to demonstrate Hazard Press's commitment to the arts, particularly to emerging artists - or writers, as the case may be - and to giving them as sympathetic, yet saleable exposure as possible. This, in turn, goes some way towards establishing Heather Busch's reputation as an artist of special merit.8

Hazard's second book of poetry, Triptych by Rob Jackaman, was another unconventional choice. Although Jackaman is a poet with an extensive publication history, his works have not received a great deal of critical attention, nor are they "popular" in the sense that Fagan's (or a Sam Hunt's) are. Especially for a new press, this seemed a spirited, if somewhat precocious decision, but it was an effective way of displaying the credentials of the man who was to become the New Zealand editor for the Hazard Poets series. Triptych also provided an opportunity to display the format of the Hazard Poets series with its colour reproduction of a New Zealand artwork (in this case Ralph Hotere) on a wraparound cover. Also within the book itself the text was supported by a series of artworks with a complementary surrealist theme, comprising an etching by Barry Cleavin, a painting by Don Peebles and a further lithograph by Hotere.

Hazard continued to extend its repertoire and released a diverse quartet of non-fiction, ranging from a biography of women mathematicians (Women Sum it Up) to a history of Welling-

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8 John Roberts "places Heather Busch among the small company who deserve international recognition" (7), and Elva Bett enthuses that "[t]his presentation of forty-eight reproductions reaffirms benediction and represents Heather Busch as a painter of the 20th century who cannot be ignored" (Afterword 112).
ton rock music (*When Rock got Rolling*). In a more literary vein, Hazard marked the 100th anniversary of John A. Lee's birth by publishing Mervyn Thompson's dramatic adaptation of *Children of the Poor*, complete with a note by the author and reviews of its Christchurch performance. This was similarly something of a milestone for Hazard, as it was their tenth volume to appear in print. In the same year they continued to range across the publication spectrum by producing a reasonably priced - $14.95 - volume of poetry by Rangi Faith and a history of Banks Peninsula.

The following year Wilson launched the first four volumes of the Hazard Poets series in the attractive and eye-catching format already mentioned (and which presented a marked contrast to the production of Faith's *Unfinished Crossword*). The idea for a poetry series had been developed in discussions with Jackaman, but it had been Wilson's idea that

> if we dressed them up in ways that they hadn't been before, that we could access sales through the book trade better than they normally were, because poetry normally just gets sold in ones and twos and it sits spine out on the shelf and never gets seen. So the idea was to put a full-colour cover on every volume, using original artwork whenever we could, to get them to display it face out. (Personal)

The result was a departure from the more restrained designs adopted for most New Zealand poetry volumes (a fact due in no small part to the meagre resources normally allocated for poetry). Wilson had always envisaged that the series would be an Australasian one, giving local authors the opportunity of gaining exposure on the other side of the Tasman and vice-versa, and, in the process, forming a sort of "Closer Cultural Relations" with their neighbours. The less altruistic, but nonetheless compelling consideration of larger audience to absorb the relatively standard print runs of 300-500 copies was also behind the decision, as it further enabled the continued viability of the series. Jackaman's contacts within Australia and with local artists (including Leo Bensemann) made him ideally suited to the role of editor, although he approached it initially as a caretaker position.9

9 "When Quentin offered me the position of editor, I was at first rather reticent ... [but] agreed to act in the meantime in a sort of care-taker role. As it's turned out, of course, I did take on the editorship; and have greatly enjoyed the experience" (Jackaman, Letter).
The expressed desire "to make available in a high quality and reasonably priced format the work of both new and established poets" (Jackaman, Letter) makes comparisons with both the Caxton and Pegasus Poets series almost inevitable. Certainly, as with its predecessors, it was well received by reviewers, with attention again being directed at the quality of production. Peter Whiteford's review in *Landfall* of Graham Lindsay's *Return to Earth* and Rob Allan's *Karitane Postcards* (which won the New Zealand PEN First Book of Poetry award) was explicit about the bibliographic phenomenon:

> It's something of a truism that books start working on you before you even read a line of text . . . that impact - a foreshadowing - begins, most obviously, with the book's cover design, but it is equally conveyed, more subtly, by such extra-textual elements as the shape and feel of the book (and perhaps even its smell); by the choice of typeface and paper. (116)

Taking these factors into account, the overwhelming sense is one of vitality and freshness, and this was reinforced by the use of artwork which conveyed a sense of immediacy.

This artwork was not simply confined to the covers: Lindsay's book featured graphics by Bryan Harold, while David Howard's *In the First Place* included photographs by Paul Swadel which, according to the dustjacket, "underline the significance of the visual image in Mr Howard's work." These images, then, were a carefully selected part of the text and not mere illustrations, and yet they served very different purposes, whether the more traditionally symbolic ends of Howard or the explicitly post-modern aim of Allan.¹⁰ Howard's contribution to poetry was not limited to this volume of poetry, as he was well known in the Christchurch scene as one of the editors of the literary magazine *Takahe*. Other connections to the local literary scene included the fact that Lindsay had had his first book pub-

¹⁰ This volume was described on the dustjacket by the author as a "sustained post-modern attempt to write a long poem with an epic scope."
lished by Hawk Press and Mike Minehan's volume featured the artwork of another Hazard subject, Heather Busch.

There is little doubt that Hazard had made an ambitious start to their literary programme with their initial offerings in the poetry series, but on the back of Howard's volume they stated their intention to publish eight volumes a year, four from each country. This proved not to be the case (although the two Australian volumes announced were published the following year), but it was not surprising considering that Hazard went on to publish sixteen books in total that year. Again these offerings were marked by their diversity, and included their first foray into children's fiction. They also included a comprehensive 336-page *Introduction to New Zealand Government*, a pictorial essay on lighthouses, a biography/history of early New Zealand aviation, and even a history of the Golden Shears competitions. With New Zealand undergoing such major changes in direction in government, both ideologically and structurally (with the introduction of M.M.P.\textsuperscript{11}), the government book clearly met a need for an introductory book on the subject. Similarly, the book on lighthouses provided updated\textsuperscript{12} treatment of a subject that had only really been covered in one other book, long since out of print. The other two books were of more limited interest and would, no doubt, not have been published without the support of the 1990 Official Project. Official support of this kind invites comparisons with Pegasus's initial successes with the Canterbury Centennial. This eclectic selection represents the kind of carefully targeted niche marketing that had become crucial to the survival of the small press, and which had, in part, been facilitated by the retraction of some of the larger international publishing companies.

\textsuperscript{11} Hazard was also later (1993) to make a contribution to the electoral reform debate with a collection of critical essays on the subject edited by Alan McRobie.

\textsuperscript{12} The book marked the closure of the last manned lighthouse with a remarkable selection of photographs. It should be noted that this collectable-style picturebook was one of the few Hazard publications printed outside New Zealand, although the printing in Malaysia was arranged through Christchurch printing consultants. Another feature of the text was the alternating use of normal and bold italic type as an extended form of pull-quote. This approach complemented the pictorial focus of the book, allowing for the fact that the book need not necessarily be read sequentially.
Not content with the launch of a new poetry series, Hazard utilised probably New Zealand’s most bankable poet, Sam Hunt, and produced a pocketbook of his poems, as well as a similarly cheap - $14.95 - volume of Andrew Fagan’s poetry, entitled *Serious Latitudes*. The idea of a pocketbook edition, particularly for Hunt, was appropriate enough as a hitching accessory, but it also recognised a different reading audience, one less steeped in a bibliographic history. These were poems to be heard rather than read, complete with the rhythms that are distinctively Hunt’s. The cover photographs (presented as a roll of film) by Robin Morrison and the title, *Making Tracks*, accorded with Hunt’s own brand of minstrelsy, conveying the sense of movement that is integral to his poetry. The title also succeeds in conveying something of the aim of such a book: to make tracks (in the same way that Glover’s *Caxton* was about establishing (in-)roads for New Zealand literature) or record a body of work that, because of its performance aspect, is often in danger of ephemerality.

A more nearly perennial theme formed the basis for Hazard’s first poetry anthology, *White Feathers*, which was sub-titled *An Anthology of New Zealand and Pacific Island Poetry on the*
Theme of Peace. Its aim was made even more explicit in the introduction, where it was stated that “[t]his anthology challenges its readers to reflect on the ways in which structural violence is perpetuated in our society” (Locke 11). This was indeed a different approach from the traditional literary anthology format, where it could be said that a form of structural violence was inherent in the promotion of one writing practice over another. However, the editorial notes suggest a postmodern approach, where “[w]ords are signs” (11) and “[t]exts' - the structured word/gap things on the page - become poems when individual readers engage with them” (15). This book positively invited an active readership, and the hands-on approach was reflected in the cover design by Marilyn Webb (see Figure 23). This was a bold publication to undertake, but the risk was repaid when the entire edition quickly sold out. In view of Christchurch's strong pacifist association (evidenced in Elsie Locke's book and indicated elsewhere in this thesis), its success was perhaps not entirely unexpected, but Hazard's approach to a poetry anthology was both innovative and refreshing in terms of its overtly political stance. A similarly innovative approach was used in the art field with the publication of Alan Pearson: His Life and Art. This substantial 216-page biography (printed in both hard and soft covers) included seventy full-colour plates and a similar number of black-and-white illustrations. Such generous coverage accorded to a living New Zealand artist was particularly notable, as was the book's attempt to place him in the context of world art.

Nineteen ninety-two again saw Hazard ranging across a variety of topics, including the pacifist theme as represented by Elsie Locke's Peace People: A History of Peace Activities in New Zealand. In 336 pages Locke undertook the difficult task of attempting to survey a largely unwritten piece of New Zealand history, which encompassed the voluntary efforts of numerous individuals and pacifist associations. The other three non-fiction contributions had a particular Canterbury flavour: Wilson's Week, a collection of the regular humorous columns that appeared under the same title in the Christchurch Press; Gordon Ogilvie's Picturing the Peninsula, about Banks Peninsula; and the biography Nothing but Grass and Wind: the Rutherfords of Canterbury by Janet Holm. The literary selection was no less diverse and
included a further selection of Mervyn Thompson's plays, two works of fiction,¹³ and seven volumes of poetry. The poetry included five additions to the Hazard Poets series as well as two cheaper pocketbook editions by Bernard Gadd (with original art by Ruth Davey) and Jenny Barrer. This selection not only displayed a broad array of poetic styles, but provided an apparently unintentional acknowledgement of the Christchurch publishing heritage of which Hazard was now a part (and which this thesis attempts to examine). Barrer had first been published by the Nag's Head Press and so provided one of the more oblique connections to Christchurch publishing.

That Alan Loney should choose Hazard to publish his second volume of collected poems seemed almost inevitable, in that they were one of the few local publishers who shared his meticulous approach to publication, particularly of poetry. Nevertheless, Loney was not content to simply hand over the manuscript, but took the unusual step of choosing to be responsible for the overall book design. The result was a volume distinct from the others in what was a generally uniform series. In that Loney's whole approach had become a mixture of the verbal and visual, it probably still conformed to the general concept of featuring original New Zealand artwork. However, Loney provided an amalgam of typography and typographic devices, such as borders and fleurons, to create a design that deliberately subverted the traditional centred-aligned design. The borders do not function as borders and the title and globe design are off-centre, and, similarly, by the use of different fonts and colour, the title almost contains its own “missing parts.” By highlighting the Hazard Poets label and the addition of a slash between the two words, the meaning is characteristically altered in a manner reminiscent of the warning signs that featured so prominently in Janet Frame's fiction. Despite this initial typographic innovation, the volume re-presents a number of poems (particularly those from Swell) in a comparatively orthodox typographic manner. Previously Loney had maximised the typographical potential afforded him by the intimate control over individual letters occa-

¹³ One of these, Distraction of Opposites, was written by another member of the Takahe Publishing Collective, Sandra Arnold.
sioned by his printing by hand. With Loney having such direct input in the design of the book, this was obviously a conscious decision to draw attention to the effects of alterations to the bibliographic codes.

The publication of a collection of those previously published poems (as well as two new ones) by Alistair Campbell that were concerned with Maori and Polynesian themes would seem, as far as this was possible with poetry, a sound financial proposition, and this consideration, along with Campbell's established reputation, was probably the prime motivation behind the appearance of *Stone Rain* in the Hazard Poets series. As a consequence, it was accorded a larger than usual production run and, at the time of writing, looks likely to be reprinted. However, editorially, this was an important collection of a major New Zealand poet, focussing on what became an increasingly dominant theme in his poetry and fiction. There was also some symmetry in the fact that Campbell, who, as a writer with potential, had launched the Pegasus Poets series some forty years earlier, should be the established writer who validated a later publisher's poetry series. Rob Jackaman provided the last connection in this form of publishing genealogy when Hazard published a second book of his poetry, entitled *Distances*. The painting on the cover fulfilled the requirement of the series to feature an original work by a New Zealand artist, but the choice of Leo Bensemann was more than coincidental, as Jackaman made clear in his dedication:

One looks in vain for an entry under Leo's name in the local edition of Who's Who - a fact which is a comment on that publication more than on the man himself. This present book of poems constitutes (among a number of other things) an attempt to recoup and record what might otherwise be lost - some of that piece of our history which surrounds Leo Bensemann. (7)

This was a tribute to a friend and artist, but it was also a very fitting tribute to a printer and publisher who had done much to foster and maintain the arts in New Zealand.

The other two volumes that made up the series were two of the four Australian volumes that
had been promised the previous year: *The Mask and the Jagged Star* by Jill Jones and P.R. Hay's *The View from the Non-Members' Bar*. Jones's book was quick to receive recognition in Australia and was awarded the Anne Elder Award for a first book of poems. This was a notable success for a company operating from the other side of the Tasman, and perhaps went some way towards Jackaman's hope of "break[ing] down the invisible barrier that still patently exists somewhere between Greymouth and Botany Bay" (Letter). Exposure gained by the New Zealand poets as a result of this was certainly beneficial, both in terms of broadening the writing community, as well as the extra sales generated in Australia, which had a good reputation for supporting its literary endeavours.

Clearly, the appointment of Philip Mead, a poet and respected lecturer in Australian literature, as the Australian-based co-editor strengthened both the credibility and currency of the series. Although working in consultation with one another, Mead's criteria for selection differed somewhat from Jackaman's, in that Mead was primarily concerned with providing an outlet for new and first-book Australian poets (Millar 283). While Paul Millar's claim that we have "outgrown notions that ... our own poetry provides sufficient representations of experience" (288) is arguable, both editors shared the goal of a trans-Tasman poetic dialogue; Mead, however, obviously felt less constrained to be representative.

Nineteen ninety-three was not as prolific a year for Hazard Press with only two-thirds the number of publications appearing as in the previous year. Nevertheless, these were still spread across a variety of subjects, and, again, included the lucrative juvenile market. Two of these books were set in colonial New Zealand, including a reprint of one of Elsie Locke's most popular works (and her first full-length story), *The Runaway Settlers*. James Norcliffe provided the third - and his second - children's story for Hazard, as well as almost completing something of a hat-trick with his appearance in the Hazard Poets series. Non-fiction was also represented by three volumes, which included a timely and much-needed contribution to the electoral referendum debate edited by political commentator Alan McRobie, the biography of
a rural school teacher and a niche-targeted dictionary of Greek words for Classical Studies. Even the Hazard Poets were reduced to three, admittedly diverse offerings. Norcliffe, who was yet another active member of the Takahe Publishing Collective, was represented by *Letters to Dr Dee*, and this went on to become a finalist in the New Zealand Book Awards.

Riemke Ensing's *The K.M. File and Other Poems with Katherine Mansfield* was conceived for the Katherine Mansfield Centenary and presented an unusual poetic dialogue that utilises extracts from Mansfield's own letters and journals. The cover features a page from the calligraphed original (which now hangs in the Alexander Turnbull Library), complete with source notations, and this affords an interesting comparison of two very different bibliographic codes. The intimacy of the calligraphy accords very well with the personal context of the letters and journals that are the poems' inspiration as well as the idea of the correspondence across time between two authors. However, as public tribute and original artistic endeavour, Hazard's printed version is equally valid. It also met with a degree of commercial success, being one of the few poetry volumes to merit reprinting. A contemporary of Alan Loney, Stephen Oliver, makes up the triumvirate with a collection of dense poetry entitled *Guardians, Not Angels*. As the only art contribution, Shona McFarlane's *White Moas & Artichokes: Paintings, Prose & Preserves* sat very well with this typically eclectic selection, quirkily combining her artwork, some observations and recollections and food recipes. This unusual combination epitomised the innovative and unorthodox Hazard approach.

Although it had always been Wilson's intention to feature the arts in his publishing list, the extent of his literary publications - at a time when the major publishers were very wary of anything not penned by an established name - was notable. Fifteen of the nineteen books published in 1994 were either poetry or fiction, with an increasing emphasis on the latter. As with his other endeavours, Wilson's approach to fiction seemed not to have been fettered by...
the conventionally conservative publishing wisdom. This was not to say that Hazard's publications were simply wanton, because although many of them carried a higher degree of risk than was generally acceptable, most were offered with one eye firmly on the market. The five novels offered that year were a shrewd mixture of new and old, accessible and not too "literary." *The Freedom Junkies* by first-time author Cliff Taylor was a "road" novel aimed at a younger audience familiar with *Overseas Experience* and the world beyond New Zealand that it offered up. In contrast to this, *Olivia*, by Lester Earnshaw, was a more traditional historical novel about New Zealand and seemed to offer something to older readers. In a similar, more humorous vein was Peter Hawes's *Tasman's Lay*, which was that rare thing in New Zealand literature - a comic novel. An often under-rated satirist, Hawes also had the unusual distinction of having had his first novel on the bestseller list in Spain. In New Zealand he was probably more well known for his appearances on television, and this more public profile would have been useful for his book sales.

The format of a uniform series with an eye-catching cover that had proved successful with the poetry series was also applied to a new short fiction series. These novellas were presented in a saddle-stitched pocketbook style, and priced at a very affordable $9.95, offering a very modest alternative to the standard New Zealand trade price of $24.95 for poetry and novels.¹⁵ Their size and format not only targeted a sizeable summer reading market, but provided an outlet for a genre in which a number of New Zealand authors had shown a strength. The initial pairing of an established and talented author like Marilyn Duckworth with Chad Taylor was a useful way of introducing a promising young writer as well as signalling a mixture of credibility and innovation in the approach of the series. James Norcliffe provided one of the two children's novels that year, as well as a more general collection of short stories. Hazard also continued to expand its scope by offering two science-fiction novels (a genre for which Wilson admits a "weakness" [Personal]) complete with lurid S-F covers.

¹⁵ These had to compete against overseas novels, particularly bestsellers, priced at around $17.95.
Although slightly more restrained, the covers for the Hazard Poets series also continued to be striking, and the four offerings were evenly split between New Zealand and Australia, again with a focus on less established authors. By contrast, the non-fiction did not stray far from traditional areas of interest and continued to favour subjects with a regional as well as a national appeal. *Piercing the Clouds* was one such book, a history of mountaineering which was published to coincide with the celebration of the centenary of the first ascent of Mount Cook. A substantial biography of 432 pages about New Zealand's first Prime Minister was Hazard's other contribution. Another to feature a local connection was a further art book, this time on Bill Sutton, a former member of The Group and friend of Leo Bensemann. As with the other art books, it featured a generous representation of over eighty works, over half of which were in full colour.

In keeping with their predecessors, Caxton and Pegasus, Hazard produced, at the end of 1994, a catalogue of their current and future publications. As well as signalling their intentions for early 1995 (which consisted predominantly of children's fiction as well as a historical murder-mystery set in Christchurch), the catalogue clearly demonstrated the evolution of printing technology, and, in many ways, the evolution of New Zealand literature itself. This was particularly evident in the Hazard Press logotype (see Figure 24), which combined a computer bit-mapped font (distinguished from letterpress by its obviously fuzzy edges) that

![Hazard Press](https://example.com/hazard_press.png)

*Fig. 24. Hazard Press logotype. Detail of cover of Summer Catalogue: November 94 - May 95, in possession of author.*

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16 It is interesting to note the foregrounding of text in terms of title and author that takes place on poetry books, which is in contrast to the overriding images generally used on science-fiction covers. It would seem that the latter corresponds with the different emphasis of such novels, where action and plot generally take precedence.
had been doctored to remove the crossbars from the “A’s” and thereby provided a distinctive logo. The same could be said about the stylised “HP” which was obviously created on a computer font programme, but utilised the traditional black/red contrast of private press. In this way, Hazard Press can be seen to place itself very much within a tradition of literature publishing in Canterbury, with an acknowledged debt to a specifically Anglocentric bibliographic heritage.

At the same time, publishing in the region had maintained a tradition of adaptability and innovation that marked it off from its more hidebound role-models in the Northern Hemisphere, as well as from its contemporaries in other parts of New Zealand. Hazard appears to have adopted a similar approach, continuing a pursuit of quality in both content and presentation which often required making optimal use of limited resources. By embracing the new computer desktop publishing technology, Hazard was simply seeking the most effective way of achieving its goals, but this decision was to have a profound effect on the sorts of books that they published.

Just as letterpress, particularly Monotype, had lent itself to poetry, the development of larger offset machines allowed for relatively cost-effective production of the more substantial works of fiction that began to appear in the 1950s. Similarly, the major breakthrough represented by computer technology\(^\text{17}\) meant greater flexibility for smaller sized operations such as Hazard Press. Because of the greater ease with which text and image could be manipulated, Caxton’s austere book design was replaced by a more graphic-oriented approach. Hence, with books like the Cleavin/Grant collaboration, the study of Heather Busch’s work and the attractive art reproductions on the covers of the Hazard Poets series, Hazard

\(^{17}\) Computers and associated laser printing technology have meant the first significant break in the evolution of the printing press since its invention by Gutenberg over 550 years ago; previously, all technology was concerned with the impression of ink into paper.
represents a shift to a less rigid, and more interdisciplinary approach to the arts. However, like its predecessors, Hazard drew attention to its efforts to promote the arts by incorporating available technology with an appeal to tradition (the only difference being that the computer revolution had considerably eroded the bibliographic sensibility associated with that tradition).

Support of the visual arts had been an expressed intention of many of Hazard’s predecessors, but one which was usually hampered by the complexity and consequent high costs of such undertakings. This did not mean that full-colour art reproduction had suddenly become cheap, but it at least presented itself as a more viable option. This was particularly so when, as was the case with Hazard Press, the publishing and printing operations were kept separate. Competition amongst printers ensured cost was then kept to a minimum, and the ability to store all the necessary production information on disk simplified the process considerably. In this way, the conflicting demands of being a commercial printer and a book publisher were avoided, as well as the very high capital costs associated with owning and maintaining plant and machinery. Although these results of the new technology offered opportunities to Hazard Press that perhaps might not have existed before, it marked the end of the era of the old-style printer/publisher in Canterbury.

In their book, *The Arts in Aotearoa/New Zealand*, Peter and Dianne Beatson include small publishers under their category of “Indies”:

They owe their existence mainly to the vision, hard work and financial commitment of one dedicated individual or group. Subtract these diligent visionaries and much of the indigenous cultural infrastructure would go with them.

Such individuals and their organisations have to combine the quixotic and the commercial. It is this level that is largely responsible for nurturing the arts of Aotearoa to maturity. Their existence is often more precarious than their external reputation would suggest. (185)
Certainly, Hazard is outwardly the model of much-touted entrepreneurship that, utilising the latest available technology, combines idealism with opportunism. It had successfully negotiated the small business threshold\(^\text{18}\) and seemed to be developing its own publishing momentum. However, just how finely balanced the whole operation was was revealed in 1994, when the combination of a legal wrangle and the sale of the Christchurch printer with whom they had worked closely conspired to bring production to a standstill. Five books destined for the crucial Christmas market were delayed and a backlog resulted. Meanwhile, printers’ bills (among others) still had to be paid from a heavily reduced revenue.

The losses resulting from unforeseen and uncontrollable events such as these could probably be absorbed in a larger firm, but were a body-blow to the likes of Hazard and forced a reorientation. Wilson aimed for a broader, more commercial list that would hopefully offer wider margins and allow him more flexibility. In this category are books such as Fine Cheeses, Household Gods (a book about cats and their famous owners), and Pet Friendly Holidays. However, he admitted that a number of literary works still managed to “come in the backdoor” (Personal 27/10/95), including a pocket-edition collected works of Alistair Campbell and poetry by Mike Minehan. While circumstances had clearly forced Wilson to check some of his idealism, his experience does serve to emphasise the network of co-operation and trust that is essential to the continuation of organisations which support the arts.

Wilson reported that average sales of a new novel were down to around 600 copies, with some selling as few as 350 (Personal 27/10/95). Difficulties were compounded when sales were slow, with books trickling out at a rate insufficient to support the day-to-day costs of running a business, and when organisations such as Creative New Zealand were unpredictable in their responses to requests for funding. Wilson acknowledged the importance of word-of-mouth

\(^{18}\) In business, it is a widely cited fact that eighty percent of all small businesses collapse in their first two years; survival beyond this period, while not a guarantee of success, implies that the necessary groundwork for longer-term trading has been put in place. Wilson suggested that, given the conservative nature of publishing and the necessity of establishing a back-catalogue, five years was a necessary pre-requisite (Personal).
recommendations for a particular book in order to operate successfully on such a small scale. This was particularly true of first-time authors, where the risk factor was particularly high. In the rare event that the new author established their credentials on their first attempt, the publisher's return hinged largely on the option clause for their second work. After taking the risk and making the initial investment, the likelihood was that larger companies with more money to spend and, most importantly, a larger distribution network could lure the promising author away. So, although new technology had again made the small publisher a viable option, without author loyalty, they were confined to the role of stepping stones. The only consolation for being locked into a small-scale operation seems to be that it does allow for greater flexibility and more opportunities for the serendipitous.

This situation has led Wilson to speculate that, in the future, authors themselves may have to be prepared to assume more of the initial risk, either by means of performance, broadsheets or in some electronic form (Personal 27/10/95).\(^{19}\) Also, high resolution copying technology, which had been available since the late 1980s, provides a means of producing low-cost, short print runs, offering yet another avenue for authors to air their own work. Furthermore, the narrowing of the gap between author and publisher achieved by word-processing and desktop publishing programmes is helping to dispel any disparaging notions of vanity publishing. Wilson also offered the theory that the advent of home computer technology had drawn much of the discretionary dollar spending\(^{20}\) that had once been earmarked for books, but that this was only a random fluctuation while computers established themselves as essential items in the home. Once this has been achieved, he predicted that demand for books would increase.

Although only a tentative assessment can be made of Hazard's achievement in the ten years it

\(^{19}\) One Christchurch writer has suggested to me the possibility of a computer bulletin board on which literary works could be available, with a mechanism that saves, perhaps at the end of each month, only the five most popular works.

\(^{20}\) In purely economic terms, the publisher is simply competing for the discretionary dollar which is being spread across an increasingly wider range of available options. One Christchurch bookseller, for example, informed me that the opening of the casino coincided with a marked drop in sales.
has been operating, it is clear that it has established itself as a part of New Zealand's precarious cultural infrastructure, just as Caxton, Pegasus, Hawk and Nag's Head had done before it. Similarly, a large measure of idealism has influenced Hazard's choices in terms of how and what they have published, but their success to date owes a great deal to their ability to recognise commercial imperatives and temper their enthusiasm accordingly. Their adherence to the "quixotic and the commercial" is in the best tradition of publishing in the region. An existing community of interest in printing, publishing and the arts, familiar with the high standard of production required, has ensured a solid network of support for Wilson's venture. Others appear to be following.21

Difficulties inevitably arise in trying to present an accurate picture of a relatively new press that is still actively publishing in a commercial environment. Specific financial details are unavailable for Hazard, but the all-too-frequent disappearance of formal records once such institutions close down (as they often very rapidly do), makes even a partial record of their activities important. For, even through this incomplete historical examination of Hazard's efforts, the dynamism22 of the process is apparent. Various social, institutional and technological factors are constantly at play, altering the outcome that is known as book. The consolidation of book editing and design in computer software has, for example, increased the speed with which a book can be prepared, and it has been achieved without a corresponding increase in capital expense. In fact, providing book production is kept separate, there has been a considerable reduction in the capital necessary to operate as a publisher. However, just as technology begins to provide wider options for publication, other institutional factors operate to restrict choice. Wilson is one of a number of people who have expressed concern about the dominance of the Graham Hart-led Whitcoulls Group (which still seems to merit Glover's

21 Dave Wilson cited the arrival in Christchurch of Shoal Bay Press and a branch of Daphne Brashell as evidence of this trend in his article, "Christchurch Resurgence of Book Publishing." Quentin Wilson also spoke of a developing community of publishers in the city, some of whom he shared the same office building with (Personal).

22 McGann states that "[t]he purpose of an historical approach is to deal with the literary work as a dynamic event in human experience rather than as an object of analysis, linguistic or otherwise" (Beauty 108).
title of "The Octopus") and its ability to dictate discounts to publishers (see Cox 56). The demise of Phillip King, which had previously been a strong supporter of Hazard, and the introduction of a Combined Book Order (for Whitcoulls, Paper Plus and London Books) has meant that a refusal by the Whitcoulls Group to stock a book virtually amounts to a veto on publication. How this will affect Hazard's operations is difficult to predict, but the repercussions for the publication of literature in this country are considerable.

The dominance of Whitcoulls presents the negative face of what Peter and Dianne Beatson describe as the defining power of "gatekeepers": "First, there are the gatekeepers. The construction of an artistic career depends not only on the quality of an individual's work but also upon the attitudes of guardians of the artistic tradition. Key figures such as literary editors and publishers... control entrance to the halls of artistic fame" (53). In the same book, they cite the telling example of Witi Ihimaera's experience touting his early manuscripts: "I took Pounamu Pounamu to a number of publishers and the second publisher was Albion Wright at Caxton, who asked me the question, 'Who will read your book?' I said 'Maori people would' and he said 'Maoris don't read books'" (qtd. 60). This incident betrays the Anglocentric nature of the Christchurch publishing scene at this stage and the extent to which it was a product of a much earlier generation. Particularly interesting is the way Ihimaera conflates the Caxton and Pegasus Presses, apparently regarding them as synonymous. Both publishers had calcified, their aims more commercial than cultural, and, clearly, this was one of the ways in which such institutions can serve to restrict publishing opportunities and maintain the status quo.

Although the definition of "quality" always has been and will continue to be problematic, judgements have to be made and decisions taken. Both editorial and production processes present a myriad of complex problems which are often resolved with little or no consideration of the merit of a particular author. However, it does not follow that "guardians" who champion editorial standards represent some sort of elitist conspiracy to prevent deserving writers from expressing their views. Wilson's decision not to publish Stuart Scott's The Travesty of
Waitangi exemplifies the complex issues that attend the consideration of a manuscript (Personal 27/10/95). It is a useful example in that it also serves to illustrate the distinction between the publishers, Hazard Press, and the eventual printers, Caxton Press.23

The book sold 4000 copies in three weeks (Fogarty) and would have contributed significantly to the balance sheet of Hazard Press. It was enormously popular and is interesting from a sociological perspective, reflecting a desire for information on this subject. However, as historical record and critical examination of the debate, it offered little but a poorly researched, largely anecdotal collection of prejudices, and this was confirmed in a series of negative reviews. The implied guarantee of editorial thoroughness represented by a publisher's imprint did not and could not have been applied to such a publication. The decision in this case not to publish was the exercise of editorial judgement and not a form of censorship. In this way, Wilson demonstrated the positive filtering role of the "gatekeeper."

The transition from author's manuscript to book-for-sale is very rarely a smooth one, and this perhaps explains why "[t]hey're always surprised when they see it in type." The complication of Whitcoulls' more dominant role can be viewed - optimistically - as simply another adventure in the journey of the text. Whether viewed as chance or fate, Hazard's achievement to date - 78 books in less than ten years, more than half of which relate to the arts - has been considerable. The title of the press is suitably both a warning and a light-hearted snook (in the tradition of Oriflamme) - a warning of the dangers inherent in undertaking a business whose sole aim is not the pursuit of profit; and a willing and carefree acceptance of the unpredictability and l'hasard involved in pursuing the unconventional. It is fitting that chance and luck, which play an inevitable part in publishing, should be celebrated in this way; for much of what publishers in Canterbury have achieved for the arts has been the result of seemingly unreasonable - and often unrewarded - risks, that were taken in a spirit of casual philanthropy.

23 In fairness, Caxton agreed to print the book for the author and not to publish it, but they had, by this time, essentially ceased to be publishers and to exercise the editorial discretion as to the propriety of a manuscript that accompanies that role.
that is often displayed by people who feel they have nothing to lose and everything to gain. What Hazard Press recognises is that the arts rarely conform to a predictable pattern, and their experience demonstrates above all else the dynamic social relations that exist in literature.

“when a small publishing house takes risks the larger publishers shy away from, publishes many new poets to critical acclaim, produces beautifully designed books featuring original artworks on the four-colour covers and retails them for under twenty dollars, it deserves a fair measure of credit and success” (Millar 281)
CONCLUSION

Read this first

BOOK EDITING is the conception, planning, and preparation of the content of a book, in cooperation with the author.

BOOK DESIGN is the conception, planning, and preparation of the physical and visual attributes of a book.

BOOK PRODUCTION is the execution of the design, i.e. purchasing materials and services, scheduling and routing the work, coordinating the manufacture of the book with distribution requirements, and maintaining records.

(Lee vii)
Conclusion

The functions quoted in the epigraph to this chapter are, according to a trade textbook, the three essential components that make up the process of BOOKMAKING (and from which the text draws its name). It is by virtue of this process that an author's manuscript is able to engage with an audience, to re-enter the society that created it. However, it does not operate in isolation, but takes place in a complex technological, economic, intellectual, social and cultural milieu. This thesis has begun the examination of this wider view of bookmaking in New Zealand by focussing on its peculiar manifestation in Christchurch, where a resourceful, and unusually professional commitment to the development of New Zealand literature has been exhibited. The evolution of a small, but forceful community of interest ensured that a book culture was firmly established in Canterbury, but the effect of which was to be felt throughout the entire country. It set in place a series of institutional thresholds that have had a marked effect on the writing community in New Zealand, while at the same time providing a dynamic environment, conducive to the production and transmission of literary work.

The five presses that I have examined demonstrate a diversity of interest, but all share a perceptive commitment to the arts, characterised by an independent and courageous idealism. The fortunes of these various ventures have also varied, with financial reward rarely a serious motivation, but they have persisted in spite of this, making a significant contribution to the arts that belies the scale of their operations. Their example serves to remind us that were a simple ledger mentality applied in all cases in New Zealand, much literature that is an established part of the canon would never have been published. The reality is that a variety of other factors are taken into account and the result is a more dynamic and varied output.

The necessarily wide social network that supports literary endeavours is, however, a fragile one, and the extent of the material determination of literary movements has tended to be
underestimated. The development of a body of work known as "New Zealand Literature" is inconceivable without the groundwork of the Caxton Press, although its existence in turn owes as much to the Renaissance of Printing that took place in England at the end of the nineteenth century. Jerome McGann observed that, in England, the Renaissance of Printing "encouraged freedom and innovation in the publishing and distribution of texts - moves that ... might ultimately be managed for the creation and consolidation of an audience of readers" (Black 21). This was certainly borne out by the New Zealand experience, where an institutional infrastructure developed around the efforts of Caxton Press to promote a national literature. Their efforts were bolstered by the establishment of a State Literary Fund in 1947, which was, in many ways, a recognition of their achievement.

Despite the nationalist rhetoric, an English cultural matrix is evident at a most elementary bibliographic level. By appropriating the bibliographic authority of the very country from which they were trying to separate their identity, they set about creating a locally determined canon which was closely associated with a particular set of bibliographic codes. By initiating a critical re-examination of typographic practice, they arrogated to themselves the right to determine standards, extending this from the physical document to the text itself. The notion of "invisible typography" that they successfully advocated and insisted be adhered to concealed the considerable institutional power that accrued with these bibliographic codes.

However, just as Caxton Press could be said to have emerged as a result of collaborative inertias engendered by technological change, the rapid post-war development of capital-intensive, high-volume presses ensured a challenge to the pre-war craft principles that informed much of Caxton's activity. Pegasus Press capitalised on the developing infrastructure, embracing the new technology while consolidating on the existing facilities for high-quality press work, as well as fully utilising the availability of State patronage. Its groundbreaking pursuit of foreign

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1 See footnote 15 in chapter one.
markets followed by the recognition that its production standards were internationally competitive encouraged a less provincial outlook, even though the means to trade globally were not then in place. The potential that they had foreseen in an international market was later to be exploited by multinational publishing conglomerates, particularly in the late 1970s and 1980s.

The physical size and small print runs of Gormack's books also exemplify the material determination of literature, and what can be achieved while observing the necessity to work within available resources. His adoption of private press conventions can be seen as anachronistic, a function of his refusal to renounce the influence of Georgianism, but his handpress offered a means to combat his exclusion from the dominant literary discourse and the capital-intensive monopolisation of the publishing world. By drawing attention to the means by which literary works are transmitted, in effect reinstating the graphic noise so scrupulously avoided by Caxton Press, Gormack could be said to foreshadow the signal literary developments of the late sixties and early seventies, which were focussed around a revitalisation of the small press.

Again, technological change precipitated a new literary dynamic. The effect on the printing industry of the transition to offset printing was considerable, but it had little to offer in the production of small editions of local literature, particularly poetry, where the older technologies not only remained economically viable - just - but proved to be editorially more scrupulous. The increased availability of the now doubly anachronistic handpresses offered a new generation an accessible means of expressing themselves, in a context sympathetic to their critical premisses. Despite initial successes, particularly with regards to poetry and literary reviews, their efforts served to confirm the marginality of publishing literature in an increasingly competitive market. They had, however, succeeded in revitalising a stagnating literary scene. They had achieved this by a re-orientation of the cultural matrix, substituting American models for English ones, and the result, in poetry at least, was a marked alteration in the appearance of their texts. By challenging the bibliographic authority of their predecessors,
they weakened its determining power and succeeded in challenging for a place in the canon of New Zealand literature.

The appearance of Hazard Press was both a continuation of a tradition - of support for the arts in Christchurch (in response to a perceived lack) - and a major break from printing tradition. The high capital cost of maintaining a printery and the impact of cheap, off-shore printing operations had brought about perhaps the most sustained retrenchment of the publishing industry in this country (although this was a worldwide phenomenon), and the demise of the printer/publisher in particular had been hastened by the onset of computer technology that virtually collapsed the bookmaking process into the one 'meta-medium' of the personal computer. Hazard Press took advantage of the opportunities offered by the new technology to explore the gaps left by the retraction of the larger multinational companies from their New Zealand lists. By locating itself in Christchurch, some distance from the multinational publishing hub on Auckland's North Shore, it was able to maintain its independence while making the most of the established production standards of the existing infrastructure in the region.

While the support offered to the visual arts by Hazard Press continues a positive tradition in Christchurch, it also reflects the increasing emphasis on the visual encouraged by electronic media. The exploration of text and image, to which Alan Loney was increasingly drawn, has been facilitated by the manipulation of images made possible by digital technology, and has led one commentator to suggest that "[d]esigners are in a uniquely powerful position as culture makers" (qtd. in Smythe 34). Certainly, this thesis tends to lend credence to this assertion. The writer quoted above also prefaced her statement with the claim that "modernism is not the language our culture speaks anymore," and this seems to be borne out by a cursory examination of current book design trends and of the contemporary arts generally in New Zealand.
The rapid expansion of the capabilities of new technology has, in turn, fuelled fears over the “death” of the book. The international wave of interest and activity in the history of print culture is itself, I believe, a manifestation of this fear (with the underlying assumption that this will be an examination of an historical artefact). The formalisation of a national project on the History of Print Culture in New Zealand by the New Zealand Academy for the Humanities in 1994 lends an immediacy to these concerns. The activities of the publishers examined in this thesis reveal a book culture informed by a modernist ethic of universal messages, conveyed unimpeded by the direct means of communication that is the book. The challenge posed by the multiple meanings of post-modernism has seriously unsettled that culture. However, just as Jerome McGann has defended post-modern writing practices, arguing that their “goal [is] not [the] ‘death’ of the referent - rather a recharged use of the multivalent referential vectors that any word has” (Social 34), I would argue that what this thesis has chronicled is not the “death” of the book but a continual process of exploration of the dynamic potential of the book. Whether Gutenberg would have recognised it or not, it could be suggested that when McGann writes of “the particular historical adventures which . . . texts undergo” (Beauty 131) and the importance of bibliographic codes, he is simply restating Gutenberg’s own description of his “epoch-making invention” (Steinberg 17) as “adventure and art.”

While the efforts of all the many people examined in this thesis offer cause for optimism, there is often a high price paid for commitment to the arts and achievements are rarely financially rewarding. There is, I believe, much room for the recognition of the network of dedicated individuals who are all too often subsumed under the title of “bookmaking,” or, seemingly, virtually erased upon the meeting of reader and author that is so often supposed to occur in the reading of a book. This thesis has convinced me of the potential of this field of study to, in the words of the bibliographer I.R. Willinson (an editor of A History of the Book

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2 See Project Prospectus for New Zealand History of Print Culture, which is reproduced in the appendix.
3 “Poetry and poems are, in this sense, trans-historical, but they acquire this perpetuity by virtue of the particular historical adventures which their texts undergo from their first appearance before their author’s eyes through all their subsequent constitutions” (Beauty 131).
in Britain) “help reintegrate theory and research in the Humanities” (qtd. in Opie 2), as well as recognise the philanthropic efforts of the raft of individuals who maintain the arts as a dynamic and challenging place to be.

4 This is a sentiment shared by Jerome McGann.
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**THESES:**


APPENDIX
LANDFALL started in 1947. It set out to prove, if possible, that New Zealand could produce and support a literary journal not unworthy of comparison with the best of its kind in Britain and America. Without making any extravagant claims, we believe that this aim has been largely fulfilled—that in its first five years Landfall has published enough work of high quality among its verse, stories, literary criticism, reviews of books, its comprehensive surveys of the arts, and its articles and commentaries on public affairs, to rank as a journal which can be judged by the highest standards both for range of interest and for literary distinction. The list of its contributors—more than one hundred and fifty in all—includes the name of almost every well-known New Zealand writer within the country or overseas, not only novelists, poets, literary critics and writers on the arts, but historians, sociologists and political commentators. A large proportion of the best stories and poems which have been published in book form in New Zealand during the last few years first appeared in Landfall; and the country's only two regular literary prizes, the Jessie Mackay Award for poetry and the Hubert Church Award for prose (both given through the New Zealand Centre of the P.E.N.), were awarded in 1950 to James K. Baxter and Frank Sargeson respectively for work which had appeared in Landfall.

Moreover, Landfall has received warm praise abroad. In a survey of recent New Zealand writing the Times Literary Supplement of August 24, 1951, devoted half a column to an appreciation of Landfall, writing as follows: 'In subject matter it ranges as widely as possible, between editorial comment on world affairs to long reviews of the latest fiction and works of scholarship. In intention it is designed to speak primarily for New Zealand and to New Zealand, but it does this without any parochial or narrowly patriotic note (its views on world affairs are, indeed, a good deal more generous and enlightened than those that appear in a number of its English counterparts). Perhaps its most valuable function has been to encourage young writers, and in this it has already produced creative work of an enviably high standard . . . At the same time, intelligent commentaries are provided on fresh developments in the fine arts, music, and the theatre—where critical standards are, indeed, sorely needed.'

Since literature in this country is still very young, we think that Landfall's achievement is something New Zealanders may be proud of. Further, we think that Landfall performs an important function in the community, and that for both these reasons it deserves support—more support than it has received hitherto. The Arts Year Book failed for lack of support. Every one praised its intentions, even when criticizing it in detail. Every one wanted it to continue. But not enough people were prepared to give it regular support. And without regular support no such journal today can hope to survive. Regular support means subscribing in advance, by the year (or longer), and not simply buying casual copies because something in them happens to catch the eye. It is no use approving of Landfall in the abstract, thinking it 'a good thing' but doing nothing about it, or withholding support because there are some things about it that you dislike. If you would rather it existed than not, then we ask you to help keep it going. Its present circulation is about eight hundred copies. That is too small a figure to cover costs, even with the aid of a grant from the New Zealand Literary Fund, which was first given in 1951. We do not think it would be practical to raise the price of Landfall; £1 a year is as much as most people are prepared to pay for any quarterly except specialist ones, and to raise the price would almost certainly result in a loss of circulation. Nor do we propose to lower our standard of printing; from the start it was intended that Landfall should be printed as well as possible, and its appearance helps to give it a distinction and authority which we believe it is important to maintain. But it must be pointed out that in a period of rising costs Landfall has not once raised its price; readers still pay for it what they paid in 1947.
In presenting a picture of LANDFALL'S financial position it would first be advisable to describe the procedure under which it operates.

Firstly, then, comes the printing department of the Caxton Press which is merely concerned with the production of the magazine itself plus such incidental printing as subscription forms and envelopes.

Secondly, there is the publishing department of the Press whose part may be subdivided into (a) keeping subscribers' record cards, receiving their subscriptions for banking in Landfall's bank account, & wrapping & posting subscribers' copies. (b) Selling casual copies and supplying bulk orders to booksellers.

Thirdly, there is Landfall's own bank account, operated by the Editor.

As far as the first is concerned, Caxton has always printed Landfall at cost or under. In the early years it was often done for the cost of paper and typesetting alone - labour time was ignored. In recent years, Landfall has been printed at £40 - £60 under what would be a normal charge for similar work. There have been times too, when Landfall would be given a £10 or £20 discount to help its dwindling funds.

For the second, Caxton receives no revenue whatever for the work involved in (a). A commission of 12½% is charged on sales made under (b). Over the past 12 months this commission averaged £2.15.6 a month. It is merely a nominal charge and does not pretend to recompense us for the time involved in wrapping the books, sending out invoices, statements and receipts.

Finally there is the bank account of Landfall. As mentioned above, this is operated by the Editor. Caxton pays in all subscription monies received and the Editor pays his contributors and, when possible his printers. There are no debits other than these - the Editor's work is unpaid and he is not reimbursed for his expenses.

Financially, therefore, Landfall has been carefully nursed by its printer & publisher. Now, we have long discarded any ideas of making money from publishing but we must live and can stay in business as publishers only as long as we survive as printers. It is thus essential that Landfall be in a position to pay its normal production costs - this it cannot do. After five years, Landfall's credit bank balance almost equals its debt to the printer. If normal charges had been made over this period there would be a deficit of £1000.
Mr Charles Brasch  
31 Royal Terrace  
DUNEDIN.

Dear Charles:

In answer to the matters you mentioned:—

1. L/F plates using different inks—Sargeson was more than pleased with the reproduction.  
2. Lawlor advised unofficially that £200 had been recommended but so far no cheque.  
3. Adresso system should be and will be foolproof. We are checking on any slip-ups to trace the cause and all will be well soon.  
4. Leo and I had a session on MSS recently and many were returned. We propose in future that we hold quarterly sessions just prior to your visits here. This will keep us all up to date and enable us to discuss MSS with you.  
5. Oliver’s MS is not lost. Denis gave him a reckless promise last May 51. It was considered at our conference and is on the definite list.  
6. I do not immediately recall McPherson’s offer but as you have written him we’ll await the MS.  
7. Ruth Dallas is on the definite list and will be advised soon.  
8. Henderson ditto.  
9. You are right about the formal acknowledgement system and this will come into being soon. Soon after my arrival here I collected all the MSS I could find and have since reposed (alphabetically filed) in a special drawer. I thought you knew that.  
10. Duggan’s MS is old. As you say, it would have done for Book and no doubt that’s what it was intended for in common with many other short story MSS we were holding. For your information and to refresh your memory here are scheduled publications:—
   Robin Hyde = Houses by the Sea — August
   Fairburn = Poems
   Baxter = The Fallen House
   = Cressida

CHRISTCHURCH CAXTON PRESS LIMITED
Also-
Bensemana  - Drawing's etc  - August
Cresswell  - Hurunui  -

Also-
Keith Sinclair  - Poems
W.H.Oliver  - "
Paul Henderson  - "
Ruth Dallas  - "
J.R.Hewey  - "
R.A.K. Mason  - Stories

Also still under consideration are
(a)The Bella Hoffman Symposium on Frank Sargeson - we want an SLF subsidy for this one.
(b)A short novel by Elsie Locke which Leo is reading now- very doubtful!
(c)There are scraps of verse by Janet Frame here. Her sister said she still writes but destroys the MSS before anyone can get at them.
(d)Lionel Grindlay - Stories

You will see from all the above that there is a preponderance of verse- too much in our opinion - and we are considering a combination of say Oliver, Henderson, Dallas & Hewey in one volume with perhaps an introduction by Baxter.

There are snags in this and we'd welcome your comments. Even if we decide that all these poets can be reconciled as far as the poets are concerned, it still remains to persuade them personally to sleep in the one bed.
Apart from all this we progress well.

Yours faithfully

[Signature]

DLD/JP
FRIDAY 2.15 p.m.
A COUNTRY IN SEARCH OF ITSELF
Speaker: David Hall
Chairman: Alan Mulgan
Discussion: H. C. D. Somerset and Professor J. C. Garrett

FRIDAY 8.15 p.m.
SOCIAL EVENING & READINGS
Readings by: Allen Curnow, Denis Glover, Basil Dowling and James K. Baxter

Morning and afternoon addresses will be given in Room 15. Evening sessions will be held in the College Hall.

Morning and afternoon tea will be served in the Students' Association Building.

During the Conference information may be obtained at the office in the main entrance of the College.

The Writers' Conference Committee wishes to acknowledge the generous financial assistance given by the Canterbury Centennial Association and the New Zealand State Literary Fund.

CANTERBURY UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
CHRISTCHURCH

WEDNESDAY 8.15 p.m.
CREATIVE WRITING: A NEW ZEALAND SURVEY
Speaker: Professor Arnold Wall & Denis Glover

THURSDAY 10 a.m.
RECENT TRENDS IN NEW ZEALAND POETRY
Speaker: James K. Baxter
Chairman: Allen Curnow
Discussion: Basil Dowling, W. Hart-Smith and J. R. Horsey

THURSDAY 2.15 p.m.
LITERARY CRITICISM IN NEW ZEALAND
Speaker: D. H. Munro
Chairman: Charles Brasch
Discussion: L. A. Baigent and T. H. Scott

THURSDAY 8.15 p.m.
OPEN FORUM
Chairman: Anton Vogt
Speaker: Mrs M. Dunningham, Professor Ian Gordon, A. R. D. Fairburn, R. M. Chapman

FRIDAY 10 a.m.
IS THERE A MAORI LITERATURE?
Speaker: Johannes C. Anderson
Chairman: Dr R. S. Duff

Fig. 28. Programme for New Zealand Writers Conference. Caxton Press Library, Christchurch.
Offstage

Costume designed & executed by Marie Steele
and Elizabeth O'Reilly

Millinery by Margaret Short

Programme by Denis Glover

Stage manager, Lee Anderson

Properties, Marjorie Evershott

Prompt, Ethel Richardson

Because of the increased facilities offered by the new Guild dub rooms at 111 Hardford Street, it has been decided to reopen the membership list. Those interested are invited to apply to the Guild secretary, Mrs P. Goldman, at Rees Road, Gains.

printed at the

pegasus press

Outrages

Layout executed by Tom Thumb

and Tapper Nandy

Decor—4 Square

Menu by Danus Over

Proprieties—Hell!

Prompt—and prompt—but prompter!!

Because of the increased facilities of the new rooms hard by the Royal it has been decided to fill up the barrel again . . . All interested put in two bob

printed at the

pegasus press

Fig. 29. First Born programme and Thirst Gorn parody. Caxton Press Library, Christchurch.
Fig. 30. Proof jacket for *Owls Do Cry*. Frank Sargeson Trust House, Takapuna.
Memorandum of Agreement

MADE this fourth day of September 1963

between

DENIS GLOVER

of Wellington, New Zealand

(hereinafter called the Author, which expression, wherever the context admits, shall include the Author's executors, administrators and assigns) on the one part, and PEGASUS PRESS LIMITED, 14 Oxford Terrace, Christchurch, New Zealand, (hereinafter called the Publisher, which expression, wherever the context admits, shall include the Publisher's executors, administrators and assigns, or successors in business as the case may be) on the other part.

WHEREAS the author has written, compiled or edited and/or is the owner of the copyright of a literary work at present entitled

ENTER WITHOUT KNOCKING
Selected Poems

(hereinafter called the Work, which term shall mean and include the first and all subsequent editions thereof, including matter which may be added to any new edition) it is mutually agreed between the parties as follows:

1. (a) The author has delivered, or undertakes to deliver by 4th September, 1963 the finished manuscript of the Work typed and ready for the printer, and the Publisher shall, unless prevented by war, strikes, lockouts or other circumstances beyond the Publisher's control, within six months of the delivery of the complete manuscript, unless otherwise mutually agreed, at his own risk and expense produce and publish the Work. If the final manuscript, as delivered by the Author, must be copied prior to submission to the printer, such expense shall be borne by the Author. In the event of the Work incorporating any material published elsewhere and subject to copyright, the Author shall procure at his/her own expense proper and complete written authorization to reprint the same.

(b) Should the Author neglect to deliver the manuscript by the prescribed date the Publisher may, if he thinks fit, decline to publish the Work, in which case this Agreement will be annulled, subject to the proviso that the Author shall not be at liberty to publish the Work elsewhere without first offering it to the Publisher on the terms of this Agreement.

(c) If, after delivery of the finished manuscript, the Publisher decides that the quality and/or content of the Work is unsatisfactory, upon giving written notice of such decision, the Publisher shall have the right to terminate this Agreement and the Author agrees to return to the Publisher all monies that may have been advanced to the Author in respect of the Work.

(d) The Author undertakes to read and correct his proofs and to return them to the Publisher within fourteen days of their receipt.
2. The Author hereby warrants to the Publisher that the said Work is in no way whatever a violation of any existing copyright and that it contains nothing obscene, indecent, or (with the intention of the Author) libellous, and will indemnify the Publisher against any loss, injury or damage, including any legal costs or expenses properly occasioned to, or incurred by, the Publisher in consequence of any breach (unknown to the Publisher) of this warranty.

3. The copyright in the Work shall remain the property of the Author, but, in consideration of the payments hereinafter mentioned, the sole and exclusive right to produce or reproduce the Work or any abridgment of the Work or any substantial part of the Work in any form for the period of unrestricted copyright is hereby vested in the Publisher throughout the world.

4. (a) The Author shall on delivery of the manuscript supply to the Publisher without additional remuneration all photographs, pictures, diagrams, maps and other material of a standard satisfying to the Publisher, from which to illustrate the said Work, and if the Author should fail to do so, the Publisher shall have the right to supply the said material and charge the cost thereof against any sums that may accrue to the Author under the terms of this Agreement. In respect of any such material of which the copyright is not his own, the Author shall at his own expense obtain from the owners of the respective copyrights written permission to reproduce such material in connection with the said Work, and the Publisher shall prepare blocks or plates therefrom at his own cost for the use of his Printers and Binders. Such pictures and material supplied by the Author shall, when done with, be returned to the Author if he so requires, but the Publisher shall not be liable for accidental damage thereto, or for loss thereof, in the absence of negligence on his part or on the part of his own employees.

(b) The Author shall supply an index, bibliography and other such appendices for the said Work if in the opinion of the Publisher these are desirable.

5. The Publisher shall have the entire control of the publication; and the paper, printing, jacket and embellishments, the manner and extent of advertisement, the number and distribution of free copies for the Press or otherwise; and the number, price and terms of sale of the first or any subsequent edition shall be in his sole discretion. Save as hereby otherwise provided, the Publisher shall bear all expenses of production and advertising except the amount, if any, by which the cost of the Author's corrections of proofs other than printer's errors, as per printer's invoice, exceeds ten per cent (10%) of the cost of type-setting, which extra amount shall be borne by the Author.

6. (a) The published price of the Work shall be about 17s 6d per copy, but the Publisher may in his discretion determine the published price of any edition as he may think fit, and may sell part or the whole of the residue of any edition at a reduced price, or as a remainder at the best price such remainder stock will fetch. The Publisher shall give the Author the first refusal of purchasing the remainder stock. Such option shall be sufficiently complied with on the Publisher's part by posting to the Author at his last known address an offer of such remainder stock, and this offer shall be deemed to be refused if no reply be received by the Publisher within three weeks after posting such offer.

(b) The Publisher shall have the right to issue the Work at a later date in a cheaper edition or editions, and shall do so at his own cost and risk and subject to the payment to the Author of the royalties payable on cheaper editions specified below.

7. (a) During the legal term of unrestricted copyright the Publisher agrees to pay to the Author the following royalties and/or fees in respect of volume or sheet sales:
(1) A royalty of **Ten per cent (10%)**

on the New Zealand published price of each copy sold, excluding such copies as may by subsequent clauses of this Agreement, or as otherwise mutually agreed, be sold subject to a different royalty.

(2) **Ten per cent (10%)** of the actual receipts in New Zealand from the sale of any edition or editions of the Work issued by the Publisher, whether specially printed or not and whether bound or in sheets, for sale in America or in the British Commonwealth or elsewhere beyond New Zealand, unless such edition or editions are sold through another publisher, subject to a royalty on the published price, in which case the following clause (3) shall apply in lieu of this clause.

(3) Fifty per cent (50%) of the net amount less commissions received in New Zealand by the Publisher from the sale of licenses or publication rights, on a royalty basis or for an outright sum, for editions in English to any publisher in the British Commonwealth, the United States of America or any other country beyond New Zealand.

(4) **Ten per cent (10%)** of the published price of every copy of any cheaper edition or editions that may be issued.

(5) **Ten per cent (10%)** of the net amount received by the Publisher on copies sold at special terms for export.

(6) **Five per cent (5%)** of the net amount received by the Publisher on all copies of the Work remaindered at above cost.

(b) In consideration of the payment by the Publisher to the Author of the following percentages of the net amount less commissions received by him in New Zealand in respect of the under-mentioned rights the Author hereby assigns the said rights to the Publisher:

(1) Translation rights: **fifty per cent (50%)**

(2) Anthology, digest, abridgments, magazine condensations and quotation rights: **fifty per cent (50%)**.

(3) Continental rights: **fifty per cent (50%)**.

(4) Second and subsequent serial rights: **fifty per cent (50%)**.

(5) Amateur Dramatic rights: **fifty per cent (50%)**.

(6) Film rights: seventy-five per cent (75%).

(7) Broadcasting rights: **fifty per cent (50%)**.

(8) Television rights: **fifty per cent (50%)**.

(9) Microphotographic reproduction rights: **fifty per cent (50%)**.

(10) Rights of reproduction by gramophone records or any other mechanical means whether by sight, sound, or a combination of both: **fifty per cent (50%)**.

(c) During the legal terms of unrestricted copyright the Publisher agrees to pay to the Author the following percentages of all monies received by him for the reasons stated below:

(1) Fifty per cent (50%) of sums paid for the right to use or reproduce illustrations, maps and/or plans appearing in the Work which have been provided by the Author.

(2) Fifty per cent (50%) of any sums obtained by the Publisher, less expenses, in respect of infringements of copyright.

(d) No royalties shall be paid on copies

(i) presented to the Author, or for review, advertising, sample or like purposes.

(ii) destroyed by fire, water, enemy action, in transit, or otherwise.

(iii) sold at cost or less than cost.

(e) The Publisher may publish, or permit others to publish, such selections from the said Work, for publicity purposes, as he may deem expedient to benefit its sale, without compensation to the Author.
(f) The Author shall be entitled to six free copies of the said Work, and to purchase further copies of it for personal use, but not for re-sale, at a discount of twenty-five per cent on the published price.

8. The Publisher shall make up the accounts annually after the date of publication, deliver them to the Author, and pay any sums due to him therewith.

The Author or his authorised representative shall have the right, upon written request, to examine the books of account of the Publisher in so far as they relate to the sale of the said Work, which examination shall be at the cost of the Author unless errors exceeding two per cent of the total sums paid to the Author shall be found to his disadvantage, in which case the cost shall be paid by the Publisher.

9. In order to keep the Work up to date the Author shall, if it be necessary, without charge to the Publisher, edit and revise all editions of the Work during the continuance of the said exclusive right and shall supply any new matter that may be needful to that end. In the event of the Author neglecting or being unable by reason of death or otherwise to edit or revise the Work, or supply new matter where needful, to the Publisher's satisfaction, the Publisher may procure some other person to edit or revise the Work, or supply new matter, and may deduct the expense thereof from the royalties payable to the Author.

10. The Author shall not without the consent of the Publisher publish any abridgment or part of the said Work in serial or book form, nor shall the Author prepare otherwise than for the Publisher any work which shall be an expansion or abridgment of the said Work or of a nature likely to compete with it.

11. The Publisher shall have the first refusal of, including the first opportunity to read and consider for publication, the Author's next two full length works suitable for publication in book form, on terms to be arranged but which shall be fair and reasonable. If, three months after each of such works has been submitted to the Publisher, no terms shall have been agreed on for its publication, the Author shall be at liberty to enter into an agreement with any other publisher for that work.

12. Joint Authors: Where there is more than one Author it is agreed that

shall represent the Joint Authors in all matters arising out of this Agreement and that his receipt shall be a full and sufficient discharge to the Publisher for all payments that may become due to the Authors under provision of this Agreement.

13. If the Publisher fails to fulfil or comply with any of the provisions of this Agreement within one month after written notification from the Author of such failure, or if he goes into liquidation, or if after the said Work is out of print he has not, within twelve months of a written request from the Author, issued a new edition or impression of at least two hundred copies, then and in any of these events the Author shall be at liberty to determine this Agreement forthwith without prejudice to any claim which he may have either for monies due and/or damages and/or otherwise.

Signed for and on behalf of the Publisher

PEGASUS PRESS LIMITED

Signed by the AUTHOR

DIRECTOR

in the presence of

WITNESS

WITNESS

Reflections From My Mirror. A.W.Ericson. Poems; 1977; 96pp. 215 x 140 Linotype 11 point Baskerville; on Antique Wove paper; sewn, card cover, Linweave Lime Green jacket printed black 36 point Caslon Italic; 200 numbered copies.

The Old Have Secrets, poems, Anon. 1978; 24pp. 176 x 133, handset 12 point Caslon, Text printing paper; centre hand sewn in card cover; orange jacket printed black, Caslon 36 point Italic, decorative border, weathercock symbol. 100 numbered copies.

Recollections of the Cocksfoot Industry on Banks Peninsula F.C.Newton 1979; 30pp, 215 x 145, 12 point Monotypeset Caslon; 8 sketches by Peg Walton; Text Printing paper; centre machine sewn in card cover with Crest Leather Board brown jacket; sketch over printed black 36 point Caslon Italic: 200 numbered copies.

Canticle. poems, Charles Bisley. 1980; 56pp, 275 x 160, Monotypeset 12 point Caslon; paper Text Printing; sewn binding in card cover with Linweave Cocoaberry jacket printed black 36 point Caslon Italic and Roman. 200 numbered copies.

Reflections and Others. poems, A.W.Ericson. 1980; 77pp. 215 x 140 Linotype 11 point Baskerville; Text Printing paper sewn in card cover with Crest Leather Board white jacket printed black 36 point Caslon Italic and line block. 100 numbered copies.


Elegy, poems, Charles Bisley 1983; 72pp, 278 x 158, 12 point Monotypeset Caslon on Text Printing paper; sewn in card cover with Blue jacket printed black 36 point Caslon Italic. 400 numbered copies.

Dark Avenue, poem, Charles Bisley. 1986; 90pp with 4 colour and 7 black and white illustrations by Nicholas Bisley. 278 x 170, Monotypeset 12 point Caslon, sewn with white card cover, blue jacket with black illustration. 500 copies; printed by The Griffin Press.

Fig. 32. Arbor Press checklist. In possession of author.
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<th>PRESS/BOOKS (U.S.A.)</th>
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<td>Alan Brunton, Messenger in Blackface</td>
<td>Ted Berrigan, Many Happy Returns</td>
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<td>Kevin Ireland, A Letter from Amsterdam</td>
<td>Edward Dorn, Hands Up!</td>
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<td>Denise Lebolt, A Kernel of 25 Poems</td>
<td>Lee Ho, Poets 5 19 20 Volume Sixside Note</td>
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<td>Robert Chir, Blue Footpaths</td>
<td>Gary Snyder, Water and Texts</td>
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<td>Avero. Spence, Relations</td>
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<td>Ian Wedde, Homage to Merrie</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER BOOKS (U.S.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barry Gifford, Coots Turttles, Books I-IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CORINTH BOOKS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B.K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edward Dorn, Hands Up!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lee Ho, Poets 5 19 20 Volume Sixside Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gary Snyder, Water and Texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BLACK SPARROW PRESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paul Blackburn, Early Selected Y Mas (Fonms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charles Bukowski, Mokehung With No Luck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tom Clark, Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robert Creeley, St. Martin’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robert Creeley, Thirty Things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dane Rudhyar, The Magelan Caudle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CARCANET PRESS (England)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H.D. (Hilda Doolittle), Hermetic Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H.D. (Hilda Doolittle), Trilogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mahmoud Darwish, Selected Poems (trans. Ian Wedde)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CITY LIGHTS PRESS (U.S.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allen Ginsberg, The Stuff of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Andre Voinetomey, Doggynme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robert Sly, The Teeth-Mother Naked At Last</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CHICAGO REVIEW PRESS (U.S.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kermit Wiesemans, Spring &amp; Autumn, Tokyo, Sato, and Intro. by Burtch Watanab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CHRISTOPHER BOOKS (U.S.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barry Gifford, Coots Turttles, Books I-IV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 33. Catalogue for The Poetry Shop, Frank Sargeson Trust House, Takapuna.
NEW DIRECTIONS PRESS (U.S.A.)

William Carlos Williams, The Red Wheel...$1.50
Old American Legends... $1.50
Old Cornman, Sun Rock Man... $1.75
Gregory Corso, Elegies, Feelings American... $2.25
Gregory Corso, The Happy Birthday of Death... $1.75
Gregory Corso, Long Live Man... $1.75
Robert Duncan, The Opening Of The Field... $1.80
William Everson (Ed.); Antioch The Residual Years... $2.25
Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Open Eye, Open Heart... $1.75
Denise Levertov, To Stay Alive... $1.95
Denise Levertov, With Eyes All The Back Of Our Heads... $1.35
Octave Paz, Early Poems 1935-1955... $2.75
Dorinne Schwartz, Selected Poems; Summer Knowledge... $1.95
Jonathan Williams, An Ear In Bartram's Tree... $1.95

OXFORD UNIV. PRESS (England)
Gray Gowrie, A Postcard from Don Giovanni... $3.15
J. L. Kennedy, Reading and Writing... $3.15
Robert Merri, The Door Standing Open... $2.45
Louis Simpson, Adventures Of The Letter... $2.65
V. D. Sofronija, After Experience... $2.95
Alice Tate, The Swimmers and Other Selected Poems... $6.25
Andrew Voznesensky, Antimodern... $1.35

RAFF & WHITING (England)
Gaynay Kinnell, Body Plays... $2.25
Gaynay Kinnell, Poems of Night... $2.25

SONO NIS PRESS (Canada)
George Amabile, Blood Time... $4.25
Willie Barstow, Anti Journal... $1.80
Charles Lillard, Garth Doucette... $2.00
Eugene McNamara, Passages and Other Poems... $4.95
Finrence McKell, The Rim Of The Park... $4.25
E. Cumins. Pride, The House Of The Union... $3.75
Mireka Jon Skakkar, In The Mashe... $2.00
Audre Steinman, Private Speech... $1.80
Don Thompson, Toys of Death... $1.80

THE BOOKS

UNICORN PRESS (U.S.A.)
Philip Levine, PIL'S WELL... $3.00

WESLEYAN UNIV. PRESS (U.S.A.)
John Arberry, The Tennyson Court Oath... $2.25
Philip Levine, New Day Fig... $2.25
James Wright, The Branch Will Not Break... $2.25

PRIVATELY PUBLISHED BY AUTHORS (U.S.A.)
R. F. Brown, Images of a City... $1.90
William E. Morris, Alchemy Of Time... $2.50

SPARROW

SPARROW appears monthly. It prints poetry, fiction, essays, criticism, and reviews. Each issue presents the work of a single author. The poet is chosen.

No. 1. Robert Kelly, THE PASTORALS. (2nd printing) .50
No. 2. Clayton Eshleman, THE SANGUINE MINSTREL. (2nd printing) .50
No. 3. Diane Wakakiri, FORM IS AN EXTENSION OF CONTENT. (2nd printing) .50
No. 4. David Bromige, THREE STORIES. (3rd printing) .50
No. 5. Charles Bukowski, WHILE THE MUSIC PLAYED. (3rd printing) .50
No. 6. Robert Creeley, THE CREATIVE. (2nd printing) .50
No. 7. Richard Grodins, TWO ESSAYS... (2nd printing) .50
No. 8. David Antin, AFTER THE WAR... (2nd printing) .50
No. 9. Sherrill Jaife, YOUNG LUST & OTHERS... (2nd printing) .50
No. 10. Joyce Carol Oates, A POSTHUMOUS SKETCH... .50
No. 11. Michael Palmer, SIX POEMS... .50
No. 12. Fielding Shaw, THE MIRACLE... .50
No. 13. Larry Bigger, SHARE SHADOW ELEMENTS MOVE... .50
No. 14. Robert Creeley, INSIDE OUT... .50
No. 15. Bobbie Louise Hawkins, YOUR OWN BODY... .50
No. 16. Michael McClure, A PIST FULL... .50
No. 17. Tom Clark, SUITE... .50
No. 18. Clayton Eshleman, AUX MORTS... .50
No. 19. Joyce Carol Oates, PLAGURIZED MATERIAL... .50
No. 20. Robert Kelly, PIANO TUNING... .50

ALL PRICES ARE EFFECTIVE AS OF NOW
The New Zealand Students Arts Council & The Queen Elizabeth 2 Arts Council Present

The Black Mountain Poet

Robert Creeley

New Zealand Tour

Dunedin  Saturday  March 6  Playhouse  8.15 pm
Christchurch Tuesday  March 9  State Trinity  8.00 pm
Palmerston North Wednesday  March 17  Art Gallery  8.15 pm
Wellington Sunday  March 21  Downstage  8.15 pm
Hamilton Tuesday  March 23  University  8.15 pm
Auckland Friday  March 26  Centennial Theatre  8.15 pm

With the assistance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the U.S. Department of State.

Fig. 34. Tour poster for Robert Creeley, Frank Sargeson Trust House, Takapuna.
THE NEW ZEALAND ACADEMY FOR THE HUMANITIES

TE WHĀINGA ARONUI

NEW ZEALAND HISTORY OF PRINT CULTURE

PROJECT PROSPECTUS

Fig. 35. Prospectus for New Zealand History of Print Culture Project. (Wellington: New Zealand Academy for the Humanities, 1995.)
NEW ZEALAND HISTORY OF PRINT CULTURE

PROJECT PROSPECTUS

1. Background to the Project

1.1 At the initiative of the New Zealand Academy for the Humanities an Inaugural Conference was held on 1 October 1994 at the Stout Research Centre, Victoria University of Wellington, to discuss the formalising of a national project on the History of Print Culture in New Zealand. A Steering Committee was established and it was agreed to report to the conference on the History of the Book to be held by the English Department at the University of Auckland in August 1995, to pursue funding for the project, and to produce a draft project proposal.

1.2 The History of Print Culture is a project being undertaken internationally. In Australia a proposal for a collaborative History of the Book in Australia aims for publication in 2001, to mark the centenary of Federation. The American Antiquarian Society's Program in the History of the Book in American Culture was established in 1983, and A History of the Book in Britain in seven volumes has been underway since the mid eighties. Collaborative histories are also underway in Germany, The Netherlands, Italy and Spain, and in France the four volumes of Histoire de l'édition française were published between 1982 and 1986.

Why is there an international wave of interest and activity in the history of print culture? While bibliographical studies of printing and publishing have always been part of literary history they have tended to be specialised studies of book production without much reference to wider economic, intellectual, social and cultural history. In 1952 the French bibliographer H.-J. Martin published an article in the French historical journal Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations which established the History of the Book as a
previously unexplored historical field. More recently the bibliographer L. R. Willison, one of the editors of A History of the Book in Britain, has described the History of the Book as a field that can help reintegrate theory and research in the Humanities, and Professor Robert Darnton of Princeton, one of the principals in the American project, has claimed that the History of the Book has the potential to take its place beside the History of Art, and the History of Science.

1.3
Most of the international projects for the History of Print Culture have received significant amounts of institutional funding. The American program has received major funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities; the History of the Book in Britain has been granted funding from the Leverhulme Trust, there has been state funding in European countries. It is generally recognised that a project of the historical significance and probable duration of the History of Print Culture requires a level of funding that will enable it to employ a fulltime editor and remunerate the necessary researchers.

2. Scope of the Project

2.1
Considerable interest has already been aroused amongst literary scholars, historians, librarians, bibliographers, printers, curators and publishers in a History of Print Culture project in New Zealand. It is also hoped to attract journalists, economists, artists, educationalists, musicologists and political scientists. There is also institutional support from the Academy for the Humanities, the Alexander Turnbull Library, and the Stout Research Centre. For a discussion of the impetus towards the project see Keith Maslen "Towards a History of the Book in New Zealand" Bibliographic Society of Australia and New Zealand 4th Quarter 1993, Vol. 17, No. 4.

2.2
It is intended that the History of Print Culture project in New Zealand should, like its counterparts in Britain, North America and Australia, be collaborative and inclusive. Like the New Zealand Historical Atlas and The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography it would need a fulltime editor plus editorial assistance. The project is currently overseen by a Steering Committee, and it is also intended to establish a Project Board. The History would require a great deal of basic research carried out by specialists in the field or graduate students working in it, and to this end it is suggested that there be annual working conferences convened by the editor to establish the scope, extent, and direction of research.

2.3
Areas of research covered by the History of Print Culture in New Zealand would include:
Printing and publishing; Readers and reading; Textbooks and education; Book collecting; Religion; Libraries - public, individual, subscription, government, academic; Learned societies; Literacy; Mass media; Magazines/Periodicals/Comics; Newspapers; Fiction; Nonfiction; Music scores; Theatre and film scripts; Minority publications; Museum and art gallery catalogues; Ephemera - advertising, pamphlets, brochures etc; Children's publications; Commerce; Maori language; Farming; Sport; Industry; Political publication; Law; Medicine; Science and natural history; Illustration - art, photography, cartoons, graphic design; Fine printing.
2.4
The Australian History of the Book has divided research into three historical periods corresponding to volume breaks: 1890, with the emergence of local publisher Angus and Robertson as the dominant force; and 1945, to reflect increasing US influence and the development of transnational corporations. The History of the Book in Britain’s seven volumes reflects generally accepted periodisation of history and the American Program also adopts a broadly historical structure. It may be that the History of Print Culture in New Zealand project will wish to adopt a generic rather than chronological structure.

3. Timetable and Projected Outcomes.

3.1
The obvious date to aim for in New Zealand for the History of Print Culture is the Year 2000. Applications have been invited from projects for funding to celebrate the year 2000, and it would have the further advantage of keeping the New Zealand project in roughly the same chronology as projects elsewhere, notably Australia, with which we will have a lot in common, not just as shared interests but also shared research material.

3.2
While it is envisaged that there will be a flagship publication, the project will have a variety of outcomes. It is intended that conferences and seminars on the History of Print Culture will occur throughout the duration of the project, both nationally and locally, and that some of these may result in collections of papers. It is also hoped that there will be exhibitions, oral histories, and media events and programmes about the project.

For further information contact:

Dr Brian Opie
President

telephone  (04) 472-1000 / 8817 [work]  (04) 472 6016 [home]
fax  (04) 495-5148
email  brian.opie@vuw.ac.nz
Table 1
Turnover and Profit at Caxton Press

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1958</th>
<th>1959</th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>1961</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross turnover</td>
<td>£21,518</td>
<td>£29,754</td>
<td>£38,780</td>
<td>£38,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of growth</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>-1.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gross profit</td>
<td>£5,153</td>
<td>£8,145</td>
<td>£8,841</td>
<td>£8,907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net profit</td>
<td>-£128</td>
<td>£926</td>
<td>£1,783</td>
<td>£2,632</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1962</th>
<th>1963</th>
<th>1964</th>
<th>1965</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Gross turnover</td>
<td>£54,482</td>
<td>£62,008</td>
<td>£61,937</td>
<td>£62,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of growth</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>-1.7%</td>
<td>.94%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gross profit</td>
<td>£11,764</td>
<td>£10,545</td>
<td>£12,555</td>
<td>£14,065</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net profit</td>
<td>£2,332</td>
<td>£1,420</td>
<td>£938</td>
<td>£1,199</td>
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Table 2
Division of Profit at Caxton Press between Printing and Publishing

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<td>Printing</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£21,392.6.4</td>
<td>£15,158.3.5</td>
<td>£15,97</td>
<td>£18,858.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publications</td>
<td>£2,007</td>
<td>£882.18.3</td>
<td>£383.3.10</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£1803.10</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1960-1</th>
<th>1961-2</th>
<th>1965-6</th>
<th>1967-8</th>
<th>1971</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gross profit</td>
<td>£5,09</td>
<td>£57,79</td>
<td>£10,057.18.7</td>
<td>£29,985</td>
<td>£20,567</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital reconstruction at 31 March 1960:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. 1750 preferential shares converted to ordinary pari passu
2. Capital increased from 5000 to 8000 shares.

E.M. Bensemann 960
Leo Bensemann 1301
Charles Brasch 1114
Dennis Donovan 1974 + 1901
Ray Elliott 500
F.G. Hayes 250 uncalled
8000

PRELIMINARY CHECKLISTS
Preliminary Checklists

Note: I have deliberately described the following as "preliminary" checklists, as they are not comprehensive and are meant as a guide to future bibliographers. They function here primarily to provide a chronology of publications.

I have omitted a bibliography for the Caxton Press in deference to Ian McLaren's The Caxton Press of Christchurch, New Zealand Annotated Bibliography 1933-78 (2nd rev. ed.). Similarly, I have begun my own checklist for the Nag's Head Press where Bob Gormack left off in his detailed and entertaining Descriptive History and Checklist.

Although only the first eight of Alan Loney's publications fall within the geographic definition of this thesis, I have listed the entire output of Hawk Press to preserve a sense of continuity as well as to record the extent of the press's operation. As a result, I have included the place of publication (after the author) in the Hawk Press checklist.

I have tried to be consistent in the provision of basic bibliographic detail. Entries follow the basic format of title, author, size (height by width) and pagination. Where the information was available, details of type, paper, number of copies and price follow along with any other pertinent detail. However, there are two minor distinctions between the 'commercial' publishers - Pegasus and Hazard - and the 'private' presses - Nag's Head and Hawk:

(i) Publications from the 'private' presses are numbered in the order in which they appeared in print. (This was, in part, to maintain the format and sequence of The Nag's Head Press: An Outline History and Descriptive Checklist of Publications to June 1992.) Such a distinction could not be made with the more commercial presses.

(ii) Due to the irregular or non-existent pagination of the 'private' press books, I give only the total number of pages, excluding endpapers. For the 'commercial' publishers' books I provide only actual stated pagination.
Preliminary Pegasus Press Checklist

1948

_Dunedin from the Air_ by V.C. Browne. 185 x 284mm. N. pag. (14 pp.), ill. Printed at Caxton Press.

1949


1950


1951


_Norfolk Island: A Brief Background_ by Merval Connelly. 222 x 143mm. Pp. 15-45, ill. (Gordon McAuslan).

_The Story of Cheviot_ by Douglas Creswell. 222 x 146mm. Pp. 7-178, ill. 1000 copies. Published by the Cheviot County Council.


_The Sun among the Ruins_ by Louis Johnson. 221 x 144mm. Pp. 11-53. 300 copies.


1952


The Great Journey: Thomas Brunner’s Journal: An Expedition to Explore the Interior of the Middle Island, New Zealand, 1846-8. Thomas Brunner. 225 x 143mm. Pp. 7-110. Monotype Caslon Old Face. £1.1s.


1953

Home Territory. Lawrence Constable. 179 x 118mm. Pp. 8-125, ill. (Robert Brett).


Proceedings of the Seventh Pacific Science Congress of the Pacific Science Association Vol. VII


English for Teachers. Anton Vogt.

1954


Merrill Moore and the American Sonnet. Edward St. John Gorey. 220 x 140mm. N. pag., ill.


From a Psychiatrist's Notebook. Merrill Moore. 222 x 145mm. Pp. 9-56.


1955


Overtime. Claude Evans. 183 x 120mm. Pp. 9-114, ill.

Keeper of the Sheep. Mary Catherine Goulter. 250 x 162mm. Pp. 13-204, ill. 500 copies.


1956

Scholar Errant: A Biography of Professor W.A. Bickerton. R.M. Burdon. 223 x 144mm. Pp. 11-149, ill.

Mine Eyes Dazzle (rev. ed.). Alistair Campbell. 190 x 131mm. Pp. 11-36. 6 shillings.


Experimental Sonnets. Merrill Moore.

Native Plants: An Introduction to the Plant Life of New Zealand. Sheila Natusch. 161 x 111mm. Pp. 9-79, ill.


1957


The Life and Times of Bishop Pompallier. Lilian Keys. 251 x 155mm. Pp. 13-415, ill.


1958


1959

Ourselves Today. Oliver Duff. 178 x 120mm. Pp. 7-47.


Native Plants: An Introduction to the Plant Life of New Zealand. Sheila Natusch.

The Silver Stream. Ivy Preston. 190 x 128mm. Pp. 7-118.


1960


A Memoir. E. Plaitowe.


1961


My Stalking Memories. Robert A. Wilson. 221 x 145mm. Pp. 11-137, ill. Published for author.

1962


Abel Tasman National Park: a handbook for visitors. 216 x 134mm. Pp. 12-83, ill. Published by Abel Tasman National Park Board.


The Street and Other Verses. J.H.E. Schroder. 221 x 145mm. Pp. 7-53

Stewart Island (3rd rev. ed.). N.S. Seaward and Sheila Natusch. 185 x 123mm. Pp. 9-56, ill.


1963


The Sudden Sun: 52 poems. J.E. Weir. 223 x 146mm. Pp. 9-63.


1964


Enter Without Knocking: Selected Poems. Denis Glover. 222 x 145mm. Pp. 11-143.

The Shell Book of New Zealand Motor Racing 1964. Peter Greenslade and Euan Sarginson. 260 x 212mm. N. pag., ill.


1965


Port Before Breakfast. John Hamley. 222 x 143mm. Pp. 12-188.


1966


Over the Greenstone Water. Sylvia Thomson. 223 x 144mm. Pp. 9-51.


1967

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Pages</th>
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<tr>
<td>A State of Siege</td>
<td>Janet Frame</td>
<td>195 x 130mm</td>
<td>9-230</td>
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<tr>
<td>The West Coast Gold Rushes</td>
<td>Philip R. May</td>
<td>227 x 146mm</td>
<td>14-559, ill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dorinda</td>
<td>Catherine McLeod</td>
<td>203 x 135mm</td>
<td>7-140</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native Plants: An Introduction to the Plant Life of New Zealand</td>
<td>Sheila Natusch</td>
<td>163 x 114mm</td>
<td>9-79, ill.</td>
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<td>Stewart Island</td>
<td>N.S. Seaward and Sheila Natusch</td>
<td>180 x 116mm</td>
<td>9-55, ill.</td>
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<td>Asthma and your Child</td>
<td>Bernice Thompson</td>
<td>215 x 140mm</td>
<td>7-63, ill.</td>
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<td>Better Breathing: Simple Exercises for the relief of Asthma, Bronchitis and Emphysema</td>
<td>Bernice Thompson</td>
<td>217 x 141mm</td>
<td>11-78, ill.</td>
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<td>The Divine Parody: Mostly narrative Verse; Volume 5 of the Alexandrians an Epic</td>
<td>Niel Wright</td>
<td>215 x 140mm</td>
<td>3-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patterns on Glass: Selected Poems</td>
<td>Peggy Dunstan</td>
<td>222 x 143mm</td>
<td>11-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pocket Mirror</td>
<td>Janet Frame</td>
<td>220 x 145mm</td>
<td>1-121, Jonathan Tatlow jacket.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Turn of the Tide</td>
<td>Rewa Glenn [Marguerite Johnson]</td>
<td>210 x 125mm</td>
<td>9-101, ill. (Elizabeth Johnson)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Wine and the Garlic</td>
<td>Rupert Glover</td>
<td>205 x 127mm</td>
<td>7-30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prospecting for Gold</td>
<td>W.F. Heinz</td>
<td>180 x 120mm</td>
<td>7-78, ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip Viard: Bishop of Wellington</td>
<td>Lilian G. Keys</td>
<td>221 x 145mm</td>
<td>16-251, ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Structure of English</td>
<td>John Moffat</td>
<td>222 x 145mm</td>
<td>9-134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Bunch of Wild Orchids</td>
<td>Sheila Natusch</td>
<td>180 x 120mm</td>
<td>5-23, ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma and your Child</td>
<td>Bernice Thompson</td>
<td>215 x 140mm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Elegant Barbarian: His Verses (Books 19, 20, 21) Volume 7 of the Alexandrians an Epic</td>
<td>Niel Wright</td>
<td>215 x 140mm</td>
<td>2-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man and No Man Being Volume 6 of the Alexandrians An Epic</td>
<td>Niel Wright</td>
<td>215 x 138mm</td>
<td>3-31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1969

The Fateful Voyage of the St. Jean Baptiste: A True Account of M. de Surville's Expedition to New Zealand and the Unknown Seas in the years 1769-70. John Dunmore. 221 x 142mm. Pp. 9-127, ill.


The Shell Book of New Zealand Motor Racing Vol. 7 1969. Peter Greenslade and Euan Sarginson. 261 x 212mm. 24 leaves, ill.


New Zealand Mosses. 178 x 118mm. Pp. 8-21, ill.

New Zealand Motor Racing 1963-69


1970


They Sailed with Cook. Marguerite Johnson. 214 x 140mm. Pp. 12-124, ill.

Gold Town Ross Westland. Philip Ross May. 273 x 223mm. Pp. 7-100, ill.

The Story of Menzies Bay, Banks Peninsula: A Personal Narrative. Ian H. Menzies. 222 x 143mm. Pp. 11-221.


Quiet with the Hills. Comp. Constance Grey. 222 x 145mm. Pp. 15-210, ill.


Only A Bullet Will Stop Me Now Being Volume 10 (Books 28, 29, 30) of the Alexandrians an Epic. Niel Wright. 215 x 140mm. Pp. 3-47.
1971

**Educating Your Dog** (2nd ed.). C.M. Cooper.


**Poetry New Zealand: Volume 1.** Ed. Frank McKay. 223 x 143mm. Pp. 8-119.


1972

**Kapiti: Selected poems 1947-71.** Alistair Campbell. 215 x 137mm. Pp. 9-87, ill.


**The Maine Remembered: A Novel.** Melanie Pflaum. 222 x 145mm. Pp. 7-149.

**Random at Large**


**Asthma and your Child** (4th ed.). Bernice Thompson.

1973

**Golden Canyon: the story of Skippers Road and the Shotover Valley.** Frederick W. Craddock. 180 x 120mm. Pp. 9-75.


Of Life and Levis. Anne-Louise Philpott. 222 x 144mm. Pp. 11-70.


Stewart Island (5th rev. ed.). N.S. Seaward and Sheila Natusch. 178 x 120mm. Pp. 9-55, ill.


1974

About 14 Oxford Terrace. 215 x 140mm. Leaflet. N. pag.


A History of Timaru Hospital. J.C. McKenzie. 223 x 145mm. Pp. 16-192, ill.


1975


Golden Canyon. Frederick W. Craddock.


In Middle Air. Lauris Edmond. 216 x 136mm. Pp. 7-46.


1976


The Ronnie Moore Story: As Told to Rod Dew. 222 x 144mm. Pp. 9-190, ill.


Native Plants: An Introduction to the Plant Life of New Zealand (rev. ed.). Sheila Natusch. 163 x 114mm. Pp. 9-79, ill.

Father and Son: A Young Saga. Lesley Young. x mm. Pp. 11-190, ill.
1977


The Story of Rolleston House. Gordon Slatter. 223 x 144mm. Pp. 11-156, ill. Published for Rolleston House Alumni.

1978


Hills of Life and Other Verses. George Kaye. 221 x 143mm. Pp. 13-110, ill. (Peter McIntyre).


Asthma and your Child (5th rev. ed.). Bernice Thompson.

1979


1980


1981


1982


1984


1992

Preliminary Nag's Head Press Checklist

1992


1993


1994

97. Tenth Wicket. OTAGO v. CANTERBURY. Played at Lancaster Park, Christchurch Friday, 25 to Tuesday, 29 December 1931. Match report from The Press, Christchurch, issues of 26, 28, 29, 30 December, 1931. 113 x 109 mm. 76 pp. Hand set and printed by Bob and Nick Gormack. 225 numbered copies. Casebound in blue buckram, with a white label printed in black on the front. Cream dustjacket printed blue with black printer's block (see Item 31).

98. The NHP ABC with Samples of Printer's Flowers & Rule Borders. 160 x 116 mm. 64 pp. 80 numbered copies. Casebound in blue buckram, with a white label printed in black on the front. Beige mottled dustjacket printed red with blue border.

99. The Centennial History of Barnego Flat: Part Ten. 161 x 111 mm. 79 pp. Hand set. 150 numbered copies. Cover printed black on yellow. 'Part ten containing Chapter XI: Wagons Away! The Barnego Trek and Trekkers; and Chapter XII: Settler Allotments on Barnego Flats.'

1995

100. Holding Company. David Howard. 194 x 128 mm. 60 pp. Hand set in 12-point Caslon. 150 copies. Casebound in green buckram, with a white label printed in black on the front. Mauve dustjacket printed green with image by Jennifer Rendall. (QE II grant)


1996

104. *Capricorn’s Farewell*. John Summers. 208 x 128 mm. 60 pp. Hand set and printed in Poliphilus and Blado Italic. 50 copies. Casebound in blue buckram, with a white label printed in black on the front. Mottled blue-grey dustjacket printed blue with blue borders.
Preliminary Hawk Press Checklist

NOTE: All poetry volumes were handsewn into card with wraparound covers and printed spines, unless otherwise stated. All were printed on an Albion handpress, except for numbers 29 and 30, which were printed on a Vandercook SP20 proof press.

1975

1. **Pathway to the Sea.** Ian Wedde. Taylor's Mistake. 280 x 195 mm. 20 pp. Perpetua types. 200 copies on Canon Antique Laid paper. Cover wash by Ralph Hotere, printed litho and letterpress by Pegasus Press.

2. **Henwise.** Stephen Oliver. Taylor's Mistake. 280 x 195 mm. 32 pp. Perpetua types. 300 copies on Canon Antique Laid paper. Cover drawing by Polly Barr, printed line and screen block.

1976


4. **Black and White Anthology.** Alan Brunton. 235 x 165 mm. 44 pp. Perpetua types for text and Centaur numbers printed from lineblocks. 300 copies on Canon Antique Laid paper. Two colours throughout.


6. **Hello.** Robert Creeley. Taylor's Mistake. 195 x 120 mm. 36 pp. Perpetua for text, Centaur for titles. 750 copies on Kinleith Offset White paper. 50 special copies on Glastonbury Antique Laid paper, with a second colour, russet, on title-page. Numbered and signed by the poet.

1977


8. **Cafe Life & The Train.** Rhys Pasley. Sumner. 210 x 148 mm. 44 pp. Centaur and Arrighi types. 300 copies on Kinleith Offset White paper. Title-page and cover type from lineblocks of Eusebius, a Ludlow typeface. 100 copies withdrawn from publication and destroyed.


1978


12. *HAWKEYE*. A series of four pamphlets. All were 12 pp. self-cover, saddle-stitched with two colours on cover.


15. *Patchwork*. Murray Edmond. Days Bay. 250 x 157 mm. 44 pp. Perpetua and Goudy types. 300 copies on Teton Text paper. Monoprints by Janet Paul were printed litho by G. Deslandes Ltd.

1979


18. **Truce**. Martin Harrison. Eastbourne. 210 x 190 mm. 36 pp. Centaur types. 200 copies on Abbey Mills Text paper. Wood types set for cover by Alison Loney.

19. **Dawn/Water**. Bill Manhire. Eastbourne. 300 x 190 mm. 44 pp. Centaur types. 200 copies on Abbey Mills Laid paper. Images by Andrew Drummond reproduced by lineblock in many colours.

Binding, by Modern Bookbinding Ltd., is quarter cloth with Canson-paper-covered boards, with printed labels on spine and front.


1980


1981


27. **11.2.80 On Creation**. Edgar Mansfield. 255 x 175 mm. 60 pp. Centaur types. 124 copies on Umbria handmade paper. 26 copies, lettered A to Z, unbound in sheets. Also 25 sets of loose prints on J. Green Handmade paper. Seven illustrations in several colours with some hand-colouring by the artist. Extra illustration in loose sets and a further illustration printed on the cover, All reproductions are by lineblock.

124 copies quarter bound with cloth spine and printed Canson paper over boards, in felt-lined slipcase. 26 copies wrapped in paper and slipcased.
1982


30. **Squeezing the Bones**, Alan Loney. Eastbourne. 325 x 230 mm. 32 pp. Centaur, Berthold and several wood types. 15 copies on Richard de Bas handmade paper. Many colours. Quarter cloth with paper covered boards, in slipcase.
Preliminary Hazard Press Checklist

1987


1988

A Series of Allegations or Taking Allegations Seriously. Barry Cleavin and A.K. Grant. 304 x 215mm. 20 leaves, ill. $19.95.

The Prance of Men: ... and a process for change. Allan Marriott. 210 x 147mm. Pp. 1-165, ill.


1989


Triptych. Rob Jackaman. 208 x 147mm. Pp. 11-63, ill. Ralph Hotere's Black Window on cover. $9.95.


1990


The Other End of the Harbour: Little Port Cooper and Camp Bay. M. Stapylton-Smith. 210 x 149mm. Pp. 10-206, ill.


1991

Karitane Postcards. Rob Allen. 210 x 138mm. 30 leaves. Barry Walsh's Falling Rhythm on cover. $19.95.

Matarawa House. Rhondda Greig. 200 x 278mm. 16 leaves, illus. Hbk & Pbk-$9.95.


Return to Earth. Graham Lindsay. 210 x 138mm. Pp. 11-60. $19.95.


Does Daniel Wilmott Tell Lies? Juliet Martin. 204 x 291mm. 18 leaves, ill. (David Johnstone).


1992


The View from the Non-Members' Bar. P.R. Hay. 210 x 138mm. Pp. 9-60. Christine Hiller's Currawongs - Cradle Mountain on the cover. $19.95.


Passing Through and other Plays. Mervyn Thompson. 210 x 138mm. Pp. 5-175. $29.95.

The Very Best of Wilson's Week. Dave Wilson. 149 x 210 mm. Pp. 4-64, ill. (Al Nisbet). $4.95.

1993


Greek Words for Classical Studies. Graham Dunn. 210 x 149mm. Pp. 5-74. $9.95


White Moas and Artichokes. Shona McFarlane. 320 x 245mm. Pp. 7-72, ill. Hbk & Pbk. $24.95


1994


Olivia. Lester Earnshaw. 195 x 130mm. Pp. 6-208. $24.95.

Tales from the Out of Time Café. Ed. Peter Friend.


A Touch of Colour: A Biography of Gordon Tovey. Carol Henderson.


W.A. Sutton: Painter. Pat Unger. 210 x 270mm. Pp. 6-96, ill. $49.95.

1995


Tasman's Lay. Peter Hawes. 195 x 130mm. Pp. 5-248. $24.95.


1996

Dividing the Light. John Allison.


Landmarks: The Landscape Paintings of Doris Lusk. Lisa Beaver and Grant Banbury. 270 x 211mm. Pp. 6-128, ill. Published by Robert McDougall Art Gallery/Hazard Press.
Pocket Collected Poems. Alistair Campbell. 150 x 102mm. Pp. 3-170.

Buried Ships. Rob Jackaman.

Suicide Season. Mike Minehan.

Leaving: A Novel. Carol Sinclair.
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COLOPHON

This document was initially written in MS-Word 4.0 on an increasingly fragile Mac Plus. Images were scanned in Photoshop 3.0, and the entire document was incorporated into Pagemaker 6.0 at Chromaset, all thanks and no responsibility to them.
& errata

page 6, paragraph 2 to for ot
page 17, paragraph 2 embarrassing for embarrassing
describing for describing
page 65, paragraph 1 inappropriate for inappropriate
page 86, paragraph 2 Woolastone for Woolaston
page 99, last line Jonathan for Johnathan
page 102, paragraph 2 and page 111, paragraph 1 conferring for conferral
page 108, paragraph 1 professor for lecturer
page 109, paragraph 1 forecast for forecasted
page 126, paragraph 2; also page 216, paragraph 1 and page 320, paragraph 1 New Zealand Literary Fund for State Literary Fund
page 145, paragraph 2 "Recent Trends in New Zealand Poetry" for "Recent Trends in New Zealand Literature"
did Mona Gordon for did Gordon
page 237, paragraph 2 Finnegans Wake for Finnegans Wake
page 239, paragraph 2 orientated towards the traditions of private presses for slightly more private press in its orientation
page 240, paragraph 1 more directly attributable to private presses for more private press format
page 257, paragraph 2 long "s" for long "f"
potocki for Potoki
page 264, footnote 34 classicist for classiscist
ibid. line 5 amateurs for the amateur
page 266, paragraph 1 Charles Brasch Festival (University of Otago, 23-25 July 1976) for Brasch Festival in 1976

References
page 331. Doyle Quick Returns for Big Returns
page 337. Williams 1972-1986 for 1972-86
page 340. Campbell to the author for to author
page Heinemann for Heinemanns
page 401. NOTE numbers for numbers

NOTE
page 86, paragraph 2 The rubric sign is deliberate and follows Gill's practice. Moreover, its intrusive nature in the text draws attention to the change in line-spacing. (See note 64 on this page.)