Oak Knoll Press and the John Carter Brown Library explains the decision to produce this facsimile reprint rather than integrate *Guide* and *Supplement* in a new publication. Yet, the appearance of this facsimile is welcome because it means a new generation of “Barbadianists” can now own their own copy of this important reference.

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Frank Herrmann. *Low Profile: A Life in the World of Books*. New Castle, Delaware: Oak Knoll Press; Nottingham, England: The Plough Press, 2002. [10], 398 pp.; \$39.95 US (hardcover). ISBN 1 58456 056 7.

Frank Herrmann has had a very full and interesting career in the world of books, both new and antiquarian, and he provides a thoroughly enjoyable and informative account of his life in this volume. He begins with the mixed memories of childhood in Berlin in the mid-1930s, of his family's exodus to England by 1937, and of their life in England during the War. He attended Westminster School from 1940 to 1945, and began a degree in science at Oxford which he did not complete. He found himself more inclined to literary studies and decided to try to get into publishing. After a series of rejections for lack of experience, he wrote to Geoffrey Faber, who was chairman of Faber & Faber and also the father of one of his friends from Westminster School. An apprenticeship in publishing began shortly thereafter.

The production department of Faber & Faber was directed by David Bland with whom Herrmann worked from 1947 to 1955. Here he learned every aspect of book production, as each member of the staff was responsible for the design, typography, estimating, progress chasing, picture research, and often editorial work for the titles on his or her list. The number of titles was as many as 60 to 80 a year. Herrmann provides profiles of the directors and staff of Faber, and describes the workings of the firm, and its relationships with authors and illustrators, printers and binders. At Faber's he met his future wife, Patricia Robinson, and gained the expertise that led to his next position, production manager for the firm of Methuen.

Herrmann devotes two chapters to his years at Methuen's, describing his ever increasing responsibilities in the firm between

1956 and 1969 and the changing nature of publishing. During this time he had to contend with the impact of mergers, the first occurring in 1957 with Eyre & Spottiswoode and Spon to form Associated Book Publishers, and the second about 1963 with the legal publishing house of Sweet & Maxwell. The second merger brought a consolidation of offices, uprooting Methuen's for the first time in 70 years and resulting in the loss of over ten tons of old editorial files. Herrmann continued with the firm until mid-1969 when the dismissal of a friend and colleague brought about his own resignation.

While working at Methuen's, Herrmann made his first foray into print with a children's book, *All About the Giant Alexander*, based upon bedtime stories told to his children. It was published by Methuen in 1964. He also began research on the history of art collecting in England, which was published in 1972 by Chatto & Windus as *The English as Collectors*. (It has been re-issued with a new introduction by Herrmann by Oak Knoll Press.) During these years, Herrmann assisted his father with the recovery and restoration of Schloss Pretzfeld, a family property in Germany, and of paintings by his paternal grandfather, Curt Herrmann. Another property in East Germany, the Wuklow Estate, came back into family hands in the 1990s.

Herrmann's next ventures in the world of publishing reflect the changes that were occurring as a result of mergers and takeovers by groups whose main interests were in profits. Shortly after his departure from Methuen's, Herrmann took on the task of revitalising the old firm of Thomas Nelson, then one of the book publishing interests of Thomson Newspapers. It was a thankless task and Herrmann was sacked within two years. A more successful venture initially was his involvement with First National Financial Corporation which was building up its investments in publishing. Herrmann became involved in the acquisition and revival of Ward Lock in 1971, and the building up by "organic growth and by acquisition" of Marshall Morgan & Scott, a religious publishing house which had been acquired two years earlier. He managed to do this quite effectively over the next five years, adding, amongst others, World Distributors – a publisher of mass-market books for children, Hudson's – a family-run book retail company based in Birmingham, and Samuel Baxter – another religious publishing house. But he could not stave off a hostile takeover by one of the principals in the firm and decided to resign in 1976.

Herrmann set up as a consultant, mixing this work with research and writing, and running the Plume Press, a small press he had

established with his wife upon leaving Nelson's. Shortly after the publication of *The English as Collectors*, Herrmann took on the history of Sotheby's, initially juggling the research with his responsibilities at Marshall Morgan & Scott. *Sotheby's: Portrait of an Auction House* appeared in 1980, published by Chatto & Windus in London and W.W. Norton in New York. Herrmann also became a partner with Philip Wilson Publishing, producing *Art at Auction*, and other art books. Between 1980 and 1983 Herrmann was more directly involved with Sotheby's, at first taking on the reorganisation of Sotheby's book department. He was later made a director of Sotheby's main board in London, a member of its executive committee, and served as the head of Sotheby's Overseas Operations outside the United Kingdom and the United States. On more than one occasion he was asked to provide an assessment of the auction house's financial position.

Following his departure from Sotheby's, Herrmann decided to set up a new auction house that would concentrate on the middle range of books no longer of interest to Sotheby's. He was joined in this venture by David Stagg and John Kerr, both formerly of Sotheby's book department. Bloomsbury Book Auctions proved to be a success and its progress over the past twenty years is described by Herrmann. Although it became his primary concern in these years, he continued to make some forays into publishing. Frank Herrmann has had a rich and varied life in the world of books. There is much in his autobiography to interest those concerned with the history of publishing in Britain in the twentieth century, and developments in the auction world in the 1980s and 1990s.

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Nancy H. Marshall. *The Night Before Christmas: A Descriptive Bibliography of Clement Clarke Moore's Immortal Poem with Editions from 1823 through 2000*. New Castle, Delaware: Oak Knoll Press, 2002. 324 pp.; \$75.00 US (hardcover). ISBN 1 58456 071 1.

From the outset Nancy H. Marshall's lengthy compendium functions under a double mode: the exclamatory and the laudatory. With 1001 bibliographic entries, 80 black-and-white illustrations, a 24-page colour-plate section, and a large hardcover format, this collection