

Bertram
ROTA



Celebrating One Hundred Years

1923-2023

May

Publishing

Bertram Rota Publishing Ltd was set up as a separate company (there was also a Bertram Rota Services Ltd), both now defunct, but a lot of pleasure was taken from the enterprise, albeit success was mixed. I append a list of books we have published and/or distributed, in chronological order, which we think is complete (but may not be). Titles available now are marked with an obelisk.

A lot of bibliography (which I do not mean dismissively) but also standing out for me the beautiful and stunningly illustrated work of Joe Lubbock (I remember a kind and gentle man who once took us all out on his boat in the depths of winter, perhaps the coldest I have ever been, after a morning spent watching him at work), designed and printed by Sebastian Carter at the Rampant Lions Press, the poetry of Robert Graves, and Gogmagog publications, often reflecting my father's personal enthusiasms and friendships. I remember meeting the poet and essayist Kenneth Hopkins, a close friend of my father, on several occasions. I was perhaps sixteen or seventeen and had just discovered *The Waste Land* and I was bowled over but also *extremely* earnest about it. I expressed my slight dismay that he had published *A Dull Head Among Windy Spaces: The Eliot Cult* which I had just absorbed. He smiled, winked, and told me to take it with a large pinch of salt.

There was also the *Festschrift* I compiled for my father's seventieth birthday (Sebastian Carter was good enough to design the eponymous upper wrapper, entirely free of charge), Christmas short stories sent out as seasonal greetings written by my father and grandfather, and although not published by us, various lectures, offprints, periodical contributions, and my father's *Apart from the Text* and *Books in the Blood*. We were also very much involved with the successful London Limited Editions, of which my father said he was not proud, but I think he should have been – they are attractive books and to me do not seem the manufactured rarity I think he rather felt they were.

It is something of a truism that booksellers are often writers manqués, but it is certainly borne out by the endeavours of a good number of former employees of the firm. Peter Scott was editor of *Stand To!*, the highly regarded journal of The Western Front Association, between 1981 and 1987 and there is little doubt that he was also its masterly book reviewer under the pseudonym 'Obturator'.

Arthur Uphill was co-author with Robert Wilson of the Gertrude Stein bibliography published by Quill and Brush in 1994 (I think it is fair to say, and that he would not mind my doing so, that he was properly obsessed with "Gertie" as he always referred to her, invariably followed by a knowing fit of giggles). He also compiled and introduced *The Books of Jonathan Williams: Checklist 1952-1979 . to mark an exhibition of JW's Books and Photographs* (copies available, see below) and edited John Cowper Powys's *Letters to Nicholas Ross* (again, see below). We are selling books from dear Arthur's library to this day.

Erstwhile cataloguer and private press specialist Nancy Campbell went on to write poetry, essays and non-fiction with great success, a series of residencies with Arctic research institutions inspiring the books *The Library of Ice*, *How To Say 'I Love You' In Greenlandic: An Arctic Alphabet* and *Fifty Words for Snow*. In 2018, she was appointed Canal Laureate by the Poetry Society and the Canal & River Trust.

Ellee Bowden, meanwhile, created her own imprint, Lambeth Books, launching the excitingly hard-boiled *Candy Rising* series (Pulp Brixton).

Less happily, Marius Kociejowski published the bizarrely titled *A Factotum in the Book Trade* last year. I have no other forum to address it, so here goes, but I will try to restrain myself. Much of it consists of a sustained attack on our firm, my father in particular, our family (including our dog) and even his memorial service. Previously confining himself to poetry, travel writing and essays, Marius chose to add to what is surely by now an over-populated genre, the 'biblio-memoir'. He seems to have hated every minute of his career in the book trade. One of our customers entirely coincidentally mentioned, around the time of publication, that resentment seemed to be Marius' default air whenever he had

visited our shop and his book seethes with it towards and/or contempt for just about everyone he encountered. Were my father alive, I am sure he would have sought legal advice. Other employers do not fare much better and colleagues and customers are described with equally pointed brutality – collectors are portrayed as a “human subspecies ... mostly to be avoided or else kept at a prophylactic distance” – and Marius has an unbecoming habit of honing in with some cruelty on people’s unavoidable physical characteristics and mannerisms. We have exchanged some brief but barbed correspondence about it all and one revision has been made for later editions as a result of one of my objections, but it all seems really just rather sad and unnecessary, hurtful to so many, woefully ill-informed and mistaken much of the time (he originally even got the name of Richard Budd, another former employee, whom he knew for some considerable time, wrong, claiming that ‘Billy Budd’ was his real name rather than a soubriquet), and betraying a paucity of understanding of how the trade or indeed business, or numbers or money work. Certainly his colleagues that I know well did not regard him as having been an accomplished bookseller. Ah well.

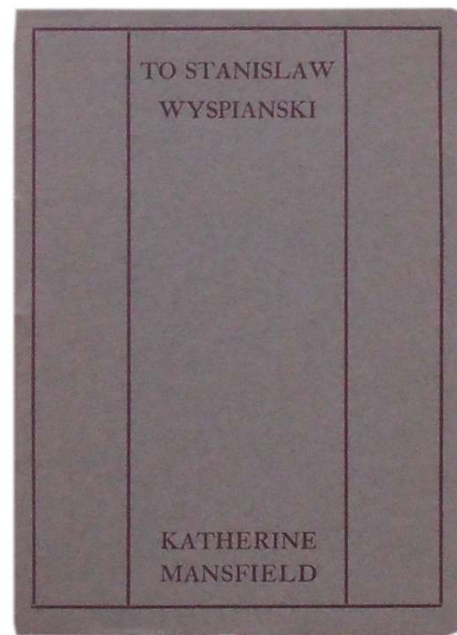
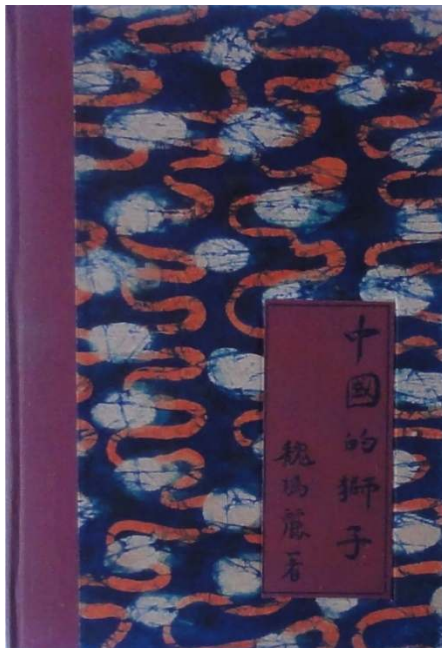
Much *more* happily, I was recently given a copy of *Aiding & Abetting, An Alphabet for Aids*, gorgeously illustrated, printed and published at the Libanus Press (and therefore, of course, exquisitely printed by the seriously talented Michael Mitchell) in 1991, compiled by John Byrne, who oversaw our private press department for many years.

Finally, I feel unable not to mention my own authorial and book design effort (yes, another writer *manqué*), *Animal Trust*, published in 2020 for the benefit of the animal rescue centre where I had been for some years volunteering at the time. I am sorry if you have already been bombarded with my sales efforts, but I venture to mention that there are remarks about the trade (not, I must admit, entirely kind but not, I hope, brutal) and passages about authors and other luminaries of the past who have written or spoken out for animal rights and animal welfare, some of whom some might find surprising. It has been well reviewed, even in the national press. And yes, copies are still available (£20 plus p&cp direct from us). Beware that there are the seeds of another, probably rather similar book running (?) around inside my head.

I hope to be writing about the firm's history of dealing with archives next, but it is such a huge and not uncomplicated subject that it may spread over several months...

Julian Rota

1. Croft-Cooke, Rupert. *The Viking*. London: privately printed for Bertram Rota, 1926. Limited edition of 150 copies
2. Armstrong, Terence Ian Fytton. *The Personal Library of John Gawsworth*. Bertram Rota, 1933. Limited edition of 7 copies



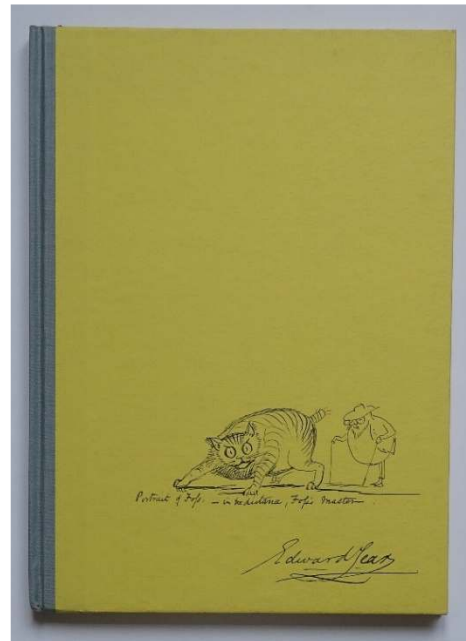
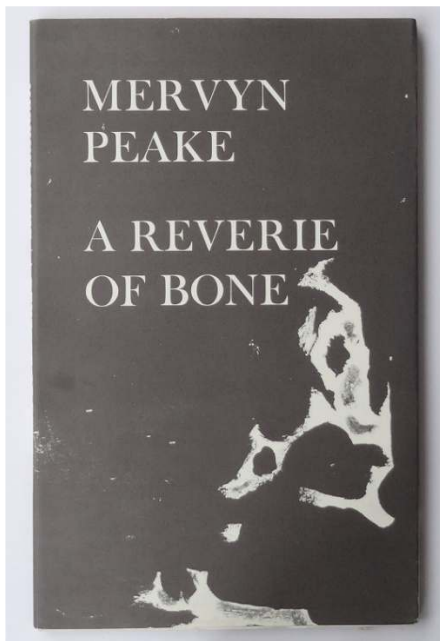
3. Webb, Mary. *The Chinese Lion*. Bertram Rota, 1937 †
4. Mansfield, Katherine. *To Stanislaw Wyspianski*. London, privately printed for Bertram Rota by the Favil Press, 1938. Limited edition of 100 copies †
5. *Fellow Citizens, Bonaparte threatens to invade us ...* Bertram Rota, [1940]
6. Rota, Bertram. *New York Episode etc.* London, Bertram Rota, [1954]. Privately printed

7. **Toole, Raymond.** *The Writings of William Somerset Maugham.* A bibliography. London, Bertram Rota, 1956
8. **Rota, Bertram.** *The Printed Work of Arthur Rackham.* A check-list, etc. London, Bodley House, Bertram Rota, [1960]
9. **Rist, John.** *Depositio Cornuti Typographici. A mirthful play performed at the confirmation of a journeyman.* London, Maximilian Editions; Bertram Rota, 1962
10. **Rota, Bertram.** *A Checklist of Jocelyn Brooke.* His writings together with some appreciations. London, Bertram Rota, [1963]
11. **Brooke, Jocelyn.** *The Birth of a Legend: a reminiscence of Arthur Machen and John Ireland.* London, Bertram Rota, 1964
12. **Lindley, Joyce.** *Urns and Angels: an anthology of epitaphs and engravings.* London, Bertram Rota, 1965



13. **Cox, Morris.** *An impression of Winter: a landscape panorama; An impression of Spring: a landscape panorama; An impression of Summer: a landscape panorama; An impression of Autumn: a landscape panorama.* Gogmagog Press. Distributed by Bertram Rota Ltd, 1965-1966 †
14. **Graves, Robert.** *Seventeen Poems missing from Love Respelt.* London, Bertram Rota, 1966 †
15. **Cox, Morris.** *14 Triads.* Gogmagog Press, distributed by Bertram Rota, 1967

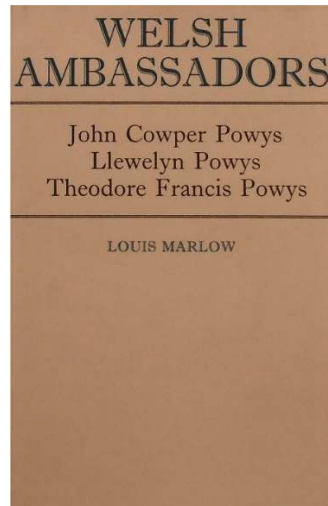
16. Mason, Stuart. *Bibliography of Oscar Wilde*; introduced by Timothy D'Arch Smith. London, Bertram Rota, 1967



17. Peake, Mervyn. *A Reverie of Bone and other poems*. Drawings by the author. London, Bertram Rota, 1967 †
18. Lindley, Kenneth Arthur. *Black Riding*. London, Bertram Rota, 1968
19. Cox, Morris. *The Warrior & the Maiden*; [designed, printed and bound by] Morris Cox [with 10 original intaglio engravings]. Gogmagog Press, distributed by Bertram Rota 1967 [1968]
20. Lear, Edward. *Rhymes of Nonsense: an alphabet*. With an introduction by Philip Hofer. London, Bertram Rota, [1968] †
21. Graves, Robert. *Beyond Giving: poems*. London, Stellar Press, distributed by Bertram Rota, 1969 †
22. Lubbock, J.G. *Aspects of Art & Science: prints and text*. London, Bertram Rota, 1969
23. Hopkins, Kenneth. *American Poems, and others*. London, Bertram Rota, 1970
24. Lindley, Kenneth Arthur. *Nostalgia*. London, Bertram Rota, 1970
25. Graves, Robert. *The Green-sailed Vessel: poems*. London, Bertram Rota, 1971 †

26. Lawrence, T.E. *Minorities*. Edited by J.M. Wilson. London, Bertram Rota & Jonathan Cape, 1971

27. Lubbock, J.G. *Reflections from the Sea*. London, Bertram Rota [1971]

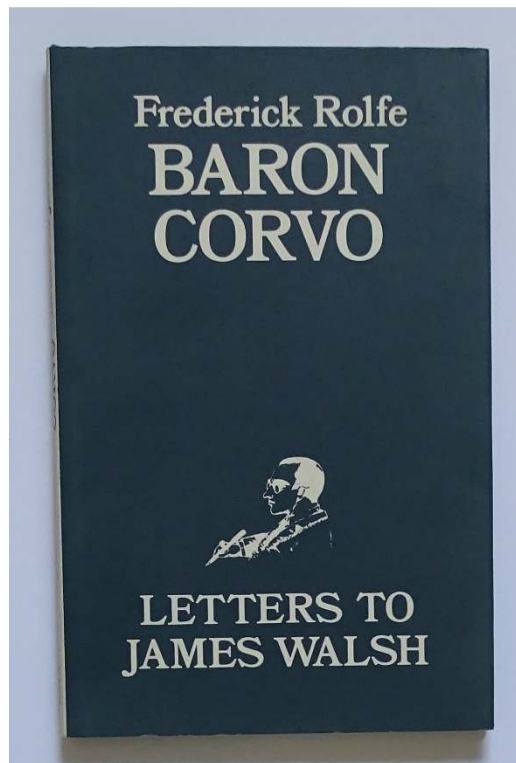


28. Marlow, Louis. *Welsh Ambassadors: Powys lives and letters*. London, Bertram Rota, 1971 †

29. Powys, John Cowper. *Letters to Nicholas Ross ...* edited by Arthur Uphill. London, Bertram Rota, 1971 †

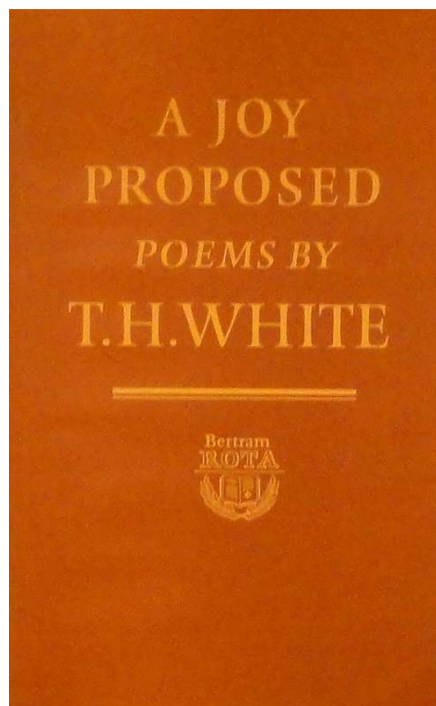


30. Shaw, Bernard. *Passion Play: a dramatic fragment*. London, Bertram Rota, 1971 †



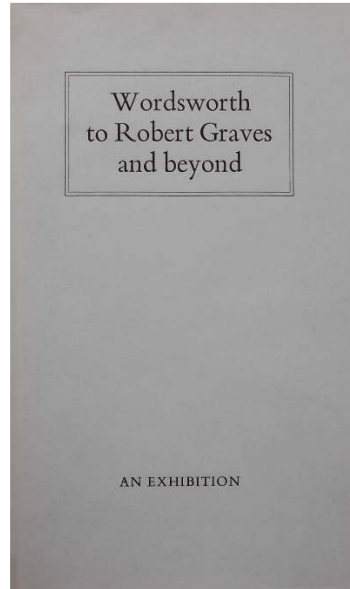
31. Rolfe, Frederick. *Letters to James Walsh; introduction and notes by Donald Weeks*. London, Bertram Rota, 1972 †
32. Burnett, David. *Shimbara; words by David Burnett, with images by Kenneth Lindley*. Pointing Finger Press, distributed by Bertram Rota, 1972
33. Graves, Robert. *Timeless Meeting: poems*. London, Bertram Rota, 1973 †
34. Patten, Brian. *The Unreliable Nightingale*. London, Bertram Rota, 1973 †
35. Lubbock, J.G. *Light and the Mind's Eye*. Original prints & text. London, Bertram Rota, 1974
36. Graves, Robert. *At the Gate: poems*. London, Bertram Rota, 1974 †
37. Parker, Derek (editor). *Sacheverell Sitwell: a symposium*. London, Bertram Rota, 1975
38. Cox, Morris. *Intimidations of Mortality: poems on Victorian themes with psychological implications*. London, Gogmagog Private Press distributed by Bertram Rota, 1977
39. Edwards, Thomas. *Gangraena*. London, Bertram Rota 1977
40. Lindley, Kenneth Arthur. *Hereforshire late autumn*. [Pointing Finger Press] [London, Bertram Rota, 1977]

41. Lubbock, J.G. *Perceptions of the Earth/original prints and text*. London, Bertram Rota, 1977
42. Cox, Morris. *Blind Drawings: examples of an exercise investigating the objective-subjective principle of graphic art*. London: Gogmagog Private Press. Distributed by Bertram Rota, 1978
43. Haberly, Loyd. *An American Bookbuilder in England and Wales: reminiscences of the Seven Acres and Gregynog Presses*. London, Bertram Rota, 1979. Limited edition of 300 copies.
44. Hagstrom, J.C and Bixby, G (compiler). *Thom Gunn: a bibliography 1940-1978*. London, Bertram Rota, 1979
45. Lindley, Kenneth Arthur. *A Hereford Window*. London, Bertram Rota, 1979
46. Lindley, Kenneth Arthur. *Seamarks*. London, Bertram Rota, [1979]
47. Lubbock, J.G. *From Garden to Galaxy/original prints and text*. London, Bertram Rota, c.1980
Limited edition of 80 copies
48. Cox, Morris. *Studio Book: 50 original colour prints*. London, Gogmagog Private Press distributed by Bertram Rota, c. 1980. Ltd edition of 35 numbered and signed copies

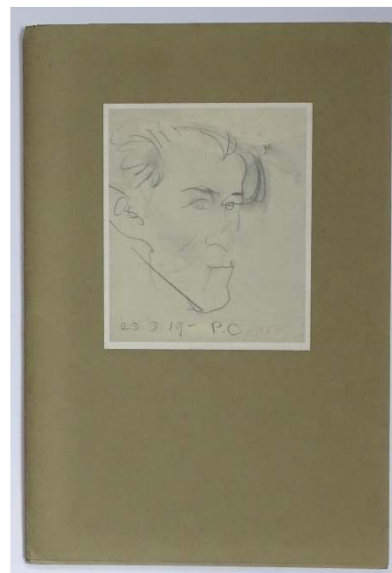


49. White, T.H. *A Joy Proposed: poems by T.H. White; with an introduction and afterword & notes by Kurth Sprague*. London, Bertram Rota, 1980 †

50. **Cutts, Simon.** *Pianostool Footnotes*. [Highlands, N.C.] Jargon Society. [London, distributed by Bertram Rota] 1982. Limited edition of 1000 copies
51. **Lubbock, J.G.** *The Sphere of Rocks and Water: original text and prints*, London, Bertram Rota, 1983

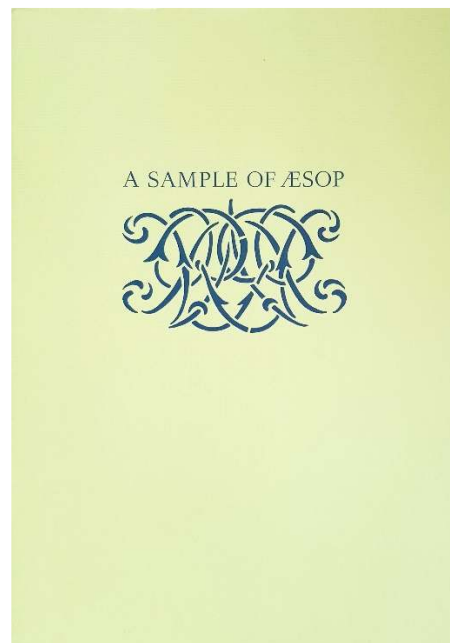
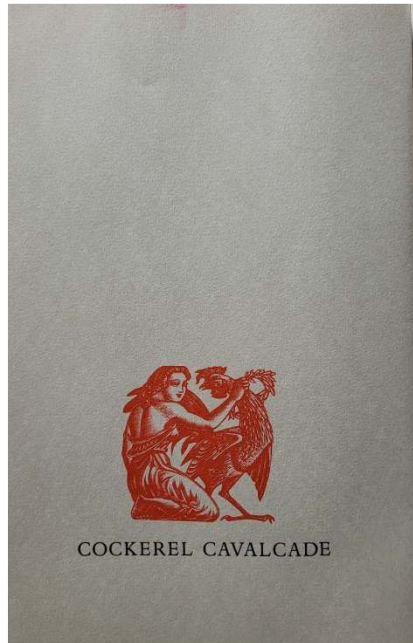


52. **Nowell-Smith, Simon.** *Wordsworth to Robert Graves and beyond: presentation and association copies from the collection of Simon Nowell Smith : an exhibition, Bodleian Library, November 1983 to January 1984.* London, Bertram Rota, 1983 †



53. **Walpole, Hugh.** *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: T.E. Lawrence in life and death*. London, Bertram Rota, 1985 †

54. Bunting, Basil. *The Pious Cat = Obaid-e zakani*. London, Bertram Rota, 1986 †
55. Lubbock, J.G. *From the Snows to the Seas: original prints and text*. London, Bertram Rota, 1986.
56. Barker, Nicholas. *The Butterfly Books: an enquiry into the nature of certain twentieth century pamphlets*. London, Bertram Rota, 198



57. Wright, John Buckland. *Cockerel Cavalcade: John Buckland Wright's devices engraved in wood, 1938-1945*. London, Bertram Rota, 1988 †
58. Lubbock, J.G. *Love for the Earth/ original prints and text*. London, Bertram Rota, c.1990
59. Hockney, David and Spender, Stephen. *Hockney's Alphabet*. London, Faber & Faber, Bertram Rota, 1991
60. Whistler, Helen. *A Sample of Aesop*, illustrations by Rex Whistler. London, Bertram Rota, 1993 †
61. Lubbock, J.G. *Landscapes of the Spirit*. London, Bertram Rota, c.1994. Limited edition of 65 copies
62. Lubbock, J.G. *Loves, Lands and Waters: original hand-coloured prints and text*. London Bertram Rota, 2000
63. Anthony Rota [a Festschrift]. London, 2002

64. Lubbock, J.G. *The Realm of Nature Mine: original hand-coloured prints and text*. London, Bertram Rota, 2005

65. Lubbock, J. G. *Life Force: original hand-coloured prints and text*. London, Bertram Rota, 2009