

THE TURNBULL LIBRARY HOLDINGS OF
BOOKS FROM THE GOLDEN COCKEREL
PRESS

The Alexander Turnbull Library has over the years acquired a fine collection of books representing the work of many of the modern private printing presses including fifty-two of those produced by the Golden Cockerel Press. Therefore, the Library was pleased to purchase recently from Mr R. F. Patterson of Dunedin a further seventy-seven titles and about the same time obtained one of the highlights of the press: *Crusader castles*, by T. E. Lawrence.

The Golden Cockerel Press was founded in December 1920 by Mr Harold Midgely Taylor at Waltham Saint Lawrence, Berkshire, as "a co-operative society for the printing and publishing of books", and in particular to encourage new works of literary significance by young authors. In fulfilment of these aims seventeen books were issued before increasing ill health caused Taylor to retire, and in 1924 the press was taken over by Robert Gibbings and his wife Moira. In August 1933 the press was transferred to London under the ownership of Christopher Sandford, Francis Newbery and Owen Rutter. Newbery ceased to be a partner in 1936 and was replaced for two years by Anthony Sandford. Rutter died in 1944 and from then Christopher Sandford remained as the sole owner until 1959 when he sold the press to Thomas Yoseloff, the New York publisher, and it ceased to be a private press.

In its forty years of existence the press produced some 212 books; most of these being in limited editions with specially designed bindings. Following the seventeen produced by Taylor, of which the Library has nine, seventy-two appeared in the nine years during which the press belonged to Moira and Robert Gibbings. Of these the Library has forty-one examples. In the next eight and a half years a further sixty-one books appeared so that by November 1941 the press had completed its century and a half, but thereafter the rate of publishing decreased. The output of the first 181 books up to December 1948 are listed in three bibliographies printed by the press. The first, *Chanticleer*, lists 112 titles from April 1921 to August 1936 with brief notes chiefly on the sizes of the editions and the variant bindings. This was followed by *Pertelote* listing a further 43 titles to April 1943. In this volume the scope of the notes was extended as the directors of the press say "to give a fuller picture of our methods, beliefs, aims, achievements, and failures, so that others may perhaps profit by our experience." These extended notes make fascinating reading and this trend was continued in *Cockalorum* which lists another 26 titles to December 1948.

It is possible to mention only a few individual titles here but among