Printers of the Streets and Lanes of Melbourne

DON HAUSER
Printers of the Streets and Lanes of Melbourne

(1837 - 1975)

JOHN PASCOE FAWKNER'S PRINTING PRESS
TO THE PIONEER PRINTERS AND RISK TAKERS WHO SET UP THEIR BUSINESSES UNDER ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE CLIMATIC CONDITIONS WITH HEAT, COLD, DUST, LACK OF PROPER EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS, WORN TYPE . . . AND TO THE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF COMPOSITORS, PROOFREADERS, PRINTERS, BOOKBINDERS AND OTHER CRAFTSMEN AND WOMEN WHO WORKED IN THESE POOR CONDITIONS . . . MANY OF WHOM VENTURED FROM ENGLAND AND EUROPE TO A NEW LIFE IN AUSTRALIA.
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THE NONDESCRIPT PRESS
MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA
Hough & Co. or Hough, Heath & Co. 174 Elizabeth Street. George Henry Hough, George Heath and William Henry Williams were all employed at the Herald until 1852 when they decided to join up and purchase the two year old firm of Connebee & Mould. Hough was registered as the printer and publisher of the Diggers' Advocate on 28 October, 1853. The partnership was short-lived because the next year Heath left to join Henry Cordell to form Heath & Cordell in Geelong and Williams left to set up on his own behalf. The metamorphosis continued in 1854 when Hough & Co. was purchased by Goodhugh & Trembath with George Hough staying on as an employee. In 1855 Charles Boyd, overseer at Goodhugh & Trembath, and William Moore, a compositor at the Herald left to join Walker, May & Co. to become Walker, Boyd and Co.
MASSINA & CO., A. H. 72 Little Collins Street, later 350 Swanston Street and 121 Cardigan Street, Carlton. Alfred Henry Massina first appeared in the Victorian Printers’ Register on 1 September, 1865 (Reg. No. 156). Like many of his peers, Massina was a native of England. He was born in London in 1834 and was apprenticed at age sixteen to printer Sydney Hedley Waterlow, 66 London Wall in 1850. Twenty years old, practically penniless, and with a new baby, Alfred and his wife boarded the George Marshall, and arrived in Port Phillip on 5 April, 1855, none the worse for wear, surprisingly, after a stormy, uncomfortable 99 day voyage. Little is recorded of Alfred Massina’s first years in Melbourne except his unsuccessful attempt to find a living on the goldfields while Frances worked in Melbourne to support herself and her child. Although Massina had not completed his apprenticeship in London, he was an excellent machinist and found work with W. H. Williams, an early printer of the Advocate at 94 Bourke Street. One of his fellow employees was S. V. Winter, a young man with whom he formed a lifelong association, later cemented when Winter became manager and editor of the Herald. In 1859 four work friends namely, Gibbs, Clarson, Shilland and Alfred Massina, pooled resources and purchased the failed business Slater, Williams and Hodgson. Trading as Clarson, Shilland & Co., the four partners saw opportunities for a printing business in Sydney. Gibbs was elected in 1862 to open up there trading as Gibbs Shilland & Co. later Gibbs Cryer & Co. When the business separated, the Melbourne part became Clarson, Massina & Co. in 1865 at premises at 72 Little Collins Street. In September that year, an event occurred which was to have a profound influence on the future of the firm. This was the publication of the Australian Journal. Although the journal was an Australian magazine, published and printed in Melbourne, it was written along the lines of fashionable English magazines of that era, to appease the “new chums” (and the old chums) with articles about life back in Britain. In spite of early difficulties, the Australian Journal and its publishers became a magnet for Melbourne’s literati, Marcus Clarke, Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall to name a few (the number of books and publications printed and published by Clarson, Massina & Co. would fill a catalogue). During the early 1880s the company’s name was changed to A. H. Massina & Co. Massina installed a Mergenthaler Linotype machine in 1894 and the Australian Journal was the first Melbourne publication to be set on this machine. In those days, the machine and its operator were ensconced in a glass screen, not so much to protect them from sabotage from angry compositors whose jobs had been put in jeopardy but to protect these delicate machines from dust and grit. As linotypes became common, the glass partitions disappeared. Alfred Massina joined his friend S.V. Winter on the board of directors of the Herald and helped steer the newspaper through the land boom collapse and bank failures of the 1890s to re-establish a firm foundation. Massina became chairman of the board of the Herald in 1895. During 1908-09 Massina retired from the printing business leaving his son Harry and his grandsons Alfred and Stanley Massina in control. He retained his seat on the board of the Herald until his death in 1917 age 83 when he was given a front page obituary noting he had done much to lift the newspaper from a struggling sheet to an evening paper of importance. Massinas traded through the great depression, WW2 and the post war boom years. Technological change and expanding competition encouraged the quest for new markets. With the introduction of magnetic ink character recognition (MICR) technology came the opportunity to partner Mason Firth & McCutcheon and later Sands & McDougall to form Cheque Printers & Encoders to pursue the profitable cheque printing market. Three friendly competitors pooled their resources to combine in a successful business employing 990 persons over 13 sites. Noel Daniels, composing room foreman, later estimator and production manager, recalls his years at Massinas in the 1960s and the regular “putting to bed” of the Dun & Bradstreet weekly journal. The company was acquired by Frank Daniels during the 1970s and continued to trade as A. H. Massina & Co. for some years.

See also: Gibbs Shilland & Co., The Herald.
SLATER, WILLIAMS and HODGSON

94 Bourke Street East. Listed in Melbourne Directory, 1856. When the business failed in 1859, four friends namely, Gibbs, Clarson, Shallard and Massina purchased it and traded as Clarson, Shallard & Co. In 1862 the four partners saw opportunities for a business in Sydney and Gibbs was elected to open a business trading as Gibbs Shallard & Co., later Gibbs Cryer & Co. The partnership separated, half remaining in Sydney and the other half became the forerunner of long standing family business A. H. Massina & Co. in Melbourne.

SEE ALSO: A. H. MASSINA & CO., GIBBS, SHALLARD & CO.

WILLIAMS, W. H.

mostly set up to produce retail and direct mail catalogue work, much of which originated from Sydney retailers. Keating was required to bring work from Sydney including catalogues for Anthony Hordern, a retail firm. A colleague at Varley’s was James P. Beveridge another traveller, who resigned his position to join John Sands in Sydney and later became managing director of McLaren & Co. in Melbourne. Varleys went into voluntary liquidation in 1925 and the machinery was bought by Sidney Cooke & Sons and promptly disposed of. The remaining assets were bought by Sands & McDougall.

VENUS HARTUNG & CO. 383 Flinders Lane, now at Church Street, Richmond. Tickets, labels, tapes and tags originally for the Flinders Lane clothing trade.

VERONA PRESS. Rear 26 Flinders Street (1966).

VICTORIAN MASTER PRINTERS’ ASSOCIATION.
The inaugural meeting of the Master Printers’ and Wholesale Stationers’ Society of Victoria, (later renamed the Victorian Master Printers’ Association), was held on 17 June, 1882. Present were R. G. McCutcheon, J. McCarson, H. Puttman, A. Stewart and J. Walker. McCutcheon and Stewart were elected President and Secretary respectively. The association was formed as a result of the rapid growth of the printing trade between 1880 and 1883 when the number of recognised printing offices reached 124. By 1890 that number had grown to 237. An earlier office address was 25 McKillop Street, John R. Walker was then Hon. Secretary in the 1930s. The association later became the Printing and Allied Trades Employers’ Association (later Printing and Allied Trades Employers’ Federation of Australia) operating from Jolimont Road, Jolimont. Keith Gillespie, Fred Humphreys, Laurie Newman, Geoffrey Code, Graham Luke, Rick Deering and Tony Duncan were successive state managers from 1953. In the 1990s PATEFA became the Printing Industries Association of Australia operating from 585 Burwood Road, Hawthorn.

VICTORIAN PRINTING WORKS. 441 Little Bourke Street, later 17 Wills Street. Letterpress and lithographic printers. VMPIA 1934.

VICTORY PUBLICITY. Bill McKechnie began screen-printing theatrical posters in the “flies” above the stage of the Victory Theatre (now the National Theatre) in St. Kilda in 1924. The company was formed in Swanston Street then moved to 262 Queen Street, later 186 Lygon Street, Carlton (a converted cinema). Screenprinters, lithographers and general commercial printers. Victory became well known for printing hand-drawn 24 sheet and other posters printed from stone and later printed on two huge 60” x 40”