

**British antiquarian booksellers during
World War II:
Notices and advertisements, 1939-1942**

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Finding Aid
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Basic information

Range of collection dates: 1939-1942

Size: one folder with 28 parts

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Restrictions: None

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Scope Note

Consists of notices and advertisements to American customers of the British antiquarian booksellers, explaining the difficulties of doing business under wartime conditions. Topics cover destruction of book stock, removal of dealers from London to the countryside, and shipping losses or delays due to destruction of ships in the Atlantic Ocean.

Assembled by Hamilton Cottier (1900-1979) of the Class of 1922, in the course of his book collecting. Item 7 docketed by Cottier on verso "English Booksellers' Notices, 1939-1941".

Arrangement

The material is arranged in alphabetical order by the bookseller's name.

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1. **Antiquarian Booksellers' Association.** "An Appeal to Book Collectors." A request for contributions to a distress fund. Addenda include book titles, perhaps those donated or those to be auctioned to benefit the fund.
2. **Antiquarian Booksellers' Association** in "The Clique." "To Our American Friends." Letter from the Antiquarian Booksellers of Great Britain asking Americans to continue ordering books, manuscripts, and autographs with dollars, which are turned over to the Government and subsequently used for the manufacture of military necessities. 17 July 1940.
3. **B. H. Blackwell, Ltd.** A statement of "Greetings and Cheer" to the Americans who are now "Comrades in Arms" in the War effort. (Broad Street, Oxford), 21 February 1942 (dated by hand).
4. **B.H. Blackwell, Ltd.** Letter requesting that American customers pay their accounts in International Money Orders or by Sterling Drafts owing to the sterling-dollar exchange rate. (Broad Street, Oxford) May 1940.
5. **B.H. Blackwell, Ltd.** Letter thanking American patrons for their continued support and assuring Blackwell's American customers that the bookseller is committed to carrying on with business throughout the war. (Broad Street, Oxford) Oct., 1939 (dated by hand).
6. **B. H. Blackwell, Ltd.** Letter to H. Cottier, Esq. of Princeton responding to a purchase order and thanking Mr. Cottier for his sympathy for the British cause. Letter includes a signature from B.H. Blackwell, Chairman, and Cottier's notes. (Oxford), 28 June 1940.
7. **F. W. Chaundy**, Chairman of Dulau & Co., Ltd. "B. H. Blackwell, Ltd. Dulau's Department." Letter confirming the complete destruction of the premises and stock of Dulau & Co., Ltd and informing customers that Dulau will now operate from the premises of B. H. Blackwell's. (Oxford), June 1941 (dated by hand).
8. **Dobell.** "To Our American Customers." A letter requesting that Americans ordering from "this Catalogue" specify certain information in their order forms and listing the requirements for submitting an order. Dobell, July 1940 (dated by hand).
9. **H. M. Fletcher.** List No. 95 of books, along with a note regarding lost mail due to the War. (Middlesex).
10. **Hector's Old Book Shop.** "Destruction of Business Premises." Notice that the premises of Hector's Old Book Shop, an Elizabethan building, was destroyed in bombings. Details site of new premises. Date of bombings has been cut out, presumably due to censorship. (Birmingham), April 25, 1939 (dated by hand.).
11. **Heffer.** "To our Foreign Customers." A card reassuring customers that books can still be sent from England to customers abroad.
- 11 A. **Heffer.** "To our American Customers." A card detailing the depreciated Sterling and opportunity for Americans to purchase books at a low cost. Sept. 1939 (dated by hand).
12. **C. Howes.** "A Catalogue of Ancient and Modern Books." Catalogue No. 92 detailing books available for purchase and requesting American purchasers to

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- send orders by Clipper. Thanks Americans for their “help and sympathy.”
(Tunbridge Wells, Kent), 3 June 1941.
13. **C. Howes.** “A Catalogue of Interesting Ancient and Modern Books.” Catalogue No. 93 listing books and detailing new method of payment through Barclays Bank. (Tunbridge Wells, Kent), 30 Sept. 1941 (dated by hand).
 14. **Maggs Bros. Ltd.** Card stating that mail has been lost as a result of enemy action from 4 November to 6 December. (Berkeley Square, London).
 15. **Maggs Bros. Ltd.** Card stating that mail has been lost as a result of enemy action between the third and fourth weeks of August. (Berkeley Square, London).
 16. **Elkin Mathews, Ltd.** Card to H. Cottier Esq. of Princeton detailing mail recently lost and requesting all correspondence to be re-sent. (Bishops Stortford).
 17. **McLeish & Sons.** Letter detailing bookseller’s move outside London and its effect on the publishing of catalogues, which will continue as frequently and as completely as possible. (Egham, Surrey) Sept. 1939 (dated by hand).
 18. **Pickering & Chatto Ltd.** “September 1939.” A notice stating that Pickering & Chatto will remain in present location, despite diminished staff due to the War. (King Street, St. James’s, London), Sept. 1939.
 19. **Pickering and Chatto, Ltd.** “Damaged through Enemy Action.” A notice stating that some books listed in a previously-issued catalogue have since been damaged as a result of London bombings, and have been subsequently marked down. Requests that customers view the damage as a mark of war, through which the message of the book lives on. (King Street, St. James’s, London). Received 1941 (dated by hand).
 20. **Charles J. Sawyer, Ltd.** “The Atlantic Trade Route.” Letter explaining that as a result of enemy attacks on transatlantic trade routes, some mail to and from customers may be delayed or lost. (New Bond Street, London).
 21. **Charles J. Sawyer, Ltd.** “Important to American Customers.” Notice that payments made to Great Britain must be in American dollars at an exchange rate of \$4.04 to £1. July, 1940 (dated by hand).
 22. **Charles J. Sawyer, Ltd.** “£ = \$3.55.” Notice that the current exchange rate gives Americans a good opportunity to purchase books from Britain. April, 1940.
 23. **Charles J. Sawyer, Ltd.** “£ = \$3.25.” Notice that the current exchange rate gives Americans a good opportunity to purchase books from Britain. June, 1940.
 24. **Thomas Thorp.** “Notice to my American Customers.” Card requesting that American customers continue to purchase books from England. A note about a Dickens volume on back. (Surrey and London), June 1940 (dated by hand).
 25. **T. D. Webster.** “Delayed or Lost Mails and Statement of Account.” Letter to American customers detailing the state of lost mail due to the War, and requesting that Americans send payments as soon as possible. (Tunbridge Wells, Kent), 26 December 1940.
 26. **[unsigned]** “Important Notice Regarding Payments.” Document detailing acceptable payments for goods exported to the United States.
 27. **[unsigned]** “A British Bookseller to Friends in America.” Pamphlet requesting that Americans aid in the cause by purchasing one British book. Sept. 1940.