

The Fanfrolico Press

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Among the various special collections of the Turnbull Library are a number of books published under the imprint of the Fanfrolico Press. Although these comprise only about a third of the total produced by the Press, they are broadly representative of its range and development not only in time, but also in geographic location and method of production. The following is a brief history of the Press and a discussion of its aims and achievements, with notes on these examples.¹

The Fanfrolico Press existed for only five years, from 1925 until 1930, and produced in this time 37 books. Although many were associated with the Press to a lesser or greater degree, Jack Lindsay was the only one who worked on it for the whole of this time, and his was the guiding hand throughout; it may fairly be said, in retrospect, to have been Jack Lindsay's Fanfrolico Press. Lindsay's partners were successively John Kirtley, Percy Stephensen and Brian Penton, and his brother Philip worked with him at the Press's beginnings, and towards its end. There were numerous illustrators (principally his father, Norman Lindsay), editors, businessmen, pressmen, friends and helpers of various kinds also associated with the Press. It spanned two continents, and progressed (or sank?) from a room above a butcher's shop in Kirribilli, Sydney, to offices in Bloomsbury Square, London, and finally to a cellar in Hampstead. The books were at first, and at last, set and printed by hand; but for most, during the heyday of the Press, the actual printing was carried out by commercial firms.

Both Lindsay and Kirtley began experimenting with printing independently, before they met. Lindsay had 'picked up a broken-down Albion sort of printing-press'² and describes how he and Philip very slowly and inexpertly produced on it *The Pleasant Conceited Narrative of Panurge's Fantastic Ally* [sic] *Brocaded Codpiece* (1924). (Stephensen, although an old Queensland acquaintance of Lindsay's, was by this time in Oxford, and neither Lindsay, Kirtley nor Stephensen himself mentions his being involved in any way with the Press in Australia.) Meanwhile both Lindsays had met Kirtley and begun helping him on his own more substantial Chandler and Price bench-platen, from which several items were

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