

Preprint of

My Boston: Some printing and publishing history

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Based on a presentation for the July 2012 T_EX Users Group annual conference,
Omni Parker House, Boston, Massachusetts.

For practical reasons, the dozens of photographs, scans of historic book pages, etc., which are the focus of my presentation, have been left out of this preprint. The slide numbers are in the margin notes.

slide
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During the four summers before each of my college years, I worked in a large cardboard box printing plant (big letter presses and lithography presses) in a small industrial town 40 miles east of San Francisco. Thus began my fascination with printing. I was also an avid reader of books and of *The New Yorker* magazine to which my father subscribed. I dreamed of eventually living in a big city with big libraries and thick newspapers. Thus, after college, I moved in 1964 to the Boston area (where I have remained ever since).

As I explored the Boston and Cambridge in the 1960s, I became aware of a number of publishing and printing activities, often by walking or driving by their then current locations and buildings. I also began to use the libraries and to frequent the bookstores. Compared with the small town in the Central Valley of California in which I had grown up (and even compared with San Francisco where I went to college), Boston was a mecca for someone interested in books, magazines, and the related printing, publishing and distribution world.

With TUG2012 (in some sense a publishing event) being held in Boston, I got to thinking about and then looking into the history of printing, publishing, libraries, bookstores, and so forth in Boston. In this note, a written variation on my TUG2012 presentation, I present a sketch of what I have learned.

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Acknowledgments

References and bibliography

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A lot of this history happened close to the conference hotel because Boston was once essentially a small island (the neck of land to the mainland was sometimes under water at high tide).¹ The location of our conference hotel is close to the center of this small almost island. Thus, anything that happened in early Boston, and much of what took place “downtown” later, took place near the hotel location.

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There are several maps which a reader might look at while reading this note (the conference hotel is at the southwest corner of Tremont and School Streets on all three maps):

- 1772 Bonner map of Boston
<http://www.doak.ws/1722MapOfBostonJohnBonner.jpg>
- Boston Freedom Trail map
<http://twoweekstotravel.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Freedom-Trail.jpg>
- “Literary Boston, 1794-1862” map
<http://bostonliteraryhistory.com/sites/default/files/bostonliteraryhistorymap.pdf>

¹ Krieger99 and Whitehill68.

Space and time do not allow a thorough presentation of the Boston-region history of printing, publishing, and the like. In particular, I have mostly not talked about the author part of the literary world.² Also, this is not a scholarly piece of research (my narrative is based on what I have read in secondary sources, been told by someone, or found in the Wikipedia). It also glosses over many details; as one example of many imprecise statements, I call the early college in Cambridge Harvard and ignore its early name. I hope my fragmentary narrative is suggestive of the actual history of events.

1 Colonial period, 1630–1775

The Pilgrims, who previously had left England to go to Holland in the Netherlands, came to Plymouth, just south of Massachusetts Bay, in 1620. Another Massachusetts-based outpost was attempted a Cape Ann in 1624. In 1628–1630 a succession of largely Puritan settlers arrived in the Massachusetts Bay Colony settling in locations from Salem to Boston.

The Puritans came to the Massachusetts Bay Colony fleeing what they felt was an incorrect approach the theology of the Church of England and the relationship of church and state (King James’s approach subordinated the church to the state). In particular, in 1630 Governor John Winthrop and other Puritan leaders arrived carrying a charter allowing the Massachusetts Bay Colony to be governed from the colonies rather than from England. Both Boston and Cambridge (a few miles up the Charles River) were settled by the Puritans around 1630. These largely Puritan immigrations to the Massachusetts Bay Colony continued for the next 10 years.

The arriving Puritans were idealistic about their new home, and John Winthrop gave a sermon quoting the Sermon on the Mount and saying that they in the Bay Colony would be a “citty on a hill,” watched by people throughout the world for the purity of their religious practice (and the way it was supported, i.e., enforced, by the government). Thus, they believed in education such that their citizens could study the Bible and read the laws and acts that governed them. By 1635 they had established the first public school in English North America, Boston Latin (there are signs on both sides of School Street outside the side door of the conference hotel noting early locations of the Boston Latin school). A couple of years later, Harvard College was established in Cambridge.

For all their concern to be free to practice their own religious reformations, the Puritans were not supportive of reformations by others. Roger Williams, among many others, was banished from the Bay colony. In 1630 to 1658, several Quakers who refused to remain banished were hung, including Mary Dyer whose statue is on the grounds of the Massachusetts State House.

In 1638 Rev. Joseph Glover contracted with Stephen Daye for the two of them and their families to travel from England to Cambridge (in the colonies) along with a printing press, type, and printing materials, where Daye would be responsible for setting up and running the printing press in Glover’s home.³ This printing press (the first in British North America⁴) was at least nominally operated under the auspices of Harvard. Glover died before their ship reached Massachusetts, and Daye carried out his contract for the widow Elizabeth Glover. Stephen’s son Matthew was also involved with the printing activity. Stephen was a locksmith and Matthew had apprenticed as a printer, so historians suspect Matthew did most of the actual printing. In any case, there was probably a lot of on-the-job learning about printing.

After printing a couple of other documents of which no copies remain, in 1640 Stephen Daye printed the so-called Bay Psalm Book, the first book written and printing in British America. In most of the churches in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the Bay Psalm Book replaced the earlier Psalm books the Puritans had brought with them from England—hence the popular name “Bay Psalm Book.”⁵

In 1649 Matthew Daye died and Samuel Green took over the printing activity. Green also did a lot of on-the-job learning. By 1656 Green had two presses. For 40 years, this activity was the “press of Harvard College,”⁶ although there was not really enough work over the years to keep Green working full time. Green

² Wilson00. ³ Section 1 is substantially based on Thomas70 and Blumenthal89; see also Reese89. ⁴ The church in colonial Mexico had a Spanish language printing press 100 years earlier. ⁵ Its actual title was *The Whole Booke of Psalmes Faithfully Translated into English Metre*. ⁶ According to Lawrence Wroth in his contribution to Lehmann-Haupt52, p. 8.

stopped printing in 1692. After Green, printing in Colonial Cambridge was finished.

Green had 19 children, 8 with his first wife and 11 with his second wife, and many of Green's descendants became printers, forming a dynasty of printers extending up and down the east coast.

In addition to no liberalism in religious practice, there was no freedom for printing (at least within the Massachusetts Bay Colony). The goal of the print shop operated by the Dayes and then the Greens was to support the church and the commonwealth.⁷

Some of the publications over the year of existence of the press were: ⁶ “a book of capital laws . . . ; small pieces relating to the scholastic activities of the college; annual almanacs; a second edition of the ‘Bay Psalm Book’; catechisms; a document relating to the troubles with the Narragansett Indians; a platform of the prevailing Congregational faith; and numerous sermons and doctrinal treatises.”

“The press reached the highest point of its activity with the publication in 1663 of John Eliot’s translation of the whole Bible into the Indian tongue”⁶ This was a massive effort, producing over 1,000 copies, and requiring a special shipment of paper from England. It was the first Bible printed in the western hemisphere. On the title page, Samuel Green is listed as the printer, and his apprentice Marmaduke Johnson is also listed.

To slightly paraphrase Wroth, this Cambridge press did its job of being, over half a century, an intellectual force in a new and rude environment.

From 1674 on, printing was also allowed in Boston, on a case-by-case basis. Marmaduke Johnson received permission to print in Boston, but died before he could do any printing. Some of the following Boston printers were:⁸

- John Foster, 1676–1680; licensed to do printing, he was the first person who actually did printing in Boston.
- Samuel Sewall, 1681–1684: he was a bookseller, licensed to do printing, who printed acts and laws and books for himself and others; Samuel Green Jr. was his printer.
- James Glen, who also printed for Sewall before going out on his own.
- Samuel Green Jr., who printing work for himself and for booksellers and was allowed to continue printing after Sewall’s death; Green died in 1690.
- Richard Pierce, 1684–1690, the 5th Boston printer, who printed for himself and booksellers.
- Bartholomew Green, who first worked for his father in Cambridge and then took over his brother’s activity in 1690. In 1704 he started the *Boston News-Letter* for the postmaster, who somehow asserted a right to have a newspaper.

There were a number of other printers in Colonial Boston, i.e., between 1700 and 1775 when the Revolutionary War started. All this is detailed in Thomas’s book.

Looking beyond printing, there were no strong lines between trades. Printers worked for booksellers, booksellers did some of their own printing, printers published newspapers, binding was often a separate trade but not always, and printers publishing newspapers did some of their own writing.

Isaiah Thomas lists about 90 booksellers between 1641 and 1771.⁸ Initially there was a bookseller or two in Cambridge. Next there were booksellers in Boston, particularly along the street and slope known as Cornhill. Hezekiah Ushel was the first in Boston, 1650–1771

Booksellers sold (and sometimes printed) acts and laws, books on religion, school books, books on politics, imported books, and new printings of books pirated from Europe. The shops of booksellers also often were community meeting places.

Colonial Boston also has a rich history of newspapers.⁸

⁷ As I understand it, the original purpose of copyrights (circa 16th century) was to control printing of books. The authorities only gave the “right to copy” to a chosen few who were allowed to print only what the authorities liked. There was somewhat of an English tradition of freedom of expression, but this was primarily about no prior restraint. Post-speech or post-publication, the authorities could punish expression they didn’t like. ⁸ Thomas70.

- The *Boston News-Letter*, 1704–1776, was started by the Boston postmaster and printer John Campbell. This was the first newspaper in Colonies. It had lots of editors over the years, and was printed through the siege of the 1770s.
- . The *Boston Gazette*, 1719–1798, was started by the next postmaster, William Brooker. Apparently postmasters thought they had a right to have a newspaper. Brooker hired James Franklin to do the printing. The *Gazette* had a long line of of successor organizations
- The *New-England Courant*, 1721–1727, was started by James Franklin, who lost his job with the *Gazette* within a couple of years.

Isaiah Thomas lists another ten Boston newspapers prior to 1775, including his own *Massachusetts Spy*, published in Boston from 1770 through April 1775. I will touch on this more in the next section. 17

Before leaving the topic of Boston’s colonial newspapers, I’ll say a little about the most famous colonial Boston-trained printer, Ben Franklin, who was born on Milk Street and baptized at the Old South Meeting House, and attended Boston Latin on School Street for two years.^{9,10} 18

Ben’s much older brother James had gone to England to apprentice as a printer. He returned in 1717 with a press and a small amount of type. James’s shop was the corner of Court Street and Franklin Ave. (called Queen Street and Dorset Alley in pre-Revolutionary times¹¹). Ben was indentured at age 12 to his brother James to learn the printing trade. The indenture was to last until age 21. 19

James started the *New-England Courant* in 1721, and it was the first “truly independent newspaper in the colonies and the first with literary aspirations.”¹² For disagreeing in print with the authorities, James was imprisoned for a month in 1722 for what he published. He was released on the condition that “James Franklin not publish the *Courant*,” so Ben became the publisher in name. However, Ben couldn’t be the publisher if indentured to James, and officially Ben’s indenture was ended although a follow-on secret document of indenture was made.

Ben contributed a lot to the *Courant*, including 14 humorous letters over six months under the name of the widow Silence Dogood. However, Ben and James didn’t agree on things, and in 1723 Ben broke his secret indenture and went to Philadelphia, knowing that James could hardly admit that such a secret indenture existed.

By 1727, James, faced with continuing suppression of his press, had moved his printing business to Newport, RI. 20

2 Revolutionary War (1775–1783) and transition

The stamp act of 1775 was an incendiary event that produced resistance to British rule in the colonies. This was a tax by the British Parliament on printed materials in the colonies—the printed materials had to be produced on paper carrying an embossed revenue stamp. It was repealed a year later, but Parliament continued to assert its power to regulate the colonies and other taxes and regulations were imposed.

As resistance to British control increased, the colonial press participated and got in trouble. One of the printers involved in the resistance was Isaiah Thomas, to whose book I have frequently referred.^{13,14} 21

Isaiah Thomas was born in 1749, but his widowed mother could not support him, and at age 6 he was apprenticed to a printer with an indenture to age 21. There he did both personal jobs for the childless printer and his wife and printing jobs. In particular, according to Thomas himself, he “set types, for which purpose he was mounted on a bench eighteen inches high, and the whole length of a double frame which contained case of both roman and italic.”

The printer was not too skilled, but Thomas quickly acquired the craft. A decade or so later, he escaped from his indenture and went elsewhere on the east coast to try to learn more about printing. By 1770 he was back in Boston, initially briefly in partnership with his former master. In 1771 Thomas started his own newspaper, the *Massachusetts Spy*. 22

As time went on and discontent with England grew in the colonies, Thomas used his *Massachusetts Spy* 23 to support the causes of the Founding Fathers against England, and his print shop became known as the

⁹ Franklin40. ¹⁰ Isaacson04. ¹¹ Drake70. ¹² Isaacson04. ¹³ Thomas70. ¹⁴ Blumenthal89.

“Forge of Sedition” as many resistance meetings were held there. Thomas himself refers to his press as the “sedition machine.” A 1774 edition of the paper shows the famous “join or die” slogan (first published in a cartoon and essay by Ben Franklin in Philadelphia), meaning that the colonies must join together or they would die separately.

24

Before April 19, 1775, the day of the British march on Lexington and Concord, Thomas smuggled a press out of Boston to Worcester, 40 miles to the west. He snuck out of Boston on April 18, 1775, and briefly joined the Lexington militia. Then two days later he traveled to Worcester where on May 3 he restarted publication of the *Massachusetts Spy*, including the first printed accounts of the Battle of Lexington and Concord.

25,26

After the war Thomas stayed in Worcester and, after some struggle, he began to develop a successful business. The business did well and Thomas became the “country’s leading printer, publisher, editor, and bookseller.”¹⁵ In Worcester, he had a big printing plant, a bindery, and a paper mill; he had branch offices including in Boston and partnerships with a number of other publishing-world companies throughout the new country.

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“Thomas retired in 1802 and devoted the rest of his productive and long life to collecting, scholarship, and philanthropy.”¹⁵ He wrote the marvelous and comprehensive 1810 book, *The History of Printing in America*. “In 1812 he established the American Antiquarian Society to house his remarkable library of 8,000 volumes, with a mission to collect, preserve and make available the printed record of the United States for future generations. He served as president of AAS until his death in 1831.”¹⁵

Thomas’s Old No. 1 printing press, his first press in Boston, resides at the Antiquarian Society in Worcester.

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After the Revolutionary War, the press was no longer regulated, and the technologies of the industrial revolution were applied in the publishing and printing business. I have just mentioned the example of Isaiah Thomas and his success.

29

Initially rotary presses were available and, eventually, much more efficient typesetting machines. Presumably using this technology, the *Boston Advertiser* was founded in 1813, Boston’s first daily newspaper.

30

However, in the years of the first third of the 1800s, Boston ceased to be the publishing center of what was now the new country. The big publishing centers were New York and Philadelphia. Other cities such as Baltimore, Cincinnati and New Orleans also developed strong publishing activities.

3 Liberal elites of the mid-19th century

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Although Boston was no longer the country’s center of publishing, in 1800s Boston was the center of an important philosophical and literary movement.^{16,17,18,19,20}

The Puritans came here as Congregationalists (see Figure 1), but individuals still needed to follow the doctrine and creed of their congregation (and to sign the Freeman’s Oath to be a citizen of the Massachusetts Bay Colony). As mentioned earlier, if someone wanted to promote some other version of religion, the Puritans kicked that person out of the Colony with lethal punishment for not staying out.

As the Revolution drew near, the churches largely favored the revolution, and I suppose in some sense this was at least a partial departure from the conservatism inherent in the colonial Puritan churches.

In the early 1800s, the Unitarian approach became more popular: people could be religious using their own reason and not reliance on doctrine and creed. Eventually Harvard appointed Unitarians as president and the divinity professor, and thus ministers coming out of Harvard were Unitarians, and in time a majority of the First Parish churches around the Massachusetts Bay region switched from Congregational to Unitarian.

Kings Chapel, across the street from the conference hotel, is a special case. Before the Revolution it was Anglican. After the Revolution it became Unitarian, but they liked their Anglican Book of Common Prayer and rewrote it to be consistent with Unitarianism. (Today they state, “We are Unitarian in theology, Anglican in worship service, and Congregational in governance.”)

¹⁵ AAS12. ¹⁶ Barry12. ¹⁷ Mayerson80. ¹⁸ Phillips06. ¹⁹ Rose81. ²⁰ Wilson05.

Church of England under the reign of King Charles (1625–1649)

- Church subordinate to state (Biblical justification); much hierarchy, ritual, and decoration between the individual and God; anti-Calvinism (predestination)

Puritans in the Massachusetts Bay Colony

- Congregational governance without ritual or decoration; theocratic state; Calvinist; Biblical literalism; exclusive

Unitarians

- Each individual could find Christian truth through intellectual freedom, reason and empirical evidence (e.g., from the Bible but without literalism); one God (not Trinity); no original sin or predestination; concern with moral and social harmony of a diverse population; anti-revivalist; use of writings, lectures, etc., to reach out

Transcendentalists

- Religion: intuition and spirituality rather than reason; Eclecticism instead of Christianity; practically, more of a philosophy and idealism than a religion
 - deliberately no component of being an organized religion
- Social movement: arguing for (and practicing) the goodness and self-reliance of man (partly as a reaction to urbanization and capitalism)
 - impractical
- Literature: believed literature was a contributor to the betterment of man; called for a new, American, literature
 - wrote some venerable works
 - attitudes evolved to acceptance of the progress of the Industrial Age and international trade (and acceptance of capitalism)
 - further development of literature and a cultural environment
- Broader world of social improvement
 - active in the abolition movement, women's right, education reform, and improving conditions of people in unfortunate circumstances

Figure 1: The evolution of spiritual doctrine from the Puritans to the Transcendentalists (my superficial approximation of the transitions).

All this thought about reason, individual goodness and personal relationship with god, etc., helped lead to the Transcendentalists and their idealism. The Massachusetts/Cambridge/Harvard liberal elites we hear so much about in politics today were in Cambridge, Boston, and Concord over 150 years ago.

In addition to their philosophy and idealism, the transcendentalists sought to create a new American literature.

One of the important meeting places was Elizabeth Peabody's bookstore, which still exists today (as a restaurant) on West Street near here. The plaque on the wall the building gives a good summary of the importance of Elizabeth Peabody and her bookstore:

Elizabeth Peabody, the first female publisher in Boston, maintained a home and business here in the 1840s. Her bookshop was the first in the city to offer books by foreign authors; and she published the periodical *The Dial* with Ralph Waldo Emerson. The shop was the meeting place for transcendentalists and intellectuals. Journalist Margaret Fuller [who lived on Winter Street, I believe, a couple of blocks away] gave lectures here called 'Conversations,' which were an important part of the early American feminist movement.

The Dial: A Magazine for Literature, Philosophy, and Religion was “an organ for the dissemination of Transcendental thought.”²⁰ The lectures were called “conversations” because women were not supposed to do public speaking in the 1840s. 33

Another meeting place was the Old Corner Bookstore, which in the mid- to -late-1800s was both a publishing location for and meeting places of the transcendentalists and other intellectuals. I’ll return to the Old Corner Bookstore in the next section. 34

Founded in 1885, the Saturday Club at the Parker House hotel (our conference hotel) was another meeting place of intellectuals. (Not only did they do a lot of writing, they apparently like to spend a lot of time in each other’s company talking about their thinking.) Here Charles Dickens gave a preliminary reading of the Christmas Carol to the Saturday Club before he did the public reading next door at the Tremont Temple. Here they conceived and started the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine in 1887. 35

It was in volume 1, issue 6, of the *Atlantic Monthly* that Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote in his series “Autocrat at the Breakfast Table” that Boston (specifically the State House) was the “Hub of the Solar System,” suggesting Boston was the center of everything commercial and intellectual at that time. The Massachusetts elites were not modest. At various times, the Old Corner Book Store and other famous downtown Boston locations have been called “the hub of the hub.”

4 Mid-1800s on, Boston is just another big American city 36

Despite Boston’s claim as a intellectual and cultural center, by the mid 1800s, it was just another big American City, in general publishing terms. The history leading up to this brings me back to the Old Corner Book store.^{21,22} 37

Going down the left column of Figure 2, we have the history of the Old Corner Bookstore building, which in time became a building housing booksellers and publishers, including eventually the important publisher known as Ticknor and Fields. A little while after the *Atlantic Monthly* was established, Ticknor and Fields acquired the Old Corner Bookstore. Then, after Ticknor’s death, Fields moved the publishing business and the Atlantic to Tremont Street.

Also shown in the figure, coming out of the 1700s, were the predecessor organizations to Little Brown.

Finally (also on the figure), Henry Houghton, just out of college, started work as a printer, eventually acquired his own business; and he established the Riverside Press in 1852 in Cambridge where he also did printing for Little Brown and later for the *Atlantic Monthly*. During the economic downturn resulting from the Civil War, Houghton acquired book plates from various failing publishers, and eventually went into publishing himself (with Hurd as a New York partner), which caused Little Brown to drop Riverside Press as a printer.

In time the successor partners to Ticknor and Fields merged with Houghton’s company, George Mifflin joined and in time, with Houghton growing old and Mifflin by that time a partner, the company became Houghton Mifflin.

In the early 1900s, the editors of the *Atlantic Monthly* bought out the magazine from Houghton Mifflin.

From then until circa 1970, Houghton Mifflin and Little Brown were the “big two” Boston publishers, and the *Atlantic Monthly* was a Boston institution. At that point, these historic institutions to a considerable extent ceased to be publishers and became financial assets to be bought and sold. 38

Of course there were other publishers in Boston besides the Big Two, including specialty publishers. Two examples of specialty publishers are the Beacon Press (1854–present) and Daniel Berkeley Updike’s Merrymount Press (1893–1941).

The Beacon press was and is the publisher for the Unitarians, now UU, church. Its first location was on Bromfield, the street parallel to School Street behind the hotel. It later moved to Washington Street, and then to Beacon Hill. Its current building is on Joy Street, a block from the Beacon Street headquarters of the UUs. In the 19th century it primarily printed sermons and other books related to Unitarian theology. Since the 20th century it was printed many non-religious books consistent with its mission to publish works that “affirm and promote . . . the inherent worth and dignity of every person; justice, equity and compassion

²¹ Hall10. ²² Tebbel72 and Tebbel75.

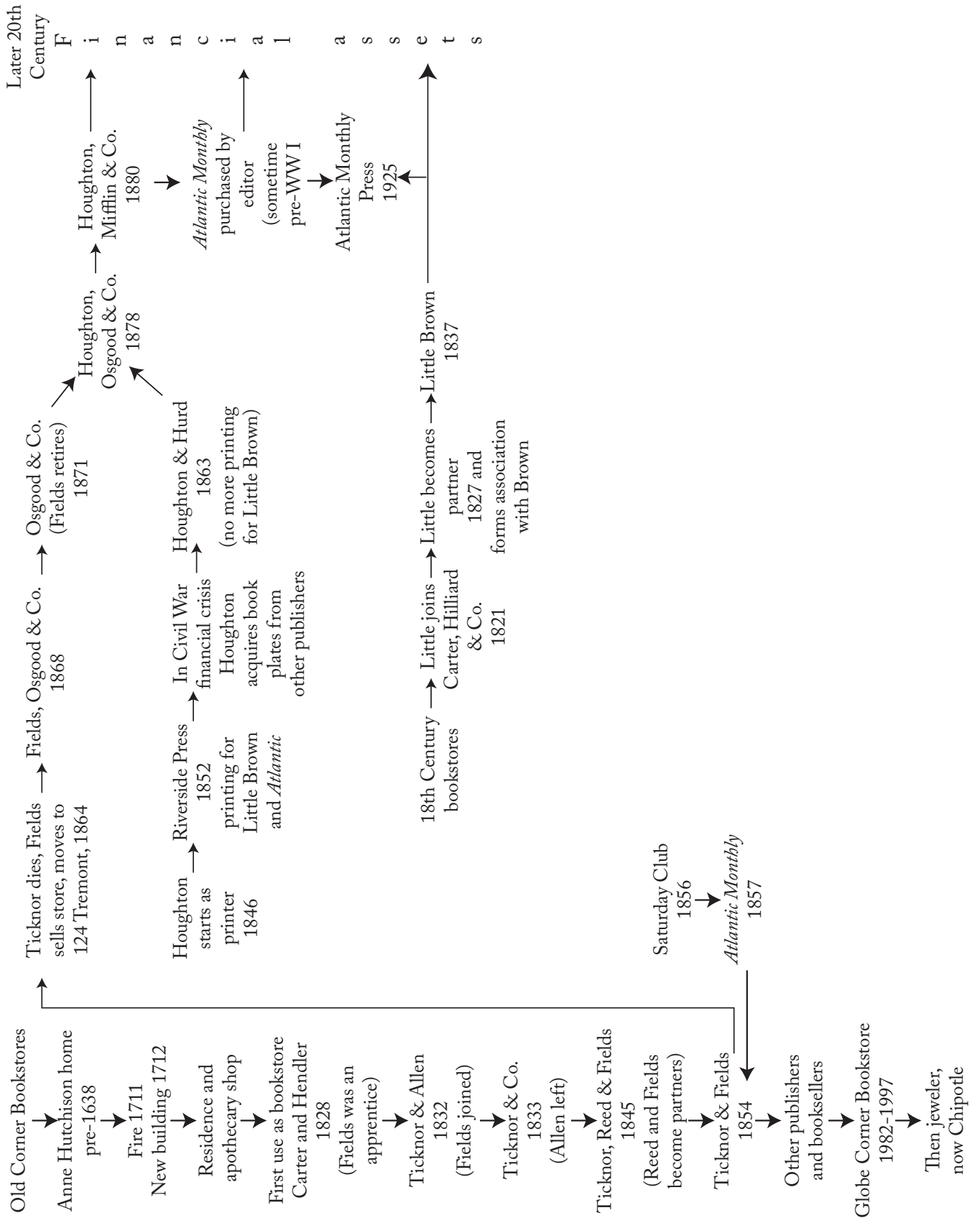


Figure 2: Some transitions in Boston publishing, from the middle years of the 19th century

in human relations; acceptance of one another; a free and responsible search for truth and meaning; the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process in society; the goal of the world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; respect for the interdependent web of all existence; and the importance of literature and the arts in democratic life.”²³

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Daniel Berkeley Updike was a fine book publisher,¹⁴ who had previously gained experience for over a decade at Houghton Mifflin and its Riverside Press.²⁴ Updike also was greatly interested in the history of printing types, and in 1922 published his classic book, *Printing Types, Their History, Forms and Use: A Study in Survivals*.²⁵

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There were lots of Boston papers in the 1800s and 1900s, for example: *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 1813; *Boston Journal*, 1833; *Boston Evening Traveler*, 1845; *Boston Herald*, 1846; *Boston Globe*, 1872; *Boston American*, 1904; plus smaller town papers. There were also lots of mergers and acquisitions, i.e., industry consolidation as the mid-1900s neared.

41

Boston’s newspaper row was on Washington Street, down the one-block length of School Street from the conference hotel. In the days before radio and TV were common, crowds stood in Washington Street to hear the latest news, e.g., of an election or prize fight.

42

An alley off of Washington Street a short way from the School Street intersection is named Pi Alley. Purportedly it is named Pi Alley because of all the newspapers in the area and the fact that a box of type dropped and scrambled on the floor was known as “pied type.”

43

In the colonial days, the printers typically had very little type—maybe one or two sizes, maybe not italic, maybe not two different typefaces. What type they did have came from Europe.

By 1800, Williams Caslon’s types had made it to the new country in many variations. Isaiah Thomas’s specimen book of types featured Caslon on its cover: “Being as large and complete an assortment as is to be met with in any one printing-office in America. Chiefly manufactured by that great artist William Caslon, Esq., of London.”^{14,26}

Type foundries took a while to get going in the United States. The first successful one in Boston was the Dickinson type foundry which was founded in 1839. There were a few other foundries by the time of the great Boston fire of 1872, in which all the type foundries were destroyed.

There were five type foundries in Boston by the time of the American Type Founders (ATF) consolidation of 1892: “the Dickinson Type Founders, Boston Type Foundry, New England Type Foundry, Curtis & Mitchell Type Foundry, and the H.C. Hansen Type Foundry. The H.C. Hansen Type Foundry was started in late 1872 after the fire (Hansen had been an employee of Dickinson). The New England and Curtis & Mitchell foundries soon disappeared. The Dickinson and Boston foundries were absorbed by ATF. H.C. Hansen, later with his sons, remained in existence until 1922 as an independent type foundry.”²⁷

No doubt a good bit of type design also went on in Boston. Two individuals well known for the type designs were Bruce Rogers and Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue.¹⁴

Goodhue (1869–1924) was an celebrated architect who also did book and type design, in particular the Merrymount type for the Merrymount press and Cheltenham type (original known as Boston Old Style).

44,45

Rogers (1870–1957) is viewed by some people as the greatest book designer of the 20th century. He worked at Riverside Press from 1895 to 1911 (he took over Updike’s position²⁴) where he created many fine editions. Two of the types he designed are Montaigne (at Riverside Press) and Centaur (for New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art). Centaur remains widely available (for example, it comes with Microsoft and Adobe products). I particularly like the slanted hyphen of Rogers’s original Centaur, which apparently and unfortunately is no longer slanted in the digital recreation. Rogers practiced so-called “allusive typography” where the type and ornamentation were matched to the content of the book.

²³ Beacon12. ²⁴ Kelly11. ²⁵ Barbara Beeton reports (2012-06-21 email) that “Updike’s archives from the Merrymount press are now in the special collections of the Providence Public Library; they include an incredible variety of specimen sheets and other material of interest to typographers and book designers.” ²⁶ As an homage to the popularity of Caslon type in the eras under discussion (it was also used for the Declaration of Independence), I have used Adobe Caslon Pro for Figure 2 of this preprint and for the text of my presentation slides. ²⁷ Devroye02.

5 Personal observations, 1964–present

46

This last section, covering the period of time I have lived in Boston and adjacent towns, is about my personal experience and observations rather than trying to cover printing and publishing history.

As I mentioned at the start of this note, Boston seemed a literary mecca when I first arrived here in 1964. In Harvard Square, near where I originally lived, the Harvard Coop and the Paperback Booksmith were my primary bookstores, but there were a variety of other stores selling new books in the Harvard Square neighborhood. Also, there seemed to be dozens of used bookstores. The Out of Town News in the middle of Harvard Square and Nini's Corner across the street had vast numbers of magazines and newspapers from around the world for sale.

I had also not previously been where I could easily use the libraries of multiple communities. Most of the time since I arrived in Boston I have had library cards for three different library systems, e.g., originally Cambridge, Boston, and Belmont (on my way to and from work). Also, because I originally worked for MIT, I could use its libraries and occasionally found a reason and way to access one of the Harvard libraries.

In my early years in the region, Boston also had many bookstores selling new books and even more used-book stores, it seemed, than in Cambridge.

47

I also liked the major newspaper options: *Globe* (more liberal), *Herald* (more conservative), and *Christian Science Monitor* (a wonderful 6-day-a-week paper providing unbiased world news). Over time some interesting weekly newspapers were founded as well as the African-American *Bay State Banner*.

48,49,50,51

As I got to know Boston, I also got to know the locations of such publishing institutions as the Riverside Press in Cambridge, Little Brown at the corner of Joy and Beacon Streets on Beacon Hill facing the Boston Common, the *Atlantic Monthly* on Arlington Street facing the Boston Public Garden, and Houghton Mifflin which in 1972 moved into the high rise building diagonally across the intersection from the conference hotel.

Much has changed in the nearly 50 years I have lived in or around Boston.²⁸ Sometime (circa 1980 perhaps) the big chains of bookstores began displacing the independent bookstores and small chains, for example, Barnes and Noble, Walden books, Border's, eventually Waterstones (from the UK) came to Boston.

A few years ago, Out of Town News stopped carrying most of the foreign newspapers it used to carry.

Also at some point, the big two publishers (Little Brown and Houghton Mifflin) seemed to become primarily financial assets to be bought and sold rather than institutions dedicated to publishing. The Riverside Press is gone from Cambridge, and the *Atlantic Monthly* is now part of a non-Boston publishing empire.

52

A notable exception to the decline of publishing in Boston is "David R. Godine, Publisher." Godine started his publishing business printing his own books in nearby Brookline. Dedicated to publishing quality books, the business has slowly grown. When I first became aware of it, it was based in the beautiful Victorian Ames-Webster mansion at the corner of Dartmouth Street and Commonwealth Avenue in Boston (it is now based about 400 feet from the conference hotel).

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Another exception is International Data Corporation, now part of the International Data Group. This company publishes business data and 300 magazines in 85 countries. It founded the Dummy series of books (later sold to Wiley). Its headquarters is across the street from the Boston Public library in a high rise building (known locally as the Darth Vader building — not a compliment).

Of course, Godine and IDC are not the only positive notes, but they are an exception to the apparent general decline of publishing and printing in Boston.

As we have moved into the Internet era, the *Globe* and *Herald* newspapers were bought by out-of-town newspaper empires (the *Herald* has since become independent again but is struggling). The *Christian Science Monitor* became primarily an on-line newspaper. And most of the chain bookstores have succumbed to the competition of on-line bookstores such as Amazon and to the popularity of the e-book. With our present American culture of "no new taxes," the city and town libraries have cut their hours. None of this is exceptional for any major metropolitan area in the United States.

Nonetheless, Boston still remains a major urban, educational, and cultural center with some pretty nifty literary resources, particularly its libraries.

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²⁸ An average of 3.5 miles from the conference hotel and never more than 8.3 miles.

Some notable libraries are at Harvard (founded 1636) libraries (with 80 libraries and 15 million books); the Boston Athenæum (founded in 1807); the New England Historical and Genealogical Society (founded 1845); Boston Public Library (founded 1848, the first large city public library in the country and the first circulating library,²⁹ now with many branches and 15 million books), and MIT (founded 1865) libraries (divided into several sub libraries with 3 million books).

In addition to being notable, these libraries are close enough together to require minimal travel time among them—so close together it is probably faster to take public transportation than to find parking. A walk passing each of them would only take about 90 minutes: one mile from the Athenæum to the NEHGS; two blocks from the Athenæum to the BPL; 1.5 miles from the BPL to MIT (1 miles as the crow flies across the Charles River, or as the Tech dinghy sails); and 1.7 miles from MIT to Harvard. 61

The youngest of these libraries is almost 150 years old. Obviously it is possible for a literary institution to withstand and adapt to the evolution of culture and economics, I suspect because they have never viewed profit as a key aspect of their missions.

Furthermore, since 1964, accessibility to library materials has become even easier. There were always many town libraries and libraries at the dozens of other colleges and universities in and around Boston. Now lots of the libraries are in library networks, where one can ask for a book at any of the libraries in the network to be sent to one's own library in that network. Also, there is the Massachusetts Virtual Library which supports exchange of books among networks. There is so much exchange going on that there is a company which has made a business of vans driving among the various libraries and networks of libraries doing deliveries and returns of exchanged books.

I am sure much of this is no different than what is going on in other states in the United States and in other areas around the world. Still, being based near Boston is particularly convenient for using libraries for research projects. 62

For bookstores, today Barnes and Noble is the only big chain still in Boston, with a store at the Prudential Center in Back Bay and operating some of the university and college bookstores. It is a little hard to find a general purpose independent store focusing on new books in Boston. Commonwealth Books and Brattle Book Shop primarily sell used books, and are within easy walking distance of the conference hotel.

In Cambridge, the MIT Press bookstore and the MIT Coop bookstore, selling new books, are across the street from each other. Moving on to Cambridge's Central Square and then Harvard Square, there are still a few used bookstores (e.g., Rodney's). Selling new books, in Harvard Square there are still the Harvard Book Store (founded in 1932 and never a part of Harvard), Grolier Poetry Bookshop (1927), and Schoenhof's Foreign Books (1856). Harvard Book Store and Grolier are still independently owned, in each case by a relatively new owner concerned that an institution not go out of business. Schoenhof's is no longer independently owned. 63

A particular favorite bookstore for me is the Harvard Book Store. It has no relationship to Harvard University except to have Harvard buildings on three sides of it. They have a large selection of new books and used books, and they offer bicycle delivery in Cambridge and nearby. They also have an Espresso Book Machine (EBM), which they have named Paige M. Gutenberg, for in-store on-demand printing of a customer's self-published book or millions of legally printable books from Google books, publishers, and other on-list books archives.³⁰ 64 65

A visit to the Harvard Book Store and their in-store book-printing machine brings us geographically full circle. The Harvard Book Store is a three minute walk from the location of Stephen Daye's original 1639 print shop. And by doing in-house printing, the bookstore has in some sense come full circle in the history of American printing and bookselling—back to its roots where booksellers often printed and published books and where printers sometimes had retail sales of books they printed. 66 67

In fact, I took the opportunity of visiting Paige M. Gutenberg to have a facsimile copy of the *Bay Psalms* printed for me. And that brings this talk full circle.

²⁹ Whitehill56. ³⁰ The EBM is another publishing activity where Jason Epstein has been a prime mover. Epstein was previously editorial director at Random House for 40 years and personally edited many famous authors; he co-founded the *New York Review of Books*; he founded the Library of America line of books; and he published the *Reader's Catalog* in the mid-1980s to make 40,000 books available through a phone-call purchase.

Acknowledgments

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