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440 FIVE HUNDRED YEARS OF 1940 Printing

SINCE GUTENBERG by ERNEST SEEMAN

Manager Duke University Press (Reprint in part from the Publishers' Weekly)

The art of printing is commonly believed to have begun with Johannes Gutenberg, of Mainz, Germany, who practiced it with movable cast-metal type about 1454. However, like most popular suppositions this belief has proved erroneous. For it is now known that worthy burgher, one Lourens Coster by name, was printing from type in Haarlem, a town in Holland, eight years before the German, and that the rudiments of printing had been understood in other parts of the world long prior to the birth of either.

To sum the matter up, it appears that what Gutenberg and his contemporaries really did was to crystallize and broadcast the experiments of the past; and that in the process Gutenberg's name became so irretrievably linked with the idea that it has become, and will probably remain, a symbol for the invention of typography.

Webster has defined printing in its simple technical sense as "The act or practice of impressing letters, characters or figures on paper, cloth or other material." But as the art has come to exert such a powerful influence on the physical as well as the mental life of man, let us grant it a deeper philosophical definition, and consider it as a method of duplicating thought-impressions by words or symbols in such a way that many minds, the distant in time and space may understand and possess the original thought.

Bearing in mind, then, this exalted idea of printing, and passing Gutenberg by as an orthodox Adam of the typographical world, if you will, let us discover the outstanding contributions to the great thought-disseminating art that have been made by succeeding thinkers in the 475 years elapsing since the publication of the first printed book, the Gutenberg Bible. (In reality, several books were known to have been printed earlier.)

The first distinct impetus given the evolution of printing was a gradual making over of the languages of Europe. Bible and school books became plentiful, and books began to appear on all sorts of recalcitrant subjects, from the mixing of poisons, and the apprehension of witches; to the best recipes for removing warts, and the nature of the universe as the seething mind of man was at last liberated by the magic key of printing.

To William Caxton, an enterprising young Englishman, is due the credit of printing the first work in a modern tongue, thereby making book easier to understand, for thus far, for lack of an adequate European language, all books had been printed in Latin. . . . Inspired by Caxton's initiative other printers and scholars in due time reduced to type the Italian, French, Spanish, and lastly the German dialects.

Probably the next epochal contribution to printing was the introduction of illustrations. In 1493 Anton Kobberger, the world's first "live wire" publisher, brought out his famous "Nuremberg Chronicle", a history of the world which contained 690 illustrations and which notably accelerated the pace in the dissemination of ideas. To Kobberger is hardly due all the credit of this achievement, however. There was Schedel, his printer, who gave 12 years to the production of the first copy; and there was also Michael Wohlgemuth, who executed the wood cuts.

Some time before 1555, an unknown artist in Spain conceived the idea of utilizing printing in a purely decorative way, and began to make wall paper. The first examples were printed on small square pieces of hand made stock. . . . First, Holland took it up and 200 years later, wall paper was being printed in London.

The ceramic arts were next to adopt printing. In France, and later in England and Italy, pottery makers discovered that designs could be transferred to crockery by applying to its surface patterns freshly stamped upon paper, and through this device the slow hand-decoration of bygone centuries was reduced to a simple printing process.

The printing of fabrics for clothing first gained headway in Holland. The stamping of calico from blocks dipped in dye had long been practiced in India and Egypt, but not until the invention of block presses in Europe in the 17th century, did cloth printing thrive.

At Venice in 1620, printing became attached to a virtuous idea that had been wandering about the world since the days of ancient Rome, and as fruit of this union there was born a popular institution destined for a long and useful career—the newspaper. Acta Diurna the Romans had called the daily bulletin posted by the government for the information of citizens—a great improvement over the method prevailing in former times of spreading the news by a trumpeter, or still earlier by house-to-house gossip.

The first paper of public intelligence was issued under the name of "Gazetta" and once the Venetians had hitched their innovations to the rising star of printing, its progress was swift. Within two years of the newspaper's debut in Italy, it had been introduced into England as a weekly by Nathaniel Butler, and 80 years afterward the world's first daily appeared in London, a product of the enterprising mind of E. Mallet, a poor printer on Fish street. It is fitting that London, the city of the daily newspaper's nativity, should still have the most widely read newspaper in the world—the London Daily Mail.

The forging of the next link in the typographical chain may be said to have begun on January 7, 1714. For on that day Queen Anne granted to Henry Mill a patent on a writing machine embodying the idea of a typewriter. But Mill seems to have patented a mere dream, for it was not until 160 years later, that the first practical typewriter was constructed by Christopher Sholes, a Milwaukee printer. The first author to take advantage of the new invention was Mark Twain, and his "Life on the Mississippi" was the first typewritten manuscript ever submitted to a publisher. The first persons to foresee the possibilities of the machine in the field of woman's employment were General Francis Spinner and William LeDuc. Owing to the shortage of male help after the Civil war, these men employed women as government clerks—an innovation in which the typewriter was to have a far-reaching effect in the economic emancipation of the sex. The use of the typewriter has now become world wide, since it has not only been adapted to 84 languages, but combined with the "thinking machinery" of Burroughs and others as the recording instrument in mechanisms for solving mathematical problems.

Almost simultaneously with the perfection of the typewriter was developed the art of shorthand, which was readily accepted as its twin. Credit for the modern simplification of shorthand may be ascribed to Isaac Pittman and his contemporaries, but the art itself is an ancient one, apparently having followed from the hieroglyphics of Egypt. In Rome, the slave Marcus Tullius Tiro, freed by Cicero and made his secretary, devised a system that achieved wide use, and it was he who preserved (with scant appreciation for the modern schoolboy) his master's famous "orations". Atticus later built up a flourishing business on Tiro's idea, training hundreds of slaves as stenographers, and Julius Caesar is said to have been among his patrons.

Haste, Post, Haste. This phrase (from which our word "posthaste" has descended) was commonly written across letter in pre-railroad days to urge their prompt dispatch; when relays of messengers on horseback constituted the only postal system. But it was left for printing to furnish a better method for expediting mail, viz: by the postage stamp and the letter envelope. It was not until 1834 that postage stamps as we know them were invented by James Chalmers, a printer of Dundee, Scotland.

The next event in the history of thought dissemination was the arrival of a principle whereby blind persons might enjoy the inner light of understanding afforded by the printed word. The discovery of this principle was dramatic. The scene was a street in Paris, at dusk of an evening in the winter of 1784. Through the falling snow plodded a man of intellectual and ascetic mien, wrapped in contemplation of the world's miseries. Opposite the church of St. Germain his attention was attracted by the sight of a beggar who was being printed in London.

The 30th Anniversary Of The Farmville Enterprise Wednesday, May 29

The 30th anniversary of THE FARMVILLE ENTERPRISE will be observed on Wednesday, May 29, at the Rouse Printery, which will hold OPEN HOUSE from eight to eleven in the evening.

Educators, business, civic and church leaders, and all other citizens of the town and community, who do not come under these classifications but who respect the significance of printing and love the printed page, are invited and urged to unite with us in this anniversary observance, to pay honor to the day when the PRINTING PRESS, which has contributed more to the progress of civilization than any other invention, was brought to Farmville to serve as an integral factor in its growth and development.

Alex Rouse, Editor and Publisher; Sec-Treas Farmville Building & Loan

Started His Life Work at Age of Twelve; Has Served the Community in Various Capacities for Nearly Three Decades



EDITOR G. A. "Alex" ROUSE

Owner and Manager of "The Farmville Enterprise" and The Rouse Printery; also Secretary-Treasurer of The Farmville Building and Loan Association.

Born in Nashville, county seat of Nash county, the oldest son of Alexander Nichols Rouse and Mrs. Nannie Friar Rouse, George Alexander, known to his friends as "Alex" Rouse, led much the same life of any boy reared in a small country town; he made average grades in school, did odd jobs, played baseball, tennis and marbles in season, and took a few music lessons. After finishing high school he entered the College of Experience, from which he declares he hasn't graduated as yet.

At the age of twelve he decided on his life's work. He chose the printing industry. He was attracted to the art and learned the rudiments of the craft, working after school, and beginning his career as office boy in the Nashville printing office of his brother-in-law, M. W. Lincke, which is still in operation under the management of his daughter, Mrs. J. A. Ragan, formerly Miss Christine Lincke.

In 1906 he accepted the position of foreman and make-up man in the Daily Reflector office in Greenville, and served the Smithfield Herald in the same capacity the following year. The next three years were spent in Snow Hill as manager and printer of the Snow Hill Publishing Co. The position of editor and manager of The Farmville Enterprise was offered him soon after it was founded in 1910, by Jno. T. Thorne and G. A. Jones, who represented the stock company owners, A. C. Monk, W. A. Pollard & Co., B. L. Davis & Bros. and the above mentioned committee, and probably others, whose names the writer was unable to get. A year's contract with the Snow Hill Publishing Co. prevented his accepting the position at that time, but he did decide to take the job later and arrived in Farmville on June 27, 1911. Editor Rouse says he will never

forget that day, for it was one of the hottest and most trying of his experience. He was ill at the time and had a temperature when he seated himself in the horse-drawn phaeton for the 12 mile trip from Snow Hill to Farmville, which was made in the short span of about two hours. He stopped at Lizzie and got a cup of shaved ice, which he says was knocked from his hands when the phaeton jolted unexpectedly.

Taking charge of the business on July 1st, he noted his equipment as: an 8x12 job press (which a few years ago he sold to the Raleigh Times for their shop printing), a Simplex newspaper press, operated by a 2-horse gasoline engine, two open type stands and an imposing mone. Stannich, part of the original equipment now remaining in the shop is the bed from the newspaper press, which is used as an impressing stone, and kept as a lasting souvenir.

Miss Donie Abrams, of Greenville, worked with him as compositor until her marriage to Tom McGee, Charlie Moore, a bright and lively colored boy served as office boy and assistant pressman. Mr. Rouse's new position demanded that he be a combination errand boy, reporter, publicity and advertising writer, compositor, proof reader, subscription solicitor, pressman, book-keeper, collector, machinist, and on occasions when verses were needed to fill in a space he served as a poet. His first and only poem, however, was written and published May 30th, 1912, and appears elsewhere in this issue; entitled "Farmville On The Boom."

The new editor and manager's salary of \$75 a month was to be paid out of the net earnings of the company, which to his dismay amounted to only \$43.75 the first month. The cash and credit of the stock company had become exhausted prior to Mr. Rouse's arrival and with them went the dreams of the enterprising Progressives, who had hoped to make some contribution in this way to the rebuilding of the town. Only the inherent interest and enthusiasm of the youthful editor remained. And when he offered to take over the few assets, consisting mostly of goodwill, and the many liabilities of the plant this following year under lease, the stockholders gave a sigh of relief and handed over the reins. Then The Rouse Printery came into existence. A few years later the establishment was purchased by Mr. Rouse.

Somewhere Alex Rouse had heard that "the first fifty years in the printing business are the hardest," and so he went to work to get them over as fast as possible. With only twenty more lean years to look forward to the editor grows more light-hearted each day. Mr. Rouse found that there is considerably more to becoming a printer than just buying a plant on a moderate investment and he has had the hard experience of running a business without a cash outlay.

On December 27th of the year he came to reside here, Mr. Rouse brought Miss Myrtle Dail, of Snow Hill, to Farmville as his bride. Four years later a daughter, Mary Friar, was born to bless this union. Stannich Methodist, the little family took an active part in the local church, Mr. Rouse serving at one time on the Board of Stewards. Mrs. Rouse passed away in February 1938. There were rough seas to chart and many difficulties to overcome during the early years of The Rouse Printery, and credit has to be given

Advent of Printing Press Brought Transformation

to the foresight and enterprise of the pilot; and to the cooperation and confidence displayed by the townspeople as a whole.

Necessary equipment was added from time to time and the splendid printing facilities now insure speedy and efficient production on a large scale and make the work of the plant notable. There has been a steady advancement in the variety and quality of the service offered due largely to the owner's lifelong interest in the art of printing, his practical constructive ability, the precision and accuracy which he demands from his assistants, and the pride which he has in the printery itself. His chief ambition is that The Rouse Printery name stand as a symbol of printing excellence.

The Farmville Enterprise editor is a machinist by instinct and training in the school of experience when pressing necessity demanded that the trouble be found with no mechanic available. There isn't a piece of machinery in the plant that he cannot take apart, refit and operate as competently as any highly trained mechanic or operator, and there isn't one thing in the shop out of place or in a position unknown to him.

Leaders in civic improvements and worthwhile movements have found a sympathetic ear in the Newspaper office and the Enterprise pages always open to them, with an editor willing to cooperate in their activities and serving constantly the many betterment agencies. The lack of column space has been noted for arguments when politics have gotten heated here, and there has been no room for publishing personal grievances of any sort. This unsympathetic attitude towards the disgruntled has resulted in the paper being kept on a balanced keel and the conservative disposition of the editor has kept its policies sane and on a high plane.

Mr. Rouse was a charter member and the first secretary of the Rotary club; a charter member of the Country club and the Farmville Chamber of Commerce and Merchants Association. He has served as president of the Rotary Club and as head of the Eastern Carolina Printers' Association. A man of dignity and natural reserve, he has nevertheless, a fine sense of humor and his chief characteristic is the benevolent feeling he has for his fellow-man.

Golf and horseback riding are his favorite sports and 'motoring' his favored form of recreation, though he takes little time away from his office for either. Some twenty years ago he was a great baseball enthusiast and a promoter of the Farmville baseball club, which he served as "chief transporter" for one season.

Next to the editor's daughter, and taking a parallel rank with the Rouse Printery in the heart and mind of this man is the Farmville Building and Loan Association, which he has served faithfully and well for the past 16 years as secretary and treasurer. He is profoundly interested in its progress and feels a justified pride in the giant strides it has made during these past several years. He knows building and loan, and is never too busy or has any matter so pressing that he cannot always lay it aside to discuss at length with any inquirer the principles, objectives and service of the Building and Loan Association.

His first dollars saved was from stock taken in the Farmville Building and Loan Association; and it was with this saving he purchased the name and good will of The Farmville Enterprise and the little printing plant of The Farmville Publishing Co.

If the Building and Loan conferred titles he might wear the degree of "Distinguished Service" but as T. A. Marshall, veteran director of the Wadesboro Association said on one occasion when complimenting others who had been in its service for many years, "to have lived with fidelity to a great trust is in itself a tribute of praise. . . . and titles do not mean anything—it is the record that counts." The secretary and treasurer of the Farmville Building and Loan Association has lived up to the high degree of responsibility placed upon him.

INVENTOR SAW RESULTS

The work to which John Gutenberg had devoted his life had come to full fruition during the decade preceding his death. When he died the craft he had developed was becoming the most potent factor in the intellectual advancement of Europe.

OTHER ANNIVERSARIES 1940

The use of postage stamps began in 1840; the 150th anniversary of Benjamin Franklin's death occurs in 1940. The birth of Geoffrey Chaucer is ascribed to 1340, six hundred years ago.

Opened Doors to Three Decades of Progress; Serves as Medium for Contact Between Business and Buyer; Avenue of Information on All Subjects

The advent of the printing press in Farmville, brought a startling change to this community, opening to the citizens here the doors of the past and present, and one which was more important still, the doors of future progress.

While 30 years of printing in Farmville is only a part in the large pattern of printing in the nation, it is a period that means something special to the Farmville people, and emphasizes, on a small scale of course, what printing has done for all the world.

The newspaper is such a familiar activity, so much a part of daily living that special reminders are needed from time to time to make it appreciated. Certainly the service to this community performed by the graphic arts and crafts is worthy of acknowledgment, and all readers from the highest to the lowest are logical participants in the celebration of the 30th Anniversary of printing in the town of Farmville.

The Rouse Printery in this issue invites all adults, who are interested in the printed page to the celebration of its 30th Anniversary, which will be observed with Open House on Wednesday, May 29, in the evening from 8:30 to 11:00 o'clock, for inspection of the new plant.

Who can estimate the potentiality of the vast influence of the newspaper black and white for perusal, for study, for reflection! Printed news gives the pleasure of reviewing when addresses or poor reception on the radio make unheard parts most desirable and to the vast population of deaf or near deaf persons, deprived of all other means of intelligent sources for learning of current events, it is indispensable.

Everyone in the entire family looks eagerly for the arrival of the home town paper to discover what has happened since the last issue and to find what will happen in the days to come. And though the editor knows some people, who read it for errors alone, most readers feel that keeping informed on world and local affairs is an obligation that is before every alert citizen.

We are living in an epoch-making period of history. The world moves fast. Things happen quickly. The FARMVILLE ENTERPRISE is designed especially to bring these happenings to its readers completely and interestingly. It enables readers to know and interpret world affairs and helps keep them informed of town affairs with a minimum of loss time.

Since the advent of the printing press in Farmville, citizens have been informed at first hand of all the news of Church and School; the business men have been furnished an avenue for assuring old customers that their establishments are interested in keeping their trade, and are by which new customers may be attracted. It has effectively carried the advertiser's message right into thousands of homes of potential buyers and consumers who look to Farmville as their trading center.

The tobacco market has been featured in every issue published just prior to and during the selling season, and its success and future development have been paramount objectives of THE ENTERPRISE since the beginning. The market has been literally "kept under the wing" of this publication; praise, and condemnation, well deserved, have poured into its pages regularly and it has always been alert to pounce upon any individual, group, or rival market which has uttered any disparaging word in connection with any phase of its activity.

The civic and social happenings have been faithfully recorded and publicized, and, the interest of the farmer folk have been taken care of in helpful suggestions relating to agricultural development, and in news items designed to benefit them in particular.

Farmville's only newspaper and printing plant has throughout these thirty years furnished news information, inspiration, buying guidance and adequate facilities for job printing needs of this section of Eastern Carolina and hopes to continue this service for many years to come.

ASSOCIATED ANNIVERSARIES

Paper makers will observe this year the 250th anniversary of the first paper mill in this country, established by William Rittenhouse at Philadelphia in 1690; the electrotyping industry originated in 1839-40.