1910 and *The Commonsense of Municipal Trading* in 1911), The Bodley Head did not publish any of his books until after his death. The authors do not mention these American issues of Shaw's books. They spend two paragraphs on inquiries he made about possible publication of his plays. No one doubts Shaw's importance, but why should he even be mentioned when other authors whom The Bodley Head published get short shrift?

With the exception of the American branch (which was sold to Dodd, Mead and Co. in the early 1920s), there is nothing in this history on the company's activity in other countries. Did the company bargain for rights outside of Britain, did it distribute its books internationally through agents, or did it export its sheets to other publishers? This history provides no answers to these questions.

Of Canadian interest there is some information on the young John Buchan, who contributed to the *Yellow Book* and was engaged by John Lane as a reader of fiction. Buchan left behind 172 reader's reports which collectively paint an intimate portrait of his literary tastes and judgments. Disappointingly, nothing new is revealed about Stephen Leacock's relationship with The Bodley Head. The accepted view is that on a return voyage to Britain in 1910 Lane read the vanity edition of Leacock's *Literary Lapses* and cabled him with an offer of a regular trade edition. Lambert and Ratcliffe contend that Leacock was discovered by Lane's associate, Frederic Chapman, who happened to read 'My Financial Career' in the *Spectator* in 1908.

One could make a number of other criticisms of this book. The sources that have been consulted are insufficiently cited. An appendix containing an annotated list of Bodley Head booklets issued between 1961 and 1984 appears as an awkward afterthought. Yet, for all its faults, this company history imparts an enormous amount of information on contemporary British publishing. Written with flair and enlivened with wit, this is an enjoyable and entertaining book.

**Carl Spadoni**

*(Carl Spadoni is the Research Collections Librarian, Mills Memorial Library, McMaster University.)*

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This beautifully produced bibliography carries on the study of smaller twentieth-century English publishers which J. Howard Woolmer began with his checklists of the Hogarth Press (1976, 1986) and his bibliography of the Samurai Press (1986). The present work can in fact be seen as a sequel to the Samurai Press volume, for it was there in the years 1907-1909 that Harold Monro, the guiding light of the Poetry Bookshop, first met John Drinkwater, Wilfrid Gibson and other young English poets and began to learn the craft of publishing.

As the novelist Penelope Fitzgerald tells us in her eloquent and informative introduction, Harold Monro was an influential figure in English poetry circles from
just before World War I until the early 1930s. A poet of some accomplishment himself, he dedicated his life to making poetry a popular art form, looking forward, he said, to the day when the public would turn to books of verse as readily as they turned to their newspapers. The focus of his popularizing efforts was a remarkable institution known simply as the Poetry Bookshop, which Monro kept afloat on his private income. Located in an eighteenth-century house on a shabby street five minutes’ walk from the British Museum, the Poetry Bookshop was always more than its name proclaimed. From the day it opened in December 1912, it was the centre of poetic life in London. In rooms above the shop poets gave public readings – Rupert Brooke gave the first in January 1913 – and gathered round the fire to discuss their work. Other rooms were available for modest rent, and at one time Robert Frost, Wilfrid Gibson and Wilfred Owen all lived there. Elsewhere in the house were the offices where Monro edited Poetry and Drama and the Chapbook with an admirably open taste for a wide range of contemporary poetry, and published, until he died in 1932, a steady stream of books and pamphlets, rhyme sheets and Christmas cards, every one of them devoted to poetry.

In the first and most substantial section of his work, Woolmer provides full bibliographic descriptions and printing histories for the forty-six books and pamphlets published by the Poetry Bookshop and one, Poems by Sturge Moore, distributed with its imprint on the title page but originally published by Duckworth. Working from his own extensive collection and the holdings of the British Library, the Bodleian Library, the Library of the University of California at Los Angeles, and many other libraries in England and North America, Woolmer enhances his descriptions with illustrations of every title-page and, for most volumes, of the cover as well, and also enriches many entries with information of genuine interest. He tells us, for example, that the impressive sales of the Georgian Poetry series – 15,000 copies of the first book – may have been inflated when someone in the War Office thought they might serve to encourage the soldiers in the trenches and bought bundles of them, bundles found in mint condition years later lying in a cellar.

With seventy-eight black-and-white illustrations and seven colour plates, this bibliography also provides a generous record of the visual beauty of the work produced by the Poetry Bookshop. To decorate his publications, Monro commissioned work from some of the finest graphic designers of the day, including Claud Lovat Fraser, E. McKnight Kauffer, and John and Paul Nash. Even Pablo Picasso and Gino Severini contributed. Since the work of such illustrators is now often of more interest than the poetry, Woolmer’s efforts in this regard are greatly to be commended. This is especially so in the three sections which catalogue more ephemeral pieces, the many rhyme sheets, broadsides, and Christmas cards which Monro published. Of particular note are a colour foldout of a broadside of Ezra Pound’s lyric, ‘An Immorality,’ decorated by Paul Nash, and a tipped-in Christmas card by Monro himself illustrated by Alistair Stewart.

The fifth section of the bibliography lists the contributors to the eight issues of Poetry and Drama that appeared before World War I, and those to the forty issues of the Chapbook which came out between 1919 and 1925. Students of literary history will readily note T.S. Eliot, Robert Frost, Thomas Hardy, James Joyce, D.H.
Lawrence, Ezra Pound and many other major figures of twentieth-century literature standing out from the lesser and forgotten names.

In three brief sections, Woolmer gives details about books distributed by the Poetry Bookshop but published by others, about ephemera such as catalogues and flyers, and about the Poetry Bookshop's ghosts. Finally, he provides a selection of books and articles useful for further study of the Poetry Bookshop and its publications, and an index of proper names.

The only complaint that can be fairly made of Woolmer's work is that sometimes he does not go far enough in his notes. He is inconsistent in providing the reader with information about poets whose names mean little to anyone other than specialists in the literary minutiae of the day. He tells us, for example, that T.P. Cameron Wilson was a schoolteacher who was killed in the Somme Valley in 1918 but offers nothing about J. Murray Allison or E.H.W. Meyerstein or Anna Wickham. On occasion, too, he fails to pursue obvious questions that arise from his own research. What was it in Charlotte Mew's The Farmer's Bride that led one company to reject it on the grounds that it was too blasphemous to print? If the question cannot be answered, Woolmer should say so. And surely there is more to be said about Michael Field, three of whose works were published by Monro and a fourth distributed by him. Three times Woolmer tells us that Michael Field was the joint pseudonym of Katherine Harris Bradley, who died in 1914, and Edith Emma Cooper, her niece, who died in 1913. How did the Poetry Bookshop come to publish their books posthumously in 1918, 1919, and 1923? Presumably, the answer has some connection to Thomas Sturge Moore, a great admirer of their work, who edited a selection from it for Monro. Again, if the information is not available, Woolmer should say so.

However, such a complaint is a very small matter in light of the wealth of information Woolmer gives us. He has produced a fine bibliography that is of value to students of literature, of visual art, and of publishing in early twentieth-century Britain.

Donald Laing
(Donald Laing, who teaches in the Faculty of Education, University of Windsor, has published bibliographies of Clive Bell and Roger Fry.)


These bibliographies are the first two volumes in a new series entitled 'American Poetry Bibliography Series' under the general editorship of Lee Bartlett. Studies of the work of Jerome Rothenberg and Clayton Eshleman have been announced for 1988, and others are in the making. These studies join many others which derive