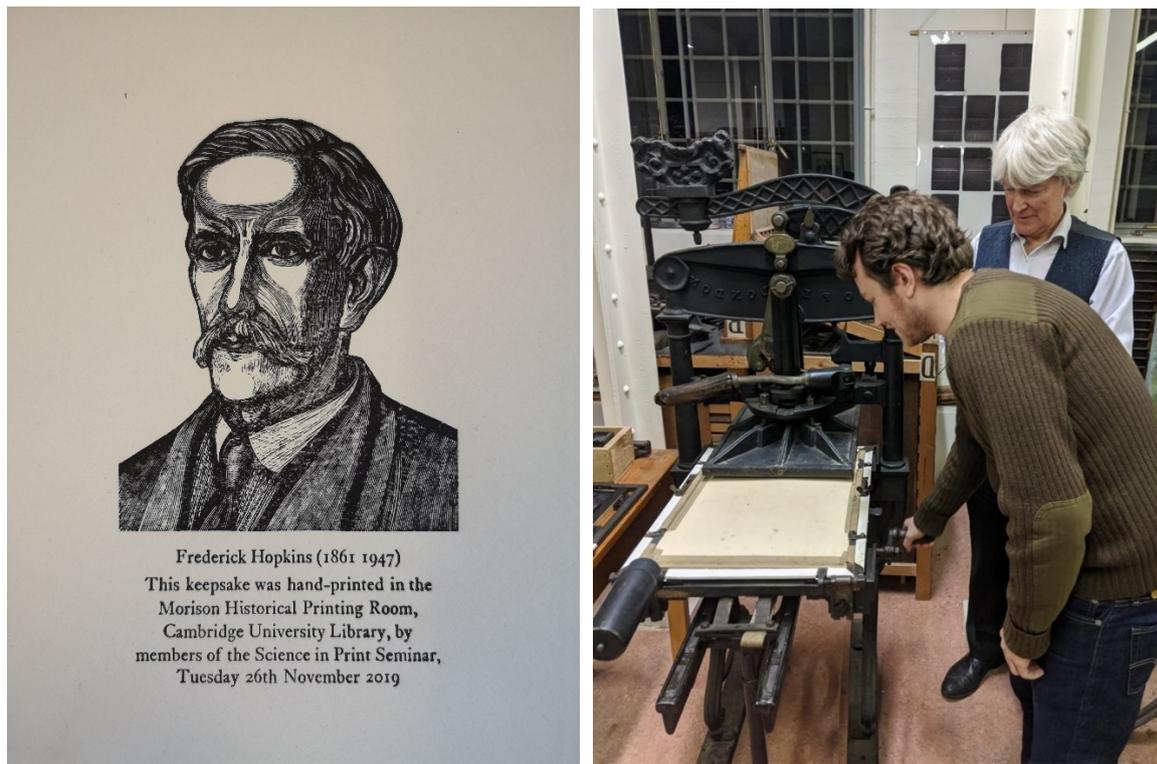


Annual Report

2019-20



A keepsake and some very hands on printing from 2019's Science in Print seminar series.

*With infinite complacency men went to and fro over this globe about their little affairs, serene in their assurance of their empire over matter. It is possible that the infusoria under the microscope do the same. [...]. It is curious to recall some of the mental habits of those departed days. – H.G. Wells, from the opening of *The War Of The Worlds*.*

Overview:

The academic year of 2019-2020 started in a traditional manner, but went on to develop in some unexpected directions. November saw Dawn Kingham returning from her maternity leave, and we bid a farewell to Francesco Mannu, who had been ably assisting in Dawn's absence.

We welcomed Sheryl Womble and Rhianna Elliot to our team of evening invigilators, joining old hands Rebecca Charbonneau and Annie Thwaite.

Michaelmas Term started with the usual gaiety, and it was wonderful to welcome back returning students, and get to know the new cohort. Michaelmas also saw the return of a fuller offering of the Science in Print Graduate Training Seminar series. This was a very popular seminar with students in HPS and across the wider university, and turned out to be a real highlight of the year.

In November the Library was represented at the Dissertation & Research Fair, this year hosted at St Johns College, taking along some items from the special collection, as has become traditional.

The library stayed open and offering a full service throughout the UCU industrial action in late 2019-early 2020, and Library Assistants Dawn and James are to be praised for allowing operations to continue as normal during this time.

BUT THEN

EVERYTHING CHANGED...

In response to Departmental, Cambridge University Library, University, and Governmental direction and guidance in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic, everything changed. In an action packed couple of weeks in March, the Library was forced to make and execute plans for effective remote working, to enable the support of the teaching and learning needs of the department and the wider scholarly community to continue as best as possible, during the national lockdown and beyond. That this was achieved so swiftly, calmly, and professionally is down to the remarkable adaptability, ingenuity and resilience of the Library Assistants, Departmental Professional Services staff, the Academic staff and the student body, and the Librarian would like to express huge thanks to everybody for all of their efforts and patience during this time.

In what must have been one of his last official acts as Departmental Computer Officer, Mark Rogers provided Jack and James with 2nd monitors to take home, at the 11th hour on the very last day of work on site, an act of kindness which prevented who know how many temper tantrums and enabled the Librarian, at least, to work from home in a far more effective manner than would have been possible otherwise.

During the national lockdown period, the Whipple Library, in common with the other University Libraries, remained 'open online', providing support remotely via email, MS Teams, and on the phone. Ebook purchasing increased considerably, and the Librarian worked closely with colleagues in the UL's ebooks & ejournals purchasing teams to ensure that the needs of HPS was as well catered for as possible. Dawn continued to produce interesting and informative blog posts from home, maintaining the tempo and ensuring continued external interest and engagement with the Whipple Library collections.

Reflecting back on what was undoubtedly an extremely difficult period for everyone, what stands out is the good humour, patience, and family-feeling of the HPS community, and this expressed itself in numerous ways. The Librarian continued to host a virtual tea and cake hour on Friday afternoons throughout Lent & Easter Terms, which was enthusiastically joined by many students, across the entire world. It was impressive seeing how early in the morning many were prepared to eat cake in their respective time zones. Departmental social events continued too with virtual quizzes and social evenings. Though we were apart, I don't think we ever felt alone.

The Department and Library were eager to resume some onsite activity as soon as possible, and work towards this started as early as May. Following the timetable dictated by the University Library, we were able to get staff working back on site by mid-August, and open the library to users by late September.

We were able to introduce two new services for library users, Click & Collect of books, Bookable Study Spaces (as the library is currently only able to operate at 50% seating capacity). We continued scanning for reading list material and are engaged in the UL's Scan and Deliver programme for

reader requests of scanning material. Through the extraordinary efforts of library staff, the support of the Department and University Libraries, and the understanding and patience of students and academics, the Whipple Library is in as strong a position as any to begin the academic year 20-21.

Collections:

Purchasing of physical material was necessarily curtailed by the pandemic, but ebooks were purchased throughout with both Department and UL funds. One notable acquisition for the Special Collection was the 3rd edition of Janet Taylor's *The Principles of Navigation Simplified*. This edition is not held elsewhere in Cambridge, and will be a valuable addition to the collection. Thanks to Dr's Josh Nall and Boris Jardine for spotting it.

Staffing:

Librarian: Jack Dixon

Library Assistants: Dawn Kingham, James Livesey, Francesco Mannu (secondment Maternity Cover).

Departmental Senior Accounts Clerk and Senior Clerical Assistant, Aga Lanucha.

Invigilators: Annie Thwaite, Rebecca Charbonneau, Rhianna Elliot, Sheryl Wombell.

This Annual Report is briefer than most, though the year has felt longer. We look forward to things improving in the next year.

For so it had come about, as indeed I and many men might have foreseen had not terror and disaster blinded our minds. These germs of disease have taken toll of humanity since the beginning of things--taken toll of our prehuman ancestors since life began here. But by virtue of this natural selection of our kind we have developed resisting power; to no germs do we succumb without a struggle, and to many--those that cause putrefaction in dead matter, for instance--our living frames are altogether immune.[...] By the toll of a billion deaths man has bought his birthright of the earth, and it is his against all comers; it would still be his were the Martians ten times as mighty as they are. For neither do men live nor die in vain.

– H.G Wells, in a more cheerful mood, at the end of *The War of The Worlds*.



Three more photographs from Science in Print



Simon Jaffa. A short-lived, but very delicious, member of the Library Morale Support Team.