

Werner and His Empire: The Rise and Fall of a Gilded Age Printer

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Introduction

The Gilded Age was a time of great prosperity for those who reached the top of their industry or trade, and a time of great strife for others who were less successful. In Akron, it was an era when the rubber industries were just gaining importance and other businesses, such as farm implements, grain, and printing, were dominant. Laborers, workers, and business owners reached for the top of the economic and social ladder, some more successfully than others. Paul E. Werner is an example of a late nineteenth century businessman who built a large printing business, employed local workers, and contributed to the financial well-being of his local community. For more than thirty years, printing presses hummed with the countless books that were manufactured and shipped from his factory. Yet his financial success did not last past the closing of his plant and his national business. Now, he is a forgotten man, one whose life and importance has faded from memory, and, most sadly, in Akron.

The pages that follow trace the life and accomplishments of Paul E. Werner and his printing empire. While he left no diaries or letters, his life can be reconstructed from public documents and primary sources. His actions and

accomplishments shed life on a time in Akron when rubber was not king. Werner's printing company was important for the economic well-being of Akron, employing many skilled artisans and laborers.¹ His philanthropy supported civic organizations, public functions, and charitable organizations. Werner is an example of a local business owner who contributed substantially to their local communities, yet have faded from public memory.

In Akron today all that is left of Paul E. Werner's enormous printing plant is the Werner Castle at the corner of Union and Perkins, just northeast of downtown Akron. Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976, it is a landmark for many familiar with the city and the University of Akron area. The exterior resembles a castle with turrets, unfaced stones, and crenellations around the top. The name "Werner Company" is deeply carved into the stone lintel over the front door. The lobby, relatively untouched, is filled with glass-fronted offices, wrought iron lamp sconces, beautiful woodwork, and wainscoting. The

¹ Two important works on labor history are Daniel T. Rodgers, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America 1850-1920*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974, 1978) and Bruce Laurie, *Artisans into Workers: Labor in Nineteenth-Century America* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989). Rodgers examines how industrialization changed the way men and women work. Laurie studies labor movements and the change from artisans to unskilled workers. His discussion of labor unions provided a basis for understanding the printing labor unions discussed throughout this dissertation. Both Laurie and Rodgers provided background for understanding how and why laborers fought for better working conditions, shedding light on motivations for the 1894 labor union strike in Werner's printing plant. These studies were also useful for understanding how labor and work changed for workers and business owners in the Gilded Age.

lobby floor has a magnificent mosaic made of images and iconography denoting the printing trades: Athena's owl, a printing press *a la* Gutenberg, books, scrolls, and more. Across the street, where once large factory buildings and a water tower stood, two small sheds are all that remain of Werner's printing plant, destroyed in a 1976 fire. The records not consumed by the flames were damaged by water and subsequently thrown out. While the current owner of Werner's Castle is intrigued with the site's history, he knows little of Werner and his vast printing empire.²

Also gone is Werner's mansion, razed in 1957 after it decayed. His son, Edward P. Werner, built a three story Swiss chalet house on the corner of his father's estate.³ Now on the National Register of Historic Places, the house is no longer in the Werner family, but stands as a memorial to the industrial moguls of Akron.⁴ Finally, a huge mausoleum in Glendale Cemetery contains the remains of Werner and his family. The cemetery is the graveyard of once affluent Akronites, many of whom made and lost their fortunes in the Gilded Age.

Despite all the things Werner did for Akron and the printing industry, he is a forgotten man. As noted, he left few records and few monuments.

² The Werner Castle is now owned by Famous Enterprises in Akron.

³ Located at 258 W Market Street in Akron formally described as Tract 7 Lot Ely 18 S of Market, about one mile west of downtown.

⁴ Nomination for National Register of Historic Places OHI# SUM292 filed 2005. The property is located at 258 W. Market Street, Akron, OH.

Nevertheless small traces of his life are there to be found in the printing and public records of Akron. This is his story, one worth telling because Werner is an example of a late nineteenth century businessman who built a large business, employed local workers, and contributed to financial well-being of the local community.

Paul E. Werner epitomizes of the Gilded Age immigrant who achieved the American dream, "the ideal that every citizen of the United States should have an equal opportunity to achieve success and prosperity through hard work, determination, and initiative."⁵ Werner, an immigrant from Germany, came to America and had to learn English. He worked for others, then with others, and finally for himself employing others. This was the American Dream, according to Jocelyn Wills; to be the owner not a wage earner but "to achieve [social and economic] mobility through entrepreneurship, land ownership, or the emerging professions associated with the rise of big business."⁶ Werner climbed the social and economic ladder in Akron. He acquired and built businesses, keeping the profitable parts, selling off or delegating the rest. He put himself into the upper middle and then the upper class through his business endeavors and his civic

⁵ "American Dream, n." OED Online, September 2011, Oxford University Press.

⁶ Jocelyn Wills, "Respectable Mediocrity: The Everyday Life of an Ordinary American Striver, 1876-1890" *Journal of Social History* 37 No. 2 (Winter 2003): 323-324.

involvement in Akron, a small town of about ten thousand in 1870.⁷ As Werner became a successful businessman, his influence and importance increased right along with the ever growing city of Akron.⁸ Even in the beginning of his career in Akron, he was involved in civic organizations and made his mark on the social and economic life of his adopted city.

Werner involved himself in his community as a civic leader and as a local philanthropist. He served on the boards of the library, public schools and city hospital.⁹ In 1882, he also founded the local German Militia for young men who had served in Germany's army. According to Edward Harter, "the company took very prominent parts in all patriotic demonstrations and parades."¹⁰ A local supporter and financier of several large building projects including the German Music Hall, Werner followed the Gilded Age ideal of social involvement and self-improvement. In terms of philanthropy, Werner upheld some of the tenets of Andrew Carnegie's *Gospel of Wealth*, by supporting civic organizations and

⁷ "Population of Incorporated Places of 10,000 or More From Earliest Census to 1960," *Ohio Almanac* (Lorain, OH: The Lorain Journal Company, 1967): 122.

⁸ Akron grew from a city of 3,477 in 1860 to 10,006 in 1870 to 16,512 in 1880. By 1910 there were 69,067 people residing in the city. "Population of Incorporated Places of 10,000 or More from Earliest Census to 1960," *Ohio Almanac*, 122.

⁹ Board of Education members are listed in *Sunday Gazette* (Feb 16, 1879):p 3. City hospital articles were signed by Thomas W. Cornell, O.C. Barber, P.E. Werner and others. Werner served as on the committee to organize the hospital and, after Cornell's death in 1892, as president of the board of trustees, according to Karl H. Grismer, *Akron and Summit County* (Akron, OH: Summit County Historical Society, 1952):606-607.

¹⁰ Edward S. Harter, *Paul E. Werner: in Honor of his 80th Birthday* (Akron, OH: The Akron Beacon Journal, 1930): 17.

financing several large projects, including the construction of the German Music Hall, which supposedly drained his finances.¹¹ Throughout the 1890s and early 1900s, Werner sponsored and supported Akron's many local festivals, parades, and fireworks. Thus Werner can be categorized as a local philanthropist who contributed his wealth to support the financial and civic well-being of Gilded Age Akron. Even when his printing empire spread across the country, Werner continued to focus his philanthropic energies into local projects that benefited his adopted home town.

Arriving in America with little, he worked hard, hustled and schemed, and gained economically, socially, and, in a local sense, politically. Despite the economic ups and downs, he was successful until 1914, when his business collapsed. Paul E. Werner took advantage of the opportunity to edit and publish three different newspapers between 1875 and 1880, working with at least three different Akron businessmen. During these years, he purchased the newspapers with equipment and staff, bringing in editors and publishers to do the daily work.¹² In turn, Werner focused his attention on the printing side of the business which remained the core of his professional life.¹³

¹¹ Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth" *North American Review* 148 Issue 391 (June 1889): 657, and Edward S. Harter 19.

¹² Alfred Chandler and Oliver Zunz both study management styles for big corporations in the Gilded Age. Where Chandler focuses on management and organizational structure in large national corporations, Zunz examines the relationship between managers and workers and

Through his business ventures Werner promoted and exemplified self-education, a trend of the era. His various printing ventures included the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, *Self-Culture Magazine*, and Home University League, Werner School books, and even the Werner Library with selections of world literature. All these publications represented an effort to bring culture to the masses. Education was the way to get ahead in the Gilded Age.¹⁴ Success and self-worth were also important for the self-made man.¹⁵ And how did one become a 'self-made man' but by providing an education for oneself. Combining self-education with the drive to succeed drew subscribers to Werner's *Encyclopædia Britannica*, *Self-Culture Magazine*, and Home University League.

management hierarchies in smaller businesses and corporations. While both look at management within large corporations, Zunz is interested in middle management. Glenn Porter's synthetic analysis of the rise of big business provides ample background to understand the rise of trusts, corporations, and conglomerates. It was important to look at Zunz and Chandler when trying to understand Werner, because he was an employee, manager, and then business owner as he progressed through his business career. Porter's work, like Chandler's, focuses on businesses far larger than Werner's while discussing changes in managerial infrastructure. Alfred D. Chandler, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1977); Olivier Zunz, *Making America Corporate 1870-1920* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1990); and Glenn Porter, *The Rise of Big Business 1860-1920*. 2nd ed. (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1992).

¹³ Clues to the various short-term business partnerships were found in city directories, county tax records, and R.G. Dun Credit Reports. These sources were invaluable for reconstructing the Akron's business community, especially between the census decades and especially between 1880 and 1900, where there are no census population schedules.

¹⁴ Wills, "Respectable Mediocrity", 324.

¹⁵ Scott A. Sandage, *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2005): 4.

School books were a natural addition to this combination of self-education materials. Historian Daniel Rodgers describes the late nineteenth century as one of economic ambition.¹⁶ Not every worker was successful in the attempt to change social class as Jocelyn Wills and Scott Sandage so ably demonstrate. Indeed there seemed to be no stigma in failure to succeed as long as one made the attempt.¹⁷ “Low ambition offends Americans even more than low achievement.”¹⁸ Paul E. Werner is an excellent example of the success story, weathering changes in financial solvency several times over the life of his printing company. These cycles of success and failure forced Paul E. Werner to gather together his energy and funds to reorganize his business enterprise and strive to succeed yet again.

The Gilded Age, which stretched from the 1870s through the turn of the century, was a time of labor unrest and economic upheaval. Labor unions organized, especially in the printing trades, negotiating for better wages and shorter work weeks.¹⁹ Better working conditions became the norm in most

¹⁶ Daniel T. Rodgers, “Tradition, Modernity, and the American Industrial Worker: Reflections and Critique” *Journal of interdisciplinary History* 7 No. 4 (Spring 1977): 668.

¹⁷ Sandage, *Born Losers*, 4.

¹⁸ Sandage, *Born Losers*, 2.

¹⁹ Labor unions are discussed extensively in Daniel T. Rodgers, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America 1850-1920*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974, 1978). Elizabeth Faulkner Baker, *Printers and Technology: A History of the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1957) writes specifically about printing labor

factories and businesses, including the Werner Company, after many years of struggle. Four financial panics brought with them tighter credit and failed businesses.²⁰ Nevertheless, Werner's business weathered these periods of economic upheaval, expanding its reach and products.

Successful businessmen were often first generation immigrants who become very successful and influential in their communities, working their way from employee to owner, saving and investing locally. Studies of local communities that focus on local businessmen find the men, while often poorly documented, were very successful in their own communities.²¹ An equal number of businessmen were new immigrants as newly arrived in a community. During the Gilded Age, many people moved from the east to the west, becoming successful and influential businessmen in their new communities. This study is important because it not only reconstructs the life of a newly arrived immigrant

unions providing insight into changes in working conditions between 1880 and 1911, particularly as it pertained to the Werner Company (see especially pages 95-110).

²⁰ Charles P. Kindleberger, *Manias, Panics, and Crashes: A History of Financial Crises*, 4th ed. (NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1978, 2000): 13; and Robert F. Bruner and Sean D. Carr, *The Panic of 1907: Lessons Learned from the Market's Perfect Storm* (NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2007): 2-4, fn pg3 * comments about thirteen banking panics between 1814 and 1907 triggered by banking firms and industry failures.

²¹. In *Boosters, Hustlers, and Speculators* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005), Jocelyn Wills mines public records and newspapers to recreate the lives of local businessmen in the twin cities. William Cronon in *Nature's Metropolis* (New York: WW Norton & Company, 1991) uses local and credit records to study the repercussions of bankruptcy on communities and businesses in the Midwest.

but shows how he competed with and against other successful businessmen in his adopted home town.

Local businessmen were essential for the financial and social success of small and large cities in Gilded Age America. Many controlled the entire business enterprise from raw product and production to transportation and distribution of finished goods and services.²² Skilled workers in Werner's manufactory performed all the necessary tasks to produce books, from composition to binding. Orders from across the country were filled in the Akron factory. When Werner merged his company with several others based in Chicago, he broadened his market and product line. The same was true when Werner acquired school book companies from Chicago, St. Louis, and even Philadelphia, expanding the reach of his market and bolstering the bottom line. Despite the national reach of his company's product, Werner limited his philanthropy to local civic matters in Akron.

When we compare Paul E. Werner to other local businessmen in Akron, we find that they began by owning small businesses and employing their children and family. Many started from scratch and against all odds were successful, influencing politics, economics, and civic organizations within their communities. Werner's career followed this same pattern, he contributed to civic organizations

²² These businesses are discussed at length in William Cronon *Nature's Metropolis* (New York: WW Norton & Company, 1991).

and served on boards, yet he established no charitable foundations in his name. His largesse extended to the community where he sponsored parades and celebrations and invested in the city hospital.²³ "Honest dealings and hard work could earn failure" as easily as success."²⁴ In the end, his business was embroiled in a series of legal troubles that drained the coffers, bringing about the company's downfall.

Documenting the rise and fall of the Werner Company was a challenge, for no business correspondence or records remain. Public records were essential for putting the puzzle together that would shed light on the business and the man. Various archives and repositories held clues and records that could be used to document event in this forgotten man's life. Genealogy and local history materials filled in the gaps providing an historical and social context for understanding life in Gilded Age Akron.

Since Werner did not write articles except for editorials and no business letters or records remain, it is difficult if not impossible to know what he was thinking, to delve into his psyche. I can make broad assumptions about his personality and priorities from reports in newspapers and magazines, from union minutes, and court records. He invested in the printing technologies of his time,

²³ In 1892, the City Hospital Association was founded to treat and care for the citizens of Akron. Board members and donors included Thomas W. Cornell, O.C. Barber, George W. Crouse, and PE Werner. Karl H. Grismer, 272-273, 606-607.

²⁴ Sandage, *Born Losers*, 15.

purchased equipment to mechanize his factory and increased productivity.²⁵ To compete and survive, one had to continuously invest in one's own business.²⁶ He marketed his products across the country, and the world. Books, magazines, and *Encyclopædia Britannica* supplemental materials all fed into his income stream and increased his wealth and buying power.

Little by little, he expanded his empire. He took risks the same as other businessmen did. He acquired, conglomerated, and then spun off ventures that were not cost effective, part of the mission, or lost money. From evidence collected, Werner split off those parts of the business that were not directly involved with straight printing. He hired an editor so he could print the *Sunday Gazette* and the *Germania*. He hired an editor and publisher for his book lines, Arthur J. Saalfield, so he could focus on the business of printing. He did not give up control rather he gave up leadership, day-to-day work, and some of the daily risk. Werner's was a typical management style, as Alfred Chandler shows in his study of the changes in management in the Gilded Age.²⁷ Werner interacted with the larger clients and his peers. He delegated management and contact with the

²⁵ William Henry Perrin, *History of Summit County, with an Outline Sketch of Ohio* (Illustrated. Chicago: Baskin & Battey, Historical Publishers, 1881, Reproduced by Unigraphic Inc, Evansville, IN, 1972):286-287; and Grismer, 293-4.

²⁶ Sandage, *Born Losers*, 15-16.

²⁷ Chandler, 415-416.

smaller clients, especially when it came to the publishing side of his printing business.

Perhaps I've romanticized Paul E. Werner and his role in Akron. The Gilded Age industrialists were successful, gaining riches and investing them in their companies. These attributes make good to great businessmen. They are just some of the qualities needed to achieve the American dream and ideal of success. Werner fits into this mold to an extent. He had the drive, gumption, success, and ruthlessness, along with concern about his community. Donald Sheehan's history of Gilded Age publishing states that even successful publishers made thousands, not millions, in their enterprises.²⁸ When he fell and picked himself up, sometimes he was successful at rebuilding the stronger company, and in the end, he was not. Werner built his company so it was diversified, printing many different types of materials for diverse clients. Diversification helps any business weather the ups and downs of financial markets and business cycles. Nancy Cook writes that businesses sought "to control a range of media . . . or all stages of a product's development and distribution."²⁹

²⁸ Donald Sheehan, *This Was Publishing: A Chronicle of the Book Trade in the Gilded Age* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1952): 4.

²⁹ Nancy Cook, "Reshaping Publishing and Authorship in the Gilded Age." Ch. 9 in *Perspectives on American Book History: Artifacts and Commentary*. Edited by Scott E. Casper, Joanne D. Chaison, and Jeffrey D. Groves. (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press in association with the American Antiquarian Society and the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress, 2002): 246.

The Werner Company in its many manifestations owned a few newspapers in the beginning and none in the end. Overall, it edited, published, and printed books, books, and more books, with a few magazines thrown in. At first glance, that was not a diversified business but one focused in a single industry that became more and more competitive over the years. As Werner aged and his business expanded, he gave up control of the various schemes revolving around books and focused his energies upon the printing plant, union strikes, labor issues, and then the all-consuming, all-threatening law suits from Encyclopædia Britannica Company.

One can speculate that Paul E. Werner's greatest downfall was not the lack of diversification, but his fight against copyright and loss of financial solvency. He reprinted what was successful, built a small empire upon that success while exploiting the Encyclopædia Britannica for all he was worth, and, in the end, through a series of legal battles, the printing empire fell.

This dissertation, drawing on a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, explores how Werner and his printing company fit within Gilded Age Akron and the United States. Chapter one examines the puzzle pieces needed to

reconstruct the history of this largely undocumented local industrialist and his printing company. The chapters that follow discuss the sources needed to compile a history of a company with few records, the economic conditions of Gilded Age Akron, the printing industry, and the types of publications that Werner's printing empire produced.

Chapter two examines how Werner and the Werner Company fit into Akron socially and economically. Within a decade of arriving in Akron, he was already involved in civic activities and eventually became a local industrialist who contributed his money locally. While Werner was successful, his company also struggled to survive and flourish during an era of economic unrest, dramatic changes in the publishing industry, and rapid industrialization.

The third chapter, "Building and Empire," examines how Werner built his printing empire. National economic upheavals affected him and his company while providing opportunities to reinvest his profits into equipment and land. Labor unrest in Akron played a significant role in the success and failure of his printing business, causing fluctuations in the quality of the finished product. Werner provided work to Akronites as did many other local businessmen in late nineteenth century northeast Ohio. According to Harter, "thousands of people were continually employed, two shifts were being operated most of the time . . .

In fact, the City of Akron largely depended upon The Werner Company for its principal material support."³⁰

Donald Sheehan notes that, as a rule, publishers' businesses were volatile and the profit margins slim.³¹ While Werner's business was quite successful overall, there are years of loss and financial instability. Sheehan's generalization about printing companies and their overall financial success can be seen in the life of this printing empire.

Chapter four describes changes in equipment and necessary skills in the printing industry. Rapid industrialization of the printing process resulted in dramatic changes in types of skills and numbers of required laborers, all of which affected the productivity of Werner's printing empire.

The fifth chapter explores the wide range of publications and printed materials produced by the laborers of the manufactory. The Werner Company printed everything from encyclopaedia to school books, competing for large market shares around the country.

As the Werner Company struggled to remain solvent, it disappeared from national prominence. Over the decades, this powerful businessman and vast

³⁰ Harter, 9.

³¹ Sheehan, *This Was Publishing*, 4-5, 201.

manufactory slowly faded from local memory until all that remains is a castle off a side street outside downtown Akron.

Despite his contributions to the economic well-being of Akron, Werner is an unknown industrialist today. Even in retrospective articles about the city, Werner and Saalfield, his successor in the printing business, barely reach the surface, completely overshadowed by the rubber industry.³² This work will be a contribution to the local history of Akron putting Paul E. Werner and the Werner Company in the forefront of nineteenth century Ohio.

³² Mark J. Price, "No Longer in Print: Grand Castle is Towering Reminder of Paul E. Werner's Vanquished Publishing Empire in Akron" *Akron Beacon Journal* (Sept 5, 2005): E1 recounts the often mis-remembered history and significance of the Werner Castle.

Chapter 1

On the Trail of Werner's Empire

Documenting the history of an undocumented prominent Gilded Age entrepreneur and his company was a challenge. The lack of business and corporate records meant reconstructing the business from primary sources, including public records and newspapers, and from a wide variety of secondary sources. Native Akronites and local historians know little of the Werner Company, which was described as one of the largest printing companies in the country.¹ Yet, when we think of studying the upper classes, we assume these influential individuals left letters and diaries documenting their personal and public lives. That was not the case with Paul Werner and his company, for what records might have existed burned in a fire in the 1970s. To uncover the facts and events of his life, I had to use the methodology for the study of "history from the bottom up" to reconstruct the company and its upper class founder. A mixture of primary and secondary sources provides the core of the documentation for this

¹ Charles Thorpe, "Printing Plant of the Werner Co., Akron Ohio," *American Pressman* VI No. 1 (Dec 1895): 12.

dissertation. This chapter explores the various sources that were examined in the pursuit of the life and accomplishments of Paul E. Werner.

To uncover the pieces of Werner's life, I began with printed biographical sketches, which all included the same basic information but little else.² Verifying each fact was the challenge that led from archives to libraries in Summit County and beyond. Secondary sources provided an historical background for understanding Akron and businesses in the Gilded Age. They served as a guide for seeking bits of information to reconstruct Werner's life. The footnotes were starting points and suggestions of sources that might hold clues for reconstructing this printing empire. Census, real estate, and tax records became the skeleton or backbone of this study, newspapers, and journal articles fleshed out the details. Books printed by Werner Company were replete with colorful examples of the various publications produced by the skilled artisans and craftsmen. Each new snippet of information led to the next, slowly forming a history of Paul Werner and his company.

² Grismer, Perrin, and Lane compiled county histories as did the Akron *Beacon Journal*. The biographical sketches were almost the same. Harter's 80th birthday commemorative booklet provided more guidance in reconstructing Werner's life, although it reads like an undocumented or verified autobiography. William Henry Perrin, *History of Summit County, with an Outline Sketch of Ohio*. (Chicago: Baskin & Battey, Historical Publishers, 1881, Reproduced by Unigraphic Inc, Evansville, IN, 1972); Samuel Alanson Lane, *Fifty years and over of Akron and Summit County* (Barberton, OH: Barberton Historical Society, 1979); Karl H. Grismer, *Akron and Summit County* (Akron, Ohio: Summit County Historical Society, 1952); and Edward S. Harter, *Paul E. Werner: in Honor of his 80th Birthday* (Akron, OH: The Akron Beacon Journal, 1930).

Economic histories that used primary sources held clues as to where I could look for information to reconstruct Akron's business community in the Gilded Age and early Progressive era. First I had to read about national trends and local Akron history to be able to set Paul E. Werner and Werner Company into a national and local historical, economic, and social context.³ The various Summit county histories provided basic background as to the growth and development of the county and region. The earliest were compiled in the 1880s, the most recent in the 1950s. No sources were too small or amateur to be consulted as I sought references to Paul E. Werner and Werner Company.

Statistics abound but had to be sorted through and evaluated for their usefulness. General federal statistics are normally available from the Bureau of Labor or Commerce. Federal non-population censuses are either available in manuscript form such as the manufacturing censuses from 1870 and 1880 for Summit County, Ohio or in statistical form in the compiled reports beginning in

³ As described in Chapter 1, I used Rodgers and Laurie for labor history, Chandler and Zunz for corporate history, and Sandage and Wills to study small businessmen and white collar worker. Daniel T. Rodgers, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America 1850-1920*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974, 1978); Bruce Laurie, *Artisans into Workers: Labor in Nineteenth-Century America* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989.); Alfred D. Chandler, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business*. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1977); Olivier Zunz, *Making America Corporate 1870-1920* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1990); Jocelyn Wills, "Respectable Mediocrity: The Everyday Life of an Ordinary American Striver, 1876-1890." *Journal of Social History* 37 No. 2 (Winter 2003): 323-349; and Scott A. Sandage, *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2005).

1890 and from which the general federal statistics are derived. Population censuses for all the years Werner was alive included information about his residences, occupations, and net worth. There are statistics in various congressional reports, particularly those dealing with copyright and with labor in general. Carroll D. Wright's report to Congress about the impact or effect of international copyright on publishing and printing in 1900 was particularly insightful.⁴

Geography and the development of local businesses set Werner and his printing company in a regional context. These studies are just part of the puzzle for understanding how and why a great printing enterprise developed in the Midwest, far from natural shipping ports and transportation lines. While it might have been less expensive to start a business in Akron, Paul E. Werner's business takes advantage of those lower costs by keeping the manufactory in Akron even when he moved his corporate headquarters to Chicago in 1890.⁵

If I depended upon library catalogues and printed bibliographies to begin my search of the literature about Paul E. Werner, then I could prove that few

⁴ U. S. Bureau of Labor, "A Report on the Effect of International Copyright Law in the United States" S.doc. 87 56 Cong 2nd session (1900-1901) US Serial 4033 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1901).

⁵ There are two marketing pieces about The Werner Company published in 1895 and 1907 which provided descriptions of products and printing processes. Covert, John C. *The Werner Co.* (Chicago: The Werner Company, 1894); The Werner Company. *Twenty Years: 1887-1907* (Akron, OH: The Werner Company, 1907)

people wrote about Werner and his company, and even *Saalfield Publishing*, ever. G. Thomas Tanselle's *Guide to the Study of United States Imprints* lists one pamphlet about Werner Company written by Covert, where indeed there are two by that author.⁶ The paucity of publications is both good and bad news for deciding upon a dissertation topic: good news in that no one has written upon the topic, but bad in that there might not be any information to find. Taking the former perspective, I proceeded to dig.

Taking the small bits of information, I headed to the *Akron Beacon Journal* and the Akron Summit County Public Library. The *Akron Beacon Journal* archives had some obituaries and short articles about Paul E. Werner and the Werner Company. Since their archive really begins in the 1930s, the obituaries were the most useful. Werner died in 1931 in Akron, and at least two of his children and one brother still lived in the area. While at *Akron Beacon Journal*, I learned Edward Harter, the author of the commemorative booklet, was a prominent editor and part owner of the *Akron Beacon Journal*.⁷

The Akron Summit County Public Library also had several sets of vertical files so I mined them for clippings of Paul E. Werner, Werner Company, Saalfield

⁶ G. Thomas Tanselle, *Guide to the Study of United States Imprints*, 2 vol. (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1971): 746. (See footnote 5 above.)

⁷ Edward S. Harter, *Paul E. Werner: in Honor of his 80th Birthday* (Akron, OH: The Akron Beacon Journal, 1930).

Publishing, and anything else that had to do with the printing and publishing industry in Akron in the Gilded Age and the Early Progressive era. Slowly, I started to find information.

Paul E. Werner was an editor for several newspapers in Akron, so I looked at the newspapers. There were editorials, and mastheads with his name. The editorials were short, but the advertisements and the articles reflected Akron's society and culture in the 1870s and 1880s. Some of the ads featured Werner and showed that he tried any business venture that seemed viable. I asked more local librarians and archivists if they knew of Werner and his companies. Most said no. Few had even heard of Saalfield Publishing, so I was not too discouraged. Even native Akronites knew little of Saalfield Publishing.⁸

I had to determine that no one else had written about my subject, his company, or endeavors. Dissertation Abstracts International revealed that there was one dissertation that talked about the history of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and the various lawsuits.⁹ The dissertation listed Werner Company and its various subsidiaries. The author of that dissertation, Paul Kruse, wrote a spinoff

⁸ Viola Smith wrote her master's thesis on the Saalfield Publishing from 1899 to 1951 using company records and personal interviews. It shed little light on the Werner Company, except to explain how Arthur J. Saalfield came to work for the company. Viola A. Smith, *A History of the Saalfield Publishing Company*, Master's thesis, (Kent State University, Kent, OH 1951).

⁹ Paul Kruse, *The Story of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1768-1943* (unpublished PhD dissertation The University of Chicago, 1959.)

article in *Library Quarterly* about the lawsuits that referenced the Werner Company and the Saalfield Publishing several times and identified each law suit.¹⁰ While reading the article, I remembered that there was a history of the Encyclopædia Britannica by Kogan, which contained detailed information about the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, but almost nothing about Werner Company.¹¹ How odd. Was the Werner Company important or not? Why file so many lawsuits and yet not mention them in a full length treatment of the company? The answers to this question did not come for over a year when I stumbled upon an article while searching legal statutes, copyright and the Encyclopædia Britannica in HeinOnline, a legal database.¹²

On yet another search for manuscript or company records for the Werner Company, I searched the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland, Ohio, looking for articles and archives about the printing industry in Akron and early Cleveland. The archivist suggested Russell Duino's dissertation on Cleveland publishing and printing industry to 1900, and the *Annals of Cleveland*.¹³ Since

¹⁰ Paul Kruse, "Piracy and the Britannica: Unauthorized Reprintings of the Ninth Edition" *The Library Quarterly* 33 No.4 (Oct. 1963): 313-328.

¹¹ Herman Kogan, *The Great EB: The Story of the Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958.)

¹² HeinOnline <http://heinonline.org>

¹³ Russell Alfred Duino, *The Cleveland Book Trade, 1819-1912* unpublished PhD dissertation (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1981) and *Annals of Cleveland* (Cleveland,: Cleveland W.P.A. Project; distributed by the Cleveland Public Library, 1936-).

Kent State University had the Annals, I delved into Duino. His dissertation was simple and to the point, chronicling the history of printing in Cleveland, especially as it pertained to the Burrows Brothers. This dissertation provided a regional business and cultural context that covered the same geographical area and chronological period as Werner and his company.

Now to verify more of what Harter and the short published biographical sketches said. Thus began my hunt to uncover the life and times of Werner and his various eponymous companies. Because there was a lack of archival sources and written records, newspapers seemed to be the best source to learn about this businessman's life and that of his company. Articles that reported events with little analysis were considered primary sources and first hand reactions to events in Akron. Times of strife and tension provided the best glimpses of the man hidden from view.

Using a number of fee and free databases, I searched for newspaper articles about Paul E. Werner and his company, both in Chicago where he moved company headquarters in 1890, as well as Akron and the surrounding towns. After finding about thirty articles in Chicago papers, I focused on Akron and Northeast Ohio newspapers. There were numerous articles about his company, his family, and the printing and publishing industry, but few that provided facts about governance or financial aspects of the business. Google Books and HathiTrust Digital Library contain many books and journals whose texts are

searchable.¹⁴ These databases were used when I needed a specific journal article or book that was unavailable in Ohio. The bibliographic data delivered by the databases was problematic, so I only searched for specific journal or book titles. I did search Google Books and HathiTrust for specific examples of publications printed by Werner Company, and for journal articles that referenced his companies.

The basic business information recounted by Harter and others in their biographical sketches was confirmed. Census records from 1870 through 1930 held the next pieces of the puzzle. These records trace Werner throughout his life, follow family members, and establish facts concerning employment, place of origin, immigration date, and approximate worth. The census records provided addresses for residences in some years, and verified his location and employment when he left Akron. While the census records serve as a framework for understanding the major events and moves in Werner's life, they are silent between decades, and the gap from 1880 to 1900. This twenty year gap held the most important changes at the Werner's company and in his life. During this period the printing business took off, Werner moved the company headquarters to Chicago, survived labor strikes, and expanded sales operations across the

¹⁴ HathiTrust Digital Library <http://www.hathitrust.org/>

country and into several related ventures. Other records filled in those gaps and are discussed below.

Land records documented real estate transactions and indicated where Werner located his companies. Using land records we can trace Werner's real estate ventures as he acquired his first buildings downtown to when he purchased the newspaper, then a home, then the rest of the land for the sprawling Werner Company manufactory. Examining these records early in the research process was essential for locating the businesses and various ventures. A second trip provided insight into Paul E. Werner's financial solvency and a chance to follow up on other business ventures. It is difficult to follow the ownership of the properties by only searching under Werner Company or Paul E. Werner, especially when properties were sold under bankruptcy. One must search all the various transfers that put the manufactory properties back in Werner's hands. This time consuming step was necessary to understanding his business relationships with other businessmen in Akron. These records provided a geographical context for both the newspaper printing businesses and for the book manufactory. The records showed how the business grew. A search of the real estate records proved invaluable as records from the Cuyahoga County

Insolvency Court and bankruptcy court decrees were filed with deeds selling Werner's property.¹⁵

Newspaper accounts led to more information about Werner, his family, and his business. These accounts fleshed out his civic role in Akron. Events associated with his company, his family, and employees appeared in news articles in various papers in the region. Between 1870 and 1914, there were many newspapers in the city and region. Many newspapers in this era operated for extremely short periods. Fortunately Werner wrote for the *Sunday Gazette* and the Akron *Germania*. In both cases he edited and published the newspaper, then acquired them along with the printing operations. Werner's name shows up in the mastheads and the editorial columns of both papers so it was easy to track his involvement in the news business. The advertisements and the articles shed light on life in Akron in the late 1870s and the 1880s. When there was extra column space in the paper, Werner often advertised his own businesses including bookbinding, commercial job printing, and for a few months, sale of steam ship tickets. All these are examples of Werner's early ambitions and drive to succeed as a printer. He was willing to do almost anything to increase cash flow.

¹⁵ Summit County Ohio Recorder's Office D1848-375 Circuit Court of US Northern District of Ohio Eastern Division (referencing bankruptcy and insolvency) concerning cases from December 1911, filed September 5, 1940.

When we turn to reconstructing the lives of undocumented individuals, much work has been done on this subject by historians researching the lower, often illiterate, classes. Since Werner left no records, or at least none I could find, he fit into this category of undocumented individuals, regardless of the fact that he was a member of upper class Akron. Wills "Respectable Mediocrity" and Sandage *Born Losers* provided excellent examples of research based upon undocumented companies and individuals.

Historical, economic, and printing histories of Gilded Age America form the background and context for Werner's life and ambition. These secondary sources were important for understanding the world that Werner encountered when he arrived in America in 1867. Within this period of industrialization, he built a printing empire competing with his fellow Akronites and with national publishing houses. He climbed the social and economic ladder in his town, only to be forgotten a century later.

The pieces of Werner's life were found in many places, in a variety of sources and materials. The hunt for these sources and bits of information was not a straight line but a matter of following lots of leads to see what each offered. After analyzing each source, the search continued sometimes following the same trail, other times seeking new paths and types of information. The search for information is never complete. In this case, some puzzle pieces did not fit the framework of this dissertation and will become a future research

project. Finding the puzzle pieces of Werner's life was merely the first step on the trail for reconstructing his printing empire. The search began with an examination of the Saalfield Publishing Company, the successor to the Werner Company.

When asking for archival materials on Saalfield Publishing Company and other printing companies housed at the University of Akron Archives, I was confronted with a half-dozen boxes of books published by the company, and some scrapbooks. One scrapbook memorialized the death of a Paul Werner in 1931. There were obituaries, articles, and a short booklet written by Edward Harter, editor and publisher of the *Akron Beacon Journal*, commemorating Werner's eightieth birthday, and the party thrown by Seiberling in 1927.¹⁶ This commemorative booklet was key to understanding Werner. Harter depicted Paul E. Werner up as a mini-robber baron responsible for employing thousands of people in Akron during the depression of 1893-6. Within thirty or so pages the information was divided into two parts, company history, and biography. There were numerous pictures so I know what Werner and his family looked like. The University of Akron archives did not have any more information except some

¹⁶ Edward S. Harter, *Paul E. Werner: in Honor of his 80th Birthday* (Akron, OH: The Akron Beacon Journal, 1930).

references in a dissertation about theater in Akron, which discussed Werner's funding the construction of the *Deutsches* Music Hall.¹⁷

As I dug, I began to find bits and pieces of his life and career in the book printing industry. Let me first say, that Paul E. Werner was not a printer in the literal sense of the word, or at least I can find no evidence that shows he actually got his hands dirty in this profession, rather he was, at this time, an editor and publisher. He was an owner, who ran the printing shop, then factory, then a conglomerate with offices across the globe.

The archivists at the University of Akron knew little or nothing about Paul E. Werner, but the librarian in the Special Collections Department at the Akron Summit County Public Library, and a former archivist for the University of Akron, now at Kent State University knew of him.¹⁸

Harter said that Paul E. Werner was the secretary of the Akron Public Library board in the 1870s, so I asked for the minutes.¹⁹ There are many years worth of minutes, many with Werner's signature, and all in his handwriting. [See Fig.1] These records confirmed his civic involvement in Akron. The minutes

¹⁷ Kenneth L. Nichols, *In Order of Appearance: Akron's Theatres 1840-1940*, Master's thesis University of Akron, 1968).

¹⁸ Much thanks to Judy James, Head of Special Collections at Akron Summit County Public Library and Stephen Paschen, University Archivist at Kent State University.

¹⁹ Akron-Summit County Public Library Collection, Board of Trustees/minutes, also described as Akron Summit County Public Library, *Minutes 1877-1883*. Paul E. Werner Secretary, Manuscript materials.

included references to payments for book and newspaper purchases, in addition to printing services, some of which were provided by Werner's company.

I started keeping track of printing companies, publishers, binders, booksellers, newspapers and anything else that had to do with the printing industry in Akron. In the minutes, I learned of many of his business acquaintances and some of his ventures. These were small clues but important ones.

While at the Akron Summit County Public Library, I began to search their genealogical and local history materials. I also used a variety of genealogy databases to compile basic data about Werner and his family. A passenger list showing immigration from Gruibingen, Wurtemberg, Germany in 1867 verified when Werner arrived in the US. The declaration of intent and naturalization papers housed in Summit County (Akron), Ohio confirmed his date of arrival in the United States and his birth place.²⁰ In fact, Paul E. Werner and his brother Julius naturalized as soon as they were allowed by law.²¹ His brother Julius, baptized Georg Julius Wilhelm Werner, came to Akron with him, but later

²⁰ Summit County Ohio Probate Court Petition for Naturalization for Paul E. Werner dated 16 April 1872 and final papers for Naturalization dated 16 April 1872 p 63
<http://www.cpclerk.co.summit.oh.us/welcome.asp>

²¹ Summit County Ohio Probate Court Petition for Naturalization for Julius G.W. Werner dated 2 Sept 1876 and final papers for Naturalization dated 2 Sept 1876 p 46
<http://www.cpclerk.co.summit.oh.us/welcome.asp>

disappeared from the 1880 census, only to appear in Boston, having moved there between 1870 and 1880. A second brother Herman immigrated to America in 1879, and appears in Werner's household on the 1880 census. Herman Werner served eleven years in the United States Army in the Indian Wars and worked for Werner Company when he was not in the Army. Herman Werner naturalized in 1896, long after his stint in the Army and on the eve of the Spanish American War.²²

A quick search of the Ohio Historic Preservation Office records resulted in two files, the Werner Castle, at Union and Perkins, and Edward P. Werner's home.²³ Both these buildings were nominated for the National Trust for Historical Places. The nominations told me little, but the real estate was important. The files contain photographs of the Werner Castle in its glory standing in sharp contrast to two lowly warehouses and a slightly worn Castle. Although the manufacturing complex burned in a fire in the 1970s, it was possible to reconstruct the physical layout of the plant using Sanborn fire insurance maps and sketches from advertisements. The Edward P. Werner house was also an

²² Summit County Ohio Probate Court final papers for Naturalization for Herman Werner dated 12 March 1896 p 210 <http://www.cpclerk.co.summit.oh.us/welcome.asp>

²³ Ohio Historic Preservation Office – Historic Inventories and National Register Nominations, [Werner Company Building](#) 109 N Union 76001533 Akron Summit and Edward P, [Werner House](#) 258 W Market St 05001146 Akron Summit

important piece of Akron architectural history and built on Werner's estate. The building is now an apartment building not far from downtown.

Now that I had some more facts about Werner's life, it was time to search for information about his company. I continued to struggle with the fact that the Werner Company was an undocumented company. There is no archive, repository of materials, or collection of papers. The company closed in 1914 and the last son of the founder died in 1971.²⁴ Reconstructing the history of this company that was so vital to the economic health of Akron in the Gilded Age was going to be a challenge.

There are few books on researching and reconstructing businesses. Most are designed for those who write corporate histories, some for public historians, and the rest for economic and labor historians. When I began this research project, I consulted articles and books for both types of researchers and found case studies that examined Gilded Age companies. Most of the books and articles referenced business archives and records. The classic book on the topic is *Local Businesses: Exploring Their History*.²⁵ K. Austin Kerr, Amos J. Loveday, and Mansel G. Blackford provide the best advice for historians exploring companies

²⁴ "E.P. Werner, 'Mr. Printer' Dies" *Akron Beacon Journal* October 21, 1971.

²⁵ K. Austin Kerr, Amos J. Loveday and Mansel G. Blackford, *Local Businesses: Exploring Their History*. (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1990).

with archives and collections of existing records, particularly those active in the twentieth century. David Kyvig's *Nearby History* and Richard Cox's *Documenting Localities* describe various archival and visual sources for documenting communities.²⁶ Undocumented companies are considered the most difficult to reconstruct and the authors have few suggestions other than exploring public records and newspapers.

Articles and case histories about labor and industry provided examples of the types of research tools necessary to reconstruct the business side of Werner's life. These tools ranged from business archives and papers, legal records, statistics and census reports, and published histories of the area or the subject. After much inquiry and investigation, there are no corporate records or papers for Werner Company. There may be records tucked within the papers of other businesses, but they are difficult to locate without a solid lead. There are legal records in the recorder's office in Summit County that were fleshed out using newspaper articles.

Statistics from federal government agencies particularly the Library of Congress and the Copyright Office, and Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor

²⁶ David E. Kyvig and Myron A. Marty, *Nearby History: Exploring the Past Around You*, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2010) and Richard J. Cox, *Documenting Localities: a Practical Model for American Archivists and Manuscript Curators* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists and Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, c1996).

show changes in industries over time as do various tables in the Historical Abstract of the United States. Statistics compiled by Carroll D. Wright for Congress show the effects of international copyright protection on publishing and printing industry between 1891 and 1900.²⁷ The narrative contained within Wright's study placed the printing industry within an historical and economic context. While these statistical sources are great, they do not always include the information needed to understand changes or events in small geographic areas. The Ohio Almanac lists local and statewide statistics, particularly as pertained to changes in population.²⁸ The federal statistics show changes in the country overall, state-by-state, or maybe by county or national regions.

To understand the size of Werner's company and its economic reach, I needed to reconstruct or compile statistics from published sources. Gordon M. Winder's article about manufacturing in the Middle West in 1880 was a guide to analyzing a variety of economic and statistical records for companies in the

²⁷ Carroll D. Wright, *Industrial Evolution of the United States* (Chautauqua Reading Circle Literature. NY: Flood And Vincent The Chautauqua-Century Press, 1895) and United State Bureau of Labor. "A Report on the Effect of International Copyright Law in the United States." S.doc. 87 56 Cong 2nd session (1900-1901) US Serial 4033 Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1901.

²⁸ *Ohio Almanac* First edition, (Lorain OH: The Lorain Journal Company, 1967).

Gilded Age.²⁹ Winder's study led to the consideration of various types of statistical sources such as manufacturing censuses and the Statistical Abstract of the United States.

Changes in the number and type of business, industry, or occupation over long periods can also be tracked through the census and Statistical Abstract of the United States. Of course, if the government did not collection information about a particular industry or ask the questions you want, you are out of luck. State statistics drill down to the county level, or maybe even larger cities. Tracking changes in small cities over a long period of time can be difficult. To supplement the federal statistics, I examined statistics in printed sources such as the Cleveland *Leader*, the *Akron Beacon Journal* and its predecessors, and, all important, city directories.

The Manufacturing and Industrial census 1850-1880 Summit County provides detailed information about paper, printing, book sellers and binders along side all the other industries. Unfortunately, every decade of the manufacturing and industrial census asks different questions and collects different information. I had to sift through the data to get a sense of the printing and publishing industry over a forty year period. In the 1850s and 1860s,

²⁹ Gordon M Winder, "The North American Manufacturing Belt in 1880: A Cluster of Regional Industrial Systems or One Large Industrial District?" *Economic Geography* 75 No.1 (Jan. 1999): 71-92

Cuyahoga Falls, the settlement just north of Akron, was the business center of Summit County. When re-examining the geography of the area, I realized that Akron is below a series of falls, so paper mills were located in Cuyahoga Falls where they could take advantage of the water power. The Ohio & Erie Canal ran through both towns making delivery of raw and finished materials easy. Finished goods could then be shipped north to Cleveland via the same canal to connect with New York and Chicago, at least until the railroad made transport even easier and more convenient. As Akron grew, the printing companies moved south of the falls, first along the river and canal, and then to the outskirts of downtown.

Shifts in management style in the Gilded Age, as analyzed by Alfred Chandler, served as a model or benchmark by which to compare The Werner Company with the national trend. *Visible Hand* studies the changing of business in the Gilded Age from family to hired supervisors and managers. Chandler provides a view of changes on a national scale, a benchmark by which to measure the size, complexity, and growth of American businesses.³⁰

From his first business ventures in 1875, Werner lacked the capital to build a business by himself, so he brought in outside partners. In the middle of his business career, when Werner Company was really strong, his children, now

³⁰ Chandler, *The Visible Hand*, 286.

adults, held positions in management. His brother, Herman, and in-laws were always part of the company holding management and superintendent positions. By the end, the break up of the Werner Company in 1914, others were named in management positions, with family members in the management levels. Thus the Werner Company both fits and does not fit Chandler's model of corporate management for large national businesses. In the end, Paul E. Werner and The Werner Company fit more of the models of business cycles described by Wills and Sandage, that of cycles of success, failure, and success again.

The Werner Company fits Chandler's model in the sense that there were non-family members in the upper ranks of his businesses. Unfortunately, his children were not old enough in 1890 (they were still teenagers) when the company really started to grow to be placed in positions of power. His brothers-in-law were placed within the company as foremen, superintendents, and officers. After his sons reached their majority, two were involved in the printing business as seen in signatures on deeds and in the insolvency court records.³¹ Indeed after 1905, Werner's sons co-signed deeds and contracts as the company

³¹ Summit County Ohio, Recorder's Office, The Werner Company to Richard P. Marvin Receiver filed 30 Oct 1897 filed 6 November 1897 in D233-317 conveying all property, assets, business affairs, copyrights, and more, subsequently reacquired by The Werner Company. Sale of the Werner Company property with all tools, implements, assets to Edward P. Werner dated 23 Oct 1903 filed 11 November 1903 in D301-106 and immediate transfer back to the Werner Company in the next deed D301-108.

was reorganized. When the business was sold and reconstituted as The New Werner Company in 1910, and was sold in parts in 1914, his sons were again involved, and helped with the transition, again seen in deeds and articles of incorporation, and the final insolvency court actions into the late 1910s.³² In fact, Werner's eldest son, Edward Paul Werner, stayed in Akron in the printing industries and was known as "Mr. Printer".³³

Land records were useful, but they only included information about transfers of property. The other primary sources contained contemporary accounts of events as recorded in newspapers and magazines, and other public records. There was a wealth of information to be found in these sources. The newspapers Werner edited and published provided small clues including advertisements for printing services. The short editorials were less informative. Werner owned the papers and purchased the printing equipment, plants, and employees when he took over each company, and his business grew from there.³⁴

³² Court decrees detailing the actions of the Receiver in the 1910 bankruptcy are delineated in Summit County Recorder's Office Deed 1848-375 captioned Circuit Court US Northern District of Ohio Eastern Division 7916 Civil Docket vs. Paul E. Werner, Edward P Werner, the Werner Company, et.al. dated December 1911, filed Sept 5, 1940.

³³ "E.P. Werner 'Mr. Printer; Dies" *Akron Beacon Journal* October 21, 1971.

³⁴ Paul E. Werner, Publisher, "Dissolution Notice" *Sunday Gazette* July 4, 1880 p 4 announces the dissolution of the partnership Werner & Nelson, with PE Werner collecting all debts.

Sanborn maps provided visual confirmation of the location of the business center in Akron, which was along Howard Street, the location of Werner Company printing plant, and other printing companies in the 1870s and 1880s. [See Fig.2] Sanborn maps include more than basic visual information about locations of businesses. The captions describe the function of various buildings and structures and sources of power. Many of the maps show railroad sidings, ingress and egress, and other transportation methods.³⁵

Through the Sanborn maps I was able to understand the geographical and business reasons for paper companies to be in Cuyahoga Falls and the proximity of the cities to one another.³⁶ [See Fig.3]

Along the way, I learned Werner bid for one of the Ohio Public Printing contracts, but no other.³⁷ According to printers I spoke to, while public printing keeps the plant running it is not necessarily lucrative.³⁸ Interesting enough,

³⁵ Sanborn Maps, Akron Ohio 1892 Map 1 Title (Reel01-6577-00056.jpg)

³⁶ Sanborn Maps, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, August 1884 Map 2, (Reel25-6669-00002.jpg)

³⁷ *Annual Report of the Supervisor of Public Printing to the Governor of the State of Ohio* (Columbus, OH: Richard Nevins State Printer, 1889) and *Annual Report of the Supervisor of Public Printing to the Governor of the State of Ohio for the Fiscal Year Ending November 15, 1891* (Columbus, OH: The Westbote Co., State Printers, 1892) Ohio Su.Doc. number OF 180

³⁸ Werner Printing & Lithographing Company was paid \$834.37 for printing House Journals in September 1889, \$916.37 for Senate Journals in November of 1889, according to the Annual Report of 1889 (p1144-1145). In 1890, the Werner Printing & Lithographing Company received printing fees of \$1019.20 for Senate Journals, \$1028.88 for House Journals, and \$290.30 for making maps in November (Annual Report 1891, p7). In April of 1891, the company engraved a senatorial map for \$9.50 (Annual Report 1891, p8), at which point the contract ended.

Werner did not bid for the German publications or translation contracts, for which his company was qualified and well equipped, but for English publications. He won the contract for some of the printing in 1890-1891. As part of the contract, Werner Company printed and subsequently reprinted many government publications, including the *Official Roster of Soldiers in the Civil War*. Over the years, the Werner Company reprinted all twelve volumes, a complicated and exacting printing job. Once set in type and plates made, this series was a wonderful edition to the Werner Company's backlist. There was not much else to find out about the public printing contract. And as intriguing as that topic is, these reports did not shed any more light on the activities of this company.

Harter mentioned a number of lawsuits, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and copyright. While searching for access points into the register for copyright deposits, I came across a series of volumes that compiled copyright lawsuits from 1790 to 1909.³⁹ Werner Company and a number of other publishing companies are listed in the index. These are the lawsuits referencing *Encyclopædia Britannica*, summarized by Kruse, along with all the legal citations

³⁹ Library of Congress. *Decisions of the United States Courts Involving Copyright and Literary Property 1789-1909 with an Analytical Index*. Compiled and edited under the direction of Wilma S. Davis, prepared by Mark A. Lillis. Copyright Office Bulletins 13-16. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1980.

and discussion by the Register of Copyright and Librarian of Congress.⁴⁰ These volumes included all the associated law suits that were used for precedence and for legal justification of actions in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* decisions.

The introduction of copyright protections for foreign authors and works in 1891, 1905, and 1909 wreaked havoc on Werner's printing business. In particular, the Werner Company's vast empire built on and around the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. It is the interconnectedness of the print products and advertising surrounding the *Encyclopædia Britannica* that show both the genius of his marketing and advertising schemes, and the financial dependence Werner Company had upon the printing and distribution of said titles. Lawsuits for copyright infringement and the demands to cease and desist ultimately brought the Werner Company to its knees financially. Most of the published information about the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* is found in Kruse and Kogan.⁴¹ In the aftermath of the protracted legal battle, cash flow dried up in for this vast printing empire.

⁴⁰ Library of Congress. *Decisions of the United States Courts Involving Copyright and Literary Property 1789-1909 with an Analytical Index*. Compiled and edited under the direction of Wilma S. Davis, prepared by Mark A. Lillis. Copyright Office Bulletins 13-16. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1980 and Paul Kruse, "Piracy and the Britannica: Unauthorized Reprintings of the Ninth Edition." *The Library Quarterly* 33 No.4 (Oct. 1963): 313-328.

⁴¹ Kruse and Kogan attribute their knowledge of the subject to Rose Phillips who wrote her master's thesis on the topic in the 1920. Rose B. Phelps, *The Encyclopædia Britannica, Ninth Edition, A Critical and Historical Study* Master's Thesis for School of Library Service. (NY:

Changes in copyright law affected the publishing and printing history of Gilded Age America. Mechanization and industrialization of the printing process revolutionized the printing industry. The field of the History of the Book is a growing field with many sub-disciplines. Earlier books focus on publishing companies and their founders. Others examine the types of books printed while still more at publishing trends and copyright. Contemporary books published within the last two decades cover the field as a whole, a sub discipline like typography and printing equipment, or are extremely narrow in scope. These books provide the larger context into which to set Paul E. Werner and The Werner Company. These books include studies on the Gilded Age publishing and printing industry, the economics of printing, and the range of printed materials.

Meredith McGill's book about reprints and copyright protection, or lack thereof, in the 1850s examines the business of reprinting, piracy, and royalties both in England and the United States.⁴² The acquisition of manuscripts from the author or from the published text across the Atlantic created fierce competition for intellectual property and profits made from these popular works of fiction.

Columbia University, 1930). See also Paul Kruse, "Piracy and the Britannica: Unauthorized Reprintings of the Ninth Edition." *The Library Quarterly* 33 No.4 (Oct. 1963): 313-328, and Herman Kogan, *The Great EB: The Story of the Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

⁴² Meredith L. McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting 1834-1853* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003.)

Reprinting books held the same place in publishing in the nineteenth century as backlists do today. They provide steady income from the purchase of titles always in demand and those read in schools.

While McGill describes the printing industry of ante-bellum America, Sheehan outlines the changes in the Gilded Age.⁴³ During this era, publishers and printers wrestled with rapid changes in technology and industrialization. Changes in copyright meant royalty payments and altered the financial character of the publishing business. Between 1890 and 1910, many publishing companies split off their printing and manufacturing plants in an effort to increase profitability. Werner Company followed this national trend, hiring Saalfield as publisher for their trade books and ultimately all books.

Just as the printing industry changed, so did the city of Akron. There are several sources for studying demographics. Census records provide information about geographic areas every decade. City Directories are year by year snapshots of life and residents of Akron. These directories are one method to track changes in a defined geographical area, particularly between 1880 and

⁴³ Donald Sheehan, *This Was Publishing: A Chronicle of the Book Trade in the Gilded Age* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1952). In addition to Sheehan, Richard Moses' dissertation provided great information about technological changes in the printing industry in the nineteenth century. Richard P. Moses, *A Tapestry of Change: Printing Technology and Publishing in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Unpublished dissertation. (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1998).

1900 where few 1890 census records exist. For this project, information was collected from the Akron and Summit County city directories first every five years, and then every three. Data was compiled including the names of newspapers and printers, their owners and locations, employees of the printing and newspaper companies and their positions within the companies when possible. The compilation of these simple demographics was possible because the Akron Summit County Public Library digitized all their city directories and made the text searchable using Optical Character Recognition (OCR).⁴⁴ While searching OCR'ed text is not perfect, it did permit searching for and collection of the names of the employees of Akron's printing industry between 1867 and 1915. The city directory identified Paul E. Werner and his brother Julius when they first arrived in Akron in 1867.

This very time consuming data collection project provides a different view of the financial health of Akron and its slowly growing community until 1900, when the population exploded and before the rubber industry dominated the city. Using the city directory it is possible to count the number of individuals employed in the printing trades, plot the growth, consolidation, and decline of the industry, and the subsequent growth of the city. Assumptions, some implied,

⁴⁴ Akron Summit County Public Library, Online City Directories 1859-
<http://sc.akronlibrary.org/genealogy/city-directories/>

some implicit, can be made as to the economic well-being of Werner Company and the city as a whole, especially during years of financial health and. Some years were selected because they were turning points for Werner Company, such as 1893, 1909, and 1914. Other years were selected in an attempt to verify claims made in biographical sketches or by Harter, such as to the importance of Werner and his printing company as employer during the financial panic of 1893. Details gleaned from employment at the manufactory provide only a small window into employment as a whole, for by 1893, the Werner Company had sales offices across the country and in the major cities in Western Europe. The book manufactory produced thousands of copies of the Encyclopædia Britannica and its associated products. The plant was working at full capacity as ably described by John Covert and Charles Thrope.⁴⁵

Labor union reports of strikes and settlements shed harsh light on Werner's attitude toward his workers, their wages, and unions in general. Eye opening accounts reveal Werner's attitude toward union workers in his shop was similar to stories heard about robber barons and their attitude toward unions.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ John C. Covert, *The Werner Co* (Chicago: The Werner Company, 1894), The Werner Company, *Twenty Years: 1887-1907* (Akron, OH: The Werner Company, 1907), and Charles Thrope, "Printing Plant of the Werner Co., Akron Ohio." *American Pressman* VI No. 1 (Dec 1895): 9-15.

⁴⁶ Elizabeth Faulkner Baker, *Printers and Technology: A History of the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1957): 94-95.

These records and reports provide a reality check to any positive image of a business owner in the Gilded Age, or in any era for that matter. The Werner Company needed to remain profitable and union demands cut into profits. Unions wanted better wages and better working conditions. While Werner Company's actions are reminiscent of those of Carnegie and Frick and the Homestead Strike, in that they both shut workers out of the plant, there did not seem to be bloodshed over the strike in Akron. What the 1894 strike does is change the quality of print output and must have disrupted the smooth flow of book manufacturing for quite a while. According to Baker, labor union strikes and strife continued for the next 16 years.⁴⁷

Census records, city directories, and union meeting minutes are not the only records that provide demographic and economic data. Two sets of financial records shed light upon the financial well-being of Werner and his companies: the R.G. Dun credit records and accounts and Summit County Tax Records. The former provide a snap shot of Werner's financial status quarterly and within his various business ventures.⁴⁸ Credit reporters describe Werner's credit worthiness, financial losses and gains, and the overall growth of his companies.

⁴⁷ Baker, 110.

⁴⁸ Ohio, Vol. 3, R.G. Dun & Co. Collection, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School.

Unfortunately the Dun credit reports end in 1889 just when Paul E. Werner hit his stride in 1890-1891.

County tax duplicates list all acquisitions of property, claimed worth, and yearly taxes.⁴⁹ By examining them, we see a public picture of real estate holdings and financial dealings of Werner and his companies. Using both the R.G. Dun reports and the county tax duplicates, we can compare the growth or decline of his company with his contemporaries and other members of his economic class. Data for Paul E. Werner, his extended family, and Henry Klages, owner of Klages Coal and Ice Co., showed acquisition of property and growth of savings.⁵⁰ The R.G. Dun Credit reports listed names of partners and business associates including Albert C. Lohman, Benjamin F. Nelson, and John J. Cook. County tax duplicates and real estate records corroborate the opinions of the credit reporter. The combination of records (credit, tax, land, and city directories) provided enough evidence to reconstruct the financial stability, solvency, and precariousness of Werner's business ventures.

When pieced together, these primary and secondary sources create a picture of Werner and his influential and far-reaching printing company. Of

⁴⁹ For a description of the contents and uses of tax duplicates, see Tacy Arledge Lewis, "Ohio Tax Lists: Practical Applications" *Ohio Genealogy News* 41 No. 2 (Summer 2010): 6-10.

⁵⁰ Upon the founder's death in 1900, Paul E. Werner becomes the president of Klages Coal & Ice, holding that office until 1918.

course there are other facts to find, small bits of evidence to uncover or leads to follow. In that, "history from below" is never finished. Ironically the tools used to research the lower classes are perfectly suited to discover and analyze the life of this undocumented upper class person and his business. Every small bit of information layered together creates a whole that explains how and why Paul E. Werner acted the way he did, or even how he reacted to various situations.

Chapter 2

Life in Akron during the Gilded Age

This was a time of social mobility where gutsy, ruthless, and determined businessmen and women could be very successful or lose it all. While the Gilded Age was a time of economic turmoil and instability, there were many opportunities for those who worked hard and managed to save enough to invest in their own store, business, or invention. Persistent inventors sold their devices and ideas and made a profit.

This chapter demonstrates that Paul E. Werner took advantage of the opportunities Gilded Age Akron offered. He was able to build a vibrant business during a period of economic turmoil and instability. In turn, he employed hundreds of printers, illustrators, and artists who produced the beautiful books for which his company was famous. Akron was a growing town where the industrious and the persistent could succeed and Werner does just that.

So let me speculate about Paul E. Werner from this point of view. Werner came to the United States with some money; at least enough to get to Cleveland and Akron.¹ Why he settled in Akron is still unclear, but it may be that Cleveland just did not hold the business opportunities he sought, or there was a relative as yet unidentified in Akron who sponsored him. Either way, he settled in Akron in 1868, within a year of arriving in the United States. Here he paid reasonable rates to live in a boarding house on Main Street a short distance from his work, first as a clerk then a bookkeeper for various local companies, including Camp, Long & Co. (a clothing firm) and Major Steinbacher's Drug Store.² While working as a bookkeeper at the lumber and building firm of Miller, Thomas & Co., he was obviously on the lookout for business opportunities.³

Akron was founded in 1825 but Summit County was not organized until 1840. When Paul E. Werner arrived in Akron in 1868, it was still a very young town with businesses clustered around the Ohio & Erie Canal and along Howard

¹ According to Harter, Werner had a "*Realschule* and *Real-gymnasium* (scientific school) education in Germany" [1]. This education mostly likely included some proficiency in English. Werner was certainly proficient in English by the mid-1870s as seen in the Akron Public Library board minutes.

² Hall's General Directory and Business Guide of the City of Akron for 1868-1869, Compiled by Andrew J. Hall, Publisher of Directories (Akron, O: Lane, Canfield & Co. Printers, Howard Street, 1868): 119; Edward S. Harter, *Paul E. Werner: in Honor of his 80th Birthday* (Akron, OH: The Akron Beacon Journal, 1930): 1-2.

³ Werner is listed as a bookkeeper for unidentified companies in the 1868 and 1871-2 city directories. In the 1873-1874 Werner is working for Miller Thomas & Co. A.R. Tarlott and Co's *Akron City Directory 1873-1874* (Akron: A.R. Talcott & Co, 1873): 143, and Edward S. Harter, *Paul E. Werner: in Honor of his 80th Birthday* (Akron, OH: The Akron Beacon Journal, 1930): 2.

Street. There were barely ten thousand people in Akron in 1869, so there were plenty of opportunities to be successful.⁴ Throughout the nineteenth century, the population of Summit County grew steadily in 1840 from 22,560 to 27,344 in 1860, in 1870 from 34,674 to 43,788 in 1880.⁵ In April 1870, the Akron Board of Trade announced that "The Growth of Akron, while evident in many directions, is no where more palpably visible than in the constant and rapid increase of its Railroad and Canal Business".⁶ There was \$2.8 million in manufacturing capital in Akron in 1869-70. According to the County Auditor the taxable property in Akron grew from \$1.2 million in 1862 to \$3.8 million in 1869 or a 31 ½ per cent increase over the previous seven years.⁷

The small growing town of Akron held many business opportunities for an ambitious young man. He quickly learned English because by the time he has his first newspaper editing stint, he wrote his adopted language reasonably well. In

⁴ Akron population in 1850 is 3,266; 1860 3,477 in 1910 69,067 as compared with Cleveland's population in 1860 43,417 and 1910 560,663 Community Research Partners, *Census 1810-2010: Celebrating 200 Years of the Census in Ohio* CRP Data Byte No. 5 (Columbus, OH, CRP, 2010): 4
http://www.communityresearchpartners.org/uploads/publications//Data%20Byte5_Census2010.pdf

⁵ U.S. Department of Commerce; National Technical Information Service, *Decennial Census of Population, 1800-2000, by County, Ohio* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Strategic Research, Ohio Department of Development, 2001)
http://urban.csuohio.edu/nodis/historic/pop_county18002000.pdf

⁶ Charles Brown and George W. Crouse, "Third Annual Report to the Akron Board of Trade" in Karl H. Grismer, *Akron and Summit County* (Akron, Ohio: Summit County Historical Society, 1952): 205.

⁷ Brown and Crouse, in Karl H. Grismer, 205.

fact by 1877, he was the secretary for the Akron Public Library Board, writing minutes of their meetings in fluent English. [See Fig.4.]

The majority of businesses were manufactories which grew at a steady rate. These businesses manufactured sewer pipe, iron, farm machinery, and rubber goods; others milled grain, made paper and printed newspapers. By 1881 over six million dollars was invested in business ventures.⁸ In the course of his business dealings, Werner associated and teamed up with many of the prominent businessmen as he built his printing empire.

As Werner became more involved in the civic and social life of Akron, he came to know several prominent business men. Ferdinand Schumacher made his fortune as a grain merchant, milling flour and oats for the local residents and selling oatmeal for soldiers during the Civil War and for many years afterward.⁹ O.C. Barber, the Diamond Match King, had just starting to sell his product regionally when Werner met him.¹⁰ John F. Seiberling owned several companies including the Akron Straw Board Company. Straw, one of the early fillers considered for making paper, made relatively poor quality paper suitable for bags, board, and boxes, but not for printing.¹¹

⁸ William Henry Perrin, *History of Summit County* (Chicago: Baskin & Battey, Historical Publishers, 1881, Reproduced by Unigraphic Inc, Evansville, IN, 1972): 365.

⁹ Grismer, 175-177.

¹⁰ Perrin, 665-666.

¹¹ Grismer, 197.

While he came to know Schumacher, Barber, and Seiberling through his service on boards and in social settings, Werner interacted with the other Akron editors, printers, and publishers throughout his professional life. Early in his printing career, Werner worked beside George Crouse and Carl Kolbe, investing his money in newspapers and printing ventures with them. Crouse invested in paper companies along with Thomas Phillips, whose paper mill flourished for many decades in Akron.¹² Crouse also owned several newspaper companies, including the Akron Printing & Publishing Company, that were ultimately rolled into what became the Akron *Beacon Journal*.¹³ Kolbe was one of the intellectuals in town and teamed up with Paul E. Werner in some of his newspaper ventures including the Akron *Sunday Gazette*. Kolbe's son was one of the Presidents of Buchtel College, which became the University of Akron.

Another colleague was Henry Klages, a native of Hanover, who arrived in Akron in 1873 and began his career selling coal to the residents of the city. Klages built a small empire with Werner that culminated in Klages Coal & Ice.¹⁴ In 1899, Henry Klages owner and president of Klages Coal & Ice Co. died and

¹² Perrin, 694 and Grismer, 259.

¹³ Grismer, 260.

¹⁴ Grismer, 699.

was succeeded by Werner, who served as president from 1899 to 1918 when he was succeeded by Howard Haupt.¹⁵

There were a number of businessmen who were essential to the growth and development of Werner Company. Less well known today, they were important in Akron between 1870 and 1900. Werner established working relationships with Albert C. Lohman, John Buchtel, and Thomas W. Cornell, once the richest man in the county according to the RG Dun credit agent.¹⁶ For a fateful eighteen months he ran the *Sunday Gazette* with B.F. Nelson.¹⁷ John J. Cook was a cousin to Lucy Denaple, who backed the young man financially in several of his printing and publishing ventures.¹⁸

Paul E. Werner came on the scene and saved his hard earned money, and began to try out various occupations while holding down his bookkeeping position, as did many young men and women in this period. He edited and published both the *Sunday Gazette* and the *Akron Germania* for many years. He

¹⁵ Grismer, 637. Biographical sketches are found in Karl H Grismer, *Akron and Summit County* (Akron, Ohio: Summit County Historical Society, 1952) and William Henry Perrin, *History of Summit County, with an Outline Sketch of Ohio*. Illustrated (Chicago: Baskin & Battey, Historical Publishers, 1881, Reproduced by Unigraphic Inc, Evansville, IN, 1972): 286-287.

¹⁶ Thomas W. Cornell and Benjamin P. Phelps owned a distillery in Cuyahoga falls in 1859, which was one of the many ways, Cornwell became a financial success. *Williams; Akron Wooster & Cuyahoga Falls Directory, City Guide and Business Mirror*, vol 1 1859-60, compiled by C.S. Williams (Akron: W.G. Robinson, Wooster: JH Baumgardner & Co, 1859): Cuyahoga Falls 182;and Perrin, 286-287; and Ohio, Vol. 3 and Vol. 180 (April 4, 1889): 790, R.G. Dun & Co. Collection, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School.

¹⁷ Ohio, Vol. 3 and Vol. 180 (Jan 8, 1885): 702, R.G. Dun & Co.

¹⁸ Ohio, Vol. 3 and Vol. 180 (Oct. 22, 1880): 609, R.G. Dun & Co.

did this together with Kolbe for a while, also with B.F. Nelson in a partnership that lasted less than two years. By 1880, Paul E. Werner decided to focus on the commercial printing part of the newspaper business. Within the next few years, Werner sold off his interest in the newspapers, but he definitely held onto the equipment and printing plants.¹⁹ City directories of the 1870s and 1880s show that printing plants were common in the commercial district along Howard Street and Exchange.

While he edited the *Sunday Gazette* and *Akron Germania*, Werner also acted as ticket agent for several steamship companies and also arranged letters of credit and bank drafts for use in Europe.²⁰ He quickly gave up that business, hiring someone to do the daily work, while raking in the profits. At the same time, he passed along his editing responsibilities in the newspapers to new editors, while he continued accepting commercial printing from local and regional companies. At this point, he was in direct competition with Beacon Publishing Co.²¹

One question is what did he print and for whom? Without records, it is almost impossible to tell, yet there are images and illustrations bearing the notation "engraved at The Werner Company" in many publications of northeast

¹⁹ Perrin, 286-287.

²⁰ Advertisement *Sunday Gazette* April 13, 1879, p6 col4-5.

²¹ Howard Wolf, *The Akron Beacon Journal: The First 100 Years* unpublished manuscript (Akron, OH, in possession of the ABJ Library, 1939).

Ohio and regional publications, city directories and the like. Pretty quickly he was printing books while continuing to print newspapers. There are several other printing firms in Akron, and then there is Nathaniel H. Burch.²² Burch published the city directory in Akron beginning in 1870 until 1925. Printers for the Burch Directory Company vary over the years, usually ending up at the Beacon Publishing Company. [See Fig.5.]

During this decade of the 1870s, Werner gradually entered Akron society. He married in 1875, had children, and was involved in civic organizations including the public library. For several years, he was the secretary of the Akron Public Library with many years of meeting minutes in his hand. He served on the board of education.²³ In addition to these civic organizations, Werner joined several German clubs including an athletic club and a singing club. In 1882, he founded the German militia for young men who served and were honorably discharged from the German Army.²⁴

The 1870s brought with them a rise in population, and severe depression from 1873 through 1876 when many businesses struggled, followed by a period of prosperity. By mid-1870 there were three major printing companies in Akron including the *Akron City Times* and the *Summit Beacon*, newspaper companies

²² Grismer, 624.

²³ *Sunday Gazette* Feb 16, 1879 p3 and March 30, 1879.

²⁴ Edward S. Harter, *Paul E. Werner: in Honor of his 80th Birthday* (Akron, OH: The Akron Beacon Journal, 1930): 17.

that offered a wide range of job printing to their customers.²⁵ Both newspapers were doing well. The *Summit Beacon* had about \$18,000 in capital and printed books in addition to its daily and weekly newspaper, taking advantage of extra capacity on its steam presses. The Akron *City Times* had only hand presses in its shop, printing a weekly newspaper interspersed with job printing and garnering about \$9000 per year on an investment of \$6000. The Akron Printing Company, capitalized at \$1500 was a small concern, yet brought in enough to provide a living for the owners.²⁶

Commercial job and newspaper printers were not the only business concerns in the Akron / Cuyahoga Falls area. A.R. Knox & Son offered both job printing and book binding making a small profit of \$1100 per year according to the 1870 manufacturing census for Cuyahoga Falls.²⁷ There was not much competition for Beebe & Elkins or W.G. Robinson whose printing, book and stationery businesses continued to flourish on Howard Street in the commercial district in Akron.²⁸

²⁵ US Bureau of the Census 1870 Manufacturing Census Schedule 4 Industry in Third Ward, Akron City, Summit County, OH page 4.

²⁶ For a complete list of newspapers in Akron see *Union List of Ohio Newspapers Available in Ohio*, Arthur D. Mink, compiler (Columbus, OH: The Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, 1946): 1-2.

²⁷ US Bureau of the Census 1870 Manufacturing Census Schedule 4 Industry in Cuyahoga Falls, Summit County, OH page 7.

²⁸ *Bailey's Akron Directory 1871-1872* (Akron, OH: Ohio Publishing Co., 1871): 107. Other printing firms in advertising in the 1870-71 directory include LD Myers & Bro, p52; Shield and Banner, p. 65 and BF Wade & Co out of Mansfield, p. 81.

The Hanford Brothers were still making Phoenix and Empire paper and running their paper mill in Cuyahoga Falls, and investing heavily in their own business valued at \$70,000.²⁹ This continued to be a lucrative business and could be one of the sources for paper for all the printing businesses in the area.

The 1880s heralded a period of growth and prosperity for Akron. As its population grew, so did the businesses, in both size and variety. Again the Manufacturing Census for 1880 provides hints to the researcher, listing just some of the many book and printing concerns in and around Akron. The city directories fill in the details of how and where businesses thrived in the city. All told, according to manufacturing census records, there was one bookbinder, three printer – publishers, and three photographers spread out between Akron and Cuyahoga Falls. Of course, other printers worked as employees within the established firms. This is the first census in which we see Werner as the owner of a printing, publishing, and book binding business.³⁰ The census indicates that he invested \$22,000 in his company and was making a handsome profit. Of course, he competed against R.H. Knight and the Beacon Publishing Co. All three businesses expanded into their own niches in the 1880s. According to the manufacturing census, there was one other bookbinder, John Stehr, and at least

²⁹ U.S. Bureau of the Census 1870 Manufacturing Census Schedule 4 Industry in Cuyahoga Falls, Summit County, OH page 6.

³⁰ U.S. Bureau of the Census 1880 Manufacturing Census Schedule 3 Products of Industry in Akron City, Summit County, OH, page 1 line 40.

three photographers in the area. Three paper mills dominated the local industry, Cleveland Paper Co., which served both Akron and Cleveland; Thomas Phillips & Co. paper mill which was located on the Ohio canal and employed seventy people; and the Akron Straw Board Co., owned by John F. Seiberling, that employed about sixty people from the surrounding area.³¹ A careful examination of city directories, credit reports, and county tax records provides details missing from the decennial census.

Werner worked hard to make a living with his nascent printing business. During the late 1870s and early 1880s, he polished his financial skills and learned to run a complex business. The R.G. Dun agent was impressed with the business knowledge Lohman contributed to the partnership.³² According to the R.G. Dun reports and the Summit county tax duplicates, Paul E. Werner joined forces at different times in the 1870s with B.F. Nelson, A.C. Lohman, and John Buchtel, investing the profits back into the business. His venture in the Akron *Germania* with Nelson ended in 1880 with debts Werner struggled to repay. Fortunately, in the early 1880s, his wife's cousin John J. Cook fronted him money to settle debts

³¹ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1880 Manufacturing Census – Special Schedule of Manufacturers No. 2 “Paper Mills” for Monroe Falls, Cuyahoga Falls, and Akron.

³² Ohio, Vol. 3 and Vol. 180 (August 9, 1885): 702, R.G. Dun & Co.

that remained after the dissolution of his partnership with Nelson.³³ Cook continued to invest in Werner's business for many years.

In the late 1880s, Thomas W. Cornell invested in the Werner Co., became its president, and gave Paul E. Werner a substantial financial boost just when he really needed it.³⁴ According to Harter's account of Werner's life, Cornell provided the opportunity to purchase property at Union and Perkins. This land ultimately contained both Werner Company business offices, in the form of a European castle, and the vast factory complex for the printing, binding, and storage of thousands of books and printing plates.³⁵ [See Fig.6]

As Werner was "finding himself", he hobnobbed with others of his social class and ethnic group who were more successful economically; a fairly common phenomenon in the Gilded Age.³⁶ More importantly, and not as common, he climbed that social ladder pretty quickly in Akron. Based on new studies of success and failure in the Gilded Age, it appears that Werner was both typical for his class and time and atypical in his string of financial successes. Many men and women of this era attempted to climb the social ladder in their community as they sought to combine social with financial success. Careful study of credit and

³³ Ohio Vol. 180, p 498, R.G. Dun Co.

³⁴ Ohio Vol. 180, p 702, R.G. Dun Co.

³⁵ Harter, 6.

³⁶ Jocelyn Wills, "Respectable Mediocrity: The Everyday Life of an Ordinary American Striver, 1876-1890" *Journal of Social History* 37 No. 2 (Winter 2003): 336-337, 342

tax records would identify others in Akron who followed the same social and economic course Werner and were more or less successful. The existence of public records and printed materials provides a starting point for understanding the undocumented businesses and individuals of all classes by neighborhoods, community, and town. With quarterly and yearly financial updates researchers can trace the development of small areas as they change from rural to urban to commercial communities.

With the growth of his company, Paul E. Werner purchased more books to print and took on more commercial printing contracts. Weathering the short financial panic of the 1884-6, the company grew in size and prospered during a healthy economic period. At this point, Werner looked to different financial backers and new printing ventures.³⁷

Dun reports indicate that stock in the new company increased from one hundred thousand shares in April of 1888 to five hundred thousand within one year.³⁸ This increase in capital reflects the growth in the company and its assets as it competed nationally. In 1890, Werner moved his corporate headquarters to Chicago, promoting a national presence, and opened business offices in New

³⁷ Ohio, Vol. 3 and Vol. 180 (August 9, 1885): 702; (Sept 9, 1886): 702; and (April 14, 1888): 790, R.G. Dun & Co.

³⁸ In 1890 the Werner Printing and Lithographing Co was valued at \$31,740. The company's value increased to \$106,130 in 1892. Summit County, Ohio. Auditor Tax Duplicates, 1890, 1892, and Ohio, Vol. 3 and Vol. 180 (August 8, 1888 and April 20, 1889): 790, R.G. Dun & Co.

York, London, and Berlin, to name a few. To expand the company, Werner Company merged with other companies between 1892 and 1895, particularly the subscription and *Encyclopædia Britannica* ventures of R.S. Peale and Belford-Clarke, both of Chicago. In 1892, the R.S. Peale Publishing Company, Belford-Clarke's "encyclopedia and subscription book business," and Werner Printing and Lithographing Co incorporated in Chicago with \$3.5 million to form the Werner Company.³⁹ With these publications, Paul E. Werner expanded his printing empire to include the regular reprinting of R.S. Peale and the Belford-Clarke versions of the ninth edition of *Encyclopædia Britannica*.⁴⁰ Together with the companion businesses of *Self-Culture Magazine*, and the Home University League, these last endeavors resonated with the American ideals of self-education, self-improvement, and self-reliance.

Success is never a steady climb as "failure studies" remind researchers.⁴¹ There are bound to be years when a company is less solvent than the previous one. In 1897, Werner Company was overextended and went into receivership to hold off creditors. Later in 1909, as the business suffered yet more financial

³⁹ "Chicago a Publishing Center: A. Belford Talks Entertainingly About the Peale-Werner Combination" *Chicago Daily Tribune* Dec 12, 1892 p1.

⁴⁰ Paul Kruse. "Piracy and the Britannica: Unauthorized Reprintings of the Ninth Edition" *The Library Quarterly* 33 No.4 (Oct. 1963): 314.

⁴¹ Wills, "Respectable Mediocrity," 324, see also fn 3-4, and Scott A. Sandage, *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2005): 4-5.

blows, it was again in receivership. This financial maneuver was a standard method for holding off creditors and while waiting for incoming funds. Court dockets and local newspaper articles tell the tale to varying degrees of detail.

The 1890s were turbulent times for the Werner Company. As his company grew, the skilled artisans and laborers working for him began to join the printing unions. The years 1894 and 1897 brought several strikes, particularly the various printers, typographers, and lithographers unions. The local Akron newspapers carried stories of the strikes that were repeated in the Chicago papers. The first strike was in April 1894 when 700 men walked off the job because the company would not restore wages. According to the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, the strike shut down the "largest printing and lithographing establishment in the country."⁴²

By 1900, the Werner Company workers were printing tens of thousands of books and distributing them across the world. This was the decade of the Encyclopædia suits, beginning in 1905 with cease and desist orders, and injunctions. Legal fees amounted to many millions of dollars over the next four years.⁴³ Werner Company failed in 1909, and again in 1914. In the end, Werner's printing empire failed but did not defeat the man. He moved away from Akron in

⁴² "Shut-Down in Printing House" *Chicago Daily Tribune* (April 10, 1894) p2; Elizabeth Faulkner Baker, *Printers and Technology: A History of the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1957): 94-95; Akron *Beacon Journal* (April 23, 1894) p1 col 8, and (Nov 27, 1894) p1 col 6.

⁴³ Harter, 10

an attempt to build a new life of financial prosperity in Kansas City, Missouri. In the sister city of Kansas City, Kansas, he "organizes the Rubber Manufacturing Corporation, with plants in Kansas City and Chester West Virginia."⁴⁴ After living in Kansas City Missouri and working in Kansas for thirteen years, P.E. Werner and his second wife, Mary Elizabeth Keiser returned to Akron in 1927 for the remaining years of his life.⁴⁵

If we look at the surface of Werner's rise, we see him as self-made man. This immigrant rose to the top of Akron society and competed with some of Chicago's wealthy businessmen. I do not see mention of him socializing with Robber Barons, but then again, he was not really that rich, not rich enough to compete with the really rich industrialists whose companies dominated the national markets. A powerful, regional businessman, Werner was one of the local business moguls who influenced and dominated the civic organizations and business interests of his community. There are many of these men. Historians including Wills and Sandage are studying their importance with their immediate communities.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Grismer, 692.

⁴⁵ Grismer, 692-693.

⁴⁶ Jocelyn Wills and Scott Sandage write about men who succeed and fail in business, some from excessive debt and some from the lack of perseverance. Many of them succeed and fail more than once, finding themselves wage earners rather than owners of large establishments. Other individuals owned large business and were influential locally. These two studies shed light on how workers struggled with success and failure during the Gilded Age. Using their works help situate Werner's business career into historical context. Wills and Sandage

An overarching question continues to be, why so much silence about a man whose company was so important to the financial and economic well-being of a community during the Gilded Age? The chapters that follow will continue to explore the life of Paul E. Werner set first in the economic setting of the Gilded Age, then within the printing industry itself, and finally how changes in copyright laws, and various challenges under those laws, contributed to the financial collapse of Werner Company.

used many different types of manuscript and public records reconstructing the lives of their subjects, providing guidance for my research. Scott A. Sandage, *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2005) and Jocelyn Wills, "Respectable Mediocrity: The Everyday Life of an Ordinary American Striver, 1876-1890." *Journal of Social History* 37 No. 2 (Winter 2003): 323-349.

Chapter 3

Building an Empire

The Gilded Age for some was a period of self-employment, as was the case with many eras. The natural progression of success was to work one's way from worker to business owner.¹ Failing to do so meant working for others.² In the Gilded Age there was a shift in attitude about work that encouraged workers to strive for better positions within a company and for more possessions. Jocelyn Wills describes this drive to get ahead as an aspiration for "salaried employment" in a "society focused on material advancement as a measure of independence, success, and self-worth."³ Acquiring possessions was not synonymous with acquiring wealth. The latter required saving and investing, while the former was merely the spending of what one earned. During this era, we see businesses marketing their goods, enticing workers to consume their wages and acquire

¹ Jocelyn Wills, "Respectable Mediocrity: The Everyday Life of an Ordinary American Striver, 1876-1890" *Journal of Social History* 37 No. 2 (Winter 2003): 341.

² Wills, "Respectable Mediocrity," 324.

³ Wills, "Respectable Mediocrity," 324.

things, leaving a trail of indebted workers who never managed to save.⁴ It was into this environment that Paul E. Werner stepped and managed to succeed in both making and saving money to grow his small business into a printing empire. In his struggles to sustain his printing empire, Werner used bankruptcy and receivership to forestall creditors and restore cash flow. We see him succeed and fail only to succeed again.

An examination of the labor history and economic history during the Gilded Age provides examples of national trends and changes in management style. Two studies about corporate management are important for this dissertation, Alfred Chandler's *Visible Hand*, and Oliver Zunz's *Making America Corporate*.⁵ Chandler's groundbreaking study examines and analyzes changes in management style as corporations evolved from owned and run businesses by family members to those administered by salaried managers.⁶ As these new corporations grew, their administrative and managerial class expanded to coordinate complex operations across a large region or the country.⁷ Chandler's work does not really discuss managers and their role with the industrialized

⁴ Thorsten Veblen, "Conspicuous Consumption," Ch. 4 in *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (NY: The Macmillan Company, 1912): 74.

⁵ Alfred Chandler, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1977), and Olivier Zunz, *Making America Corporate 1870-1920* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1990).

⁶ Chandler, 2-3.

⁷ Chandler, 2-3.

corporation.⁸ Zunz examines how managers function within these new corporations and the methods they used to control operations within factories and office complexes.⁹ Werner's companies evolved as Chandler describes, first as partnerships then as complex corporations.¹⁰ Werner, along with B.F. Nelson, was part owner of his earlier business ventures into newspapers in the late 1870s.¹¹ By 1888, T.W. Cornell was President while Werner served as General Manager and Treasurer of The Werner Company.¹² Thus, Werner served in a variety of positions, ranging from general manager and treasurer to superintendent until he ultimately became president of his printing company. As his company grew and he became the principal investor, he wielded more control over the mission and activities, and the levels of management within his corporation expanded accordingly. Werner and his business expanded to resemble those described in Chandler's introduction.¹³ At its height, the Werner Company had a hierarchical management structure with Werner at its head and

⁸ Zunz, *Making America Corporate*, 6

⁹ Zunz, *Making America Corporate*, 9.

¹⁰ Chandler, 2-3.

¹¹ Ohio, Vol. 3 and Vol. 180 (March 26, 1878): 498, R.G. Dun & Co. collection, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School.

¹² (Ohio, Vol. 3 and Vol. 180 (April 14, 1888): 790, R.G. Dun & Co.

¹³ Chandler, 6-10.

others, including family members, running various departments across the country.¹⁴

In his discussion of the rise of corporate America, Oliver Zunz examines how capitalism shapes work culture and how managers function within a corporation.¹⁵ The manager or salaried worker had constant, day-to-day contact with laborers and skilled workers, where the upper classes and the upper level managers or owners “had little contact with the growing number of people they employed.”¹⁶ During these early years, Werner ran the daily operation of the company. By the time he became president, Werner delegated responsibility to the foremen and superintendents in the manufactory who ran the daily operations. The 1900 Akron City Directory identifies at least seven hundred employees of the Werner Company. Of those seven hundred, a dozen were foremen with Werner’s brother-in-law, Charles Denaple as superintendent.¹⁷

Werner brought in editors for his newspapers, and editors, craftsmen and workers for his printing company, and editors and general managers by the 1890s. The Werner Company merged with two Chicago publishing companies in

¹⁴ John Covert provides the best information about the corporate structure of the Werner Company. John C. Covert, *The Werner Co.* (Chicago: The Werner Company, 1894).

¹⁵ Zunz, *Making America Corporate 1870-1920*, 8.

¹⁶ Zunz, *Making America Corporate*, 8-9.

¹⁷ The Burch Directory Company, *Akron Official City Directory 1900* (Akron, OH: Commercial Printing Company, 1900). In 1900, there are 42,728 people living in Akron, according to the *Ohio Almanac* (Lorain, OH: The Lorain Journal Company, 1968): 122.

1892 and purchased several other companies (for his school book line) in the mid 1890s to bring their merchandise and expertise under the wings of his enterprise.¹⁸ Arthur J. Saalfield, whom Werner Company hired in 1899 as publisher, was the last in a line of outsiders.

Changes in Werner's workforce fit within the pattern described by Bruce Laurie in *Artisans Into Workers*.¹⁹ In his labor history, Laurie recounts the changes in the workers' skills, from specialized and apprenticed over time, to laborers who were not skilled workers. These new workers were not the craftsmen of the past or even the early nineteenth century. Paid by the hour and day, they were beholden to the company, living from paycheck to paycheck.²⁰ while the skilled labor union members worked steadily, they measured their success when they rose in to supervisory positions. This shift in worker and company man was also described in Chandler in his discussion about the change in company structure from family ownership to management, bringing in people, and specialists from the outside to run his company.²¹ From his first newspaper

¹⁸ The R.S. Peale and the Belford-Clarke Company merged with Werner Printing and Lithographing Company in 1892 to form the Werner Company. ¹⁸ "Chicago a Publishing Center: A. Belford Talks Entertainingly About the Peale-Werner Combination" *Chicago Daily Tribune* Dec 12, 1892 p1. Between 1894 and 1895, the Werner Company added a school book line acquiring several more publishing companies. "It Will Publish School Books" *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Nov 28, 1895): 10. See Chapter 6 for this aspect of the Werner Company.

¹⁹ Bruce Laurie, *Artisans into Workers: Labor in Nineteenth Century America*. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997): 128-129.

²⁰ Wills, "Respectable Mediocrity," 324.

²¹ Chandler, 286.

company, Werner hired skilled laborers, editors, and publishers to produce all the commercial and book printing jobs he acquired.

In all his business ventures, Werner succeeded and failed and succeeded again. *Born Losers* by Scott Sandage focuses on failure of men in business and meshes well with Jocelyn Wills' article about how salaried, clerical people 'made themselves' in the Gilded Age. Writing in the new field of "Failure Studies", both describe individuals who worked for wages instead of themselves, seeing themselves as respectable and successful, even if they fail to save money or own businesses. Men in the ranks of management achieved a level of economic and social mobility that takes them only so far.²²

Paul E. Werner showed both qualities of success and failure, saving and working hard to make his business a success. He invested in his companies and equipment, rolled with the debt and economic panics, and, in the end, was both a success and a failure. The "Culture of the Market", as described by Sandage, "recast financial, transportation, and communication infrastructure to foster and reward individual enterprise."²³ To be successful, you must utilize the infrastructure. Borrowing, bargaining, dunning, paying, and trusting were all part

²² Wills, "Respectable Mediocrity," 324.

²³ Scott A Sandage, *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2005): 10.

of normal relationships between business owner and his clientele.²⁴ All these things Werner did to foster the growth of his various companies. This time period and business climate fostered the idea of the 'virtue of striving' and equated it with ambition.²⁵

Werner's business and civic activities were similar to the businessmen and local magnates in Akron. He supported local causes and served on various boards. Both Sandage and Wills write about the ideal of success and failure as measured against contemporaries. When we compare Werner's life and ambitions to those of his colleagues, we see that his contemporaries served as role models and colleagues throughout most of his life in Akron. Werner fits squarely into this era of men who succeeded and failed, fighting to support their families and workers.

As Werner's company matured, its management style and strata emulated those described by Zunz and Chandler. Chandler's classic work on management styles describes the shift from family owned and run business to companies managed and run by outsiders or hired managers. This was the case with Werner and his various companies from the very beginning. At first, Paul E. Werner did not have the capital to finance a business by himself, so he enlisted assistance and backing from colleagues and extended family. According to the

²⁴ Sandage, *Born Losers*, 10.

²⁵ Sandage, *Born Losers*, 14.

R.G. Dun credit reports, in March of 1878, Werner was in partnership with John Buchtel. By now, Werner was married, owned a house and a lot worth about \$1500. The partners were engaged in printing both the Akron *Germania* and *Sunday Gazette*. They are capitalized at about \$2000, which is offset by Werner's worth.²⁶ In 1889, the Werner Printing & Lithographing Company moved to its new location at Union and Perkins. They were doing so well that they issued more stock valued at \$250, 000 and were fully subscribed. Dun valued the plant at \$350,000.²⁷ They were well in the black, paying cash, and making regular mortgage payments on the real estate. The economy was booming again, and Werner Printing & Lithographing Company needed new equipment. They purchased 4 large presses.²⁸ By April of the same year, the corporation increased its shares to half a million and was considered one of the most profitable of the county.

When we take a closer look at the boom and bust cycles of this local businessman, he seems to fit the categories Sandage describes. Paul E. Werner fits Sandage's theory on the local and individual level. Sandage tells us there was often a stigma attached to bankruptcy, that many would rather be broke and earn their way out of debt, paying back over years or decades, than declare

²⁶ Ohio Vol. 180, p498, R.G. Dun Co.

²⁷ Ohio Vol. 180, p790, R.G. Dun Co.

²⁸ Ohio Vol. 180, p790, R.G. Dun Co.

bankruptcy.²⁹ Wills echoes that notion in her study recounting that her subject “understood his limitations . . . and attained a modicum of respectability he craved through salaried employment”, even as he paid off debts to the company owner.³⁰ In the late 1870s and early 1880s, Werner worked to pay off debts incurred during his partnership with Benjamin F. Nelson. Those debts, initially covered by his wife’s cousin John J. Cook, were repaid after many years.³¹ In time, the Werner Company had steady cash flow. When there are severe fluctuations in the revenue stream, he declared bankruptcy, placing his business in receivership, to hold off creditors while the company became solvent again.³² Therefore we see Werner and his company fitting both models, both shunning bankruptcy and taking advantage of the protection it affords businesses.³³

Making money is never enough when you are business owner. You have to make a profit and then invest those profits into your company. In addition, you have to find clients, and modes of work that are sustainable and the provide continuous cash flow.

²⁹ Sandage, *Born Losers*, 16.

³⁰ Wills, “Respectable Mediocrity,” 342,

³¹ Ohio, Vol 180 p609 (Cot 22, 1880), Dun & Co.

³² Summit County Ohio, County Recorder’s Office, Richard P. Marvin Receiver for the Werner Company properties and assets. Deed dated November 5, 1897 filed November 6, 1897 in D233-371.

³³ Scott Dix Kenfield. ed, *Akron and Summit County, Ohio, 1825-1928* (Chicago and Akron: S. J. Clarke, 1928): 387-388.

As Paul E. Werner's business grew, he added managers, creating a corporate hierarchy. These changes in company structure reflect Chandler's analysis of the development of corporations and business structure in the late nineteenth century.³⁴ The company hired skilled printers, engravers, lithographers, and book binders, then salaried male and female workers who ran the machinery and performed the manual labor, and finally salesmen to promote and sell products across the country. John Covert's 1895 marketing piece about the Werner Company provides a bird's-eye view of the multi-faceted company. He provides many details about both operations in both the Chicago office and the Akron factory. These details are reiterated in a short article by Charles Thorpe, written at the same time.³⁵

In the early twentieth century, publishers often segregated or sold off their printing business, if they had one. In this manner, the printing industry consolidated to remain profitable. Richard Moses and Donald Sheehan place this division in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. According to Sheehan, by 1914, only eighteen percent of publishers printed their books.³⁶

³⁴ Chandler, 7-8.

³⁵ John C. Covert, *The Werner Co.* (Chicago: The Werner Company, 1894) and Charles Thorpe, "Printing Plant of the Werner Co., Akron Ohio." *American Pressman* VI No. 1 (Dec 1895): 9-15.

³⁶ Donald Sheehan, *This Was Publishing* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1952): 21-22.

Richard Moses also reports on this trend writing, "virtually every American publisher committed to printing as well as publishing went through bankruptcy, Appleton, Harper, and Lippincott are only three examples, whose printing operation was sold off to reorganize and use the proceeds of the plant's sale to pay claims to creditors."³⁷ The Werner Company fits firmly in this time frame, by assigning then selling the publishing arm of the business to Arthur J. Saalfield between 1899 and 1905.³⁸

In 1910, The Werner Company was suffering from just such a crunch of work and cash flow, as evidenced by declaring bankruptcy and placing the business in receivership. Information gleaned from receivership papers makes this clear. William Marlatt, the court appointed receiver, petitioned the court for the release of funds to pay for supplies necessary to fulfill contracts. Without the income, Werner Company was unable to achieve any form of solvency to pay wages or debts and fulfill contracts.³⁹

As we all recognize, it is not only individual businesses that create their own financial crises, it can be the community, the state, the national, or even

³⁷ Richard P Moses, *A Tapestry of Change* Unpublished dissertation (Temple University, 1998): 29-30.

³⁸ Madeline B. Stern, *Imprints on History Book Publishers and American Frontiers* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956): 373.

³⁹ Court decrees detailing the actions of the Receiver in the 1910 bankruptcy are delineated in Summit County Recorder's Office Deed 1848-375 captioned Circuit Court US Northern District of Ohio Eastern Division 7916 Civil Docket vs. Paul E. Werner, Edward P Werner, the Werner Company, et.al. dated December 1911, filed Sept 5, 1940.

global economy that causes a restriction in the availability of credit or in cash flow. Sometimes financial solvency was beyond the business acumen of a business owner and his managers. National and global financial panics affected individuals and businesses in a multitude of ways, including their ability to provide products for their customers. During the span of Paul E. Werner's life, he lived through five financial panics, the last, the Great Depression occurred when he was retired.

The first financial panic took place in 1873, when Werner was still a young man, beginning his working career and employed by someone else. He was just beginning to edit and publish newspapers. It was just after the 1873-75 financial panic that Werner owned his first business (*Germania* and *Sunday Gazette*). During the 1884 panic, he was still building a printing business and the R.G. Dun credit records report that the Werner Printing Company brought in A. C. Lohman as a partner, along with ten thousand dollars, having finally paid off his debts to Cook⁴⁰ By the 1893 financial panic, Werner and his various companies at first seemed to be losing money and then grew at an exponential rate.⁴¹ At the height of this financial panic, in 1894, the printing labor unions struck at the Werner

⁴⁰ Ohio Vol. 180, p609 and 702, R.G. Dun Co.

⁴¹ Edward S. Harter, *Paul E. Werner: in Honor of his 80th Birthday*. Akron, OH: The Akron Beacon Journal, 1930): 7.

Company for better wages and working conditions.⁴² Within two years of settling the strike, Werner Company was in receivership for the first time.⁴³ The 1907 financial panic occurred just two years after a series of copyright law suits filed by Encyclopædia Britannica Co. that began to wreak havoc on the company.⁴⁴ Without corporate records it is difficult to know how the 1907 financial panic affected the Werner Company; however, in 1909, real estate records show bankruptcy proceedings yet again.⁴⁵

Changes in management style, technology, and finances, all affected Paul E. Werner and Werner Company. There are other factors in the Gilded Age that changed the printing and publishing industry. One in particular was the struggle between the company and the printing labor unions, which sought to improve working conditions including the length of the work day and week and standardizing wages. Unions controlled the types of work members could perform, training and skill levels. The more skilled labor in a factory, the greater the chance that workers would organize and join a union.

⁴² Elizabeth Faulkner Baker, *Printers and Technology: A History of the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1957): 94-95.

⁴³ Summit County Ohio, County Recorder's Office, Richard P. Marvin Receiver for the Werner Company properties and assets. Deed dated November 5, 1897 filed November 6, 1897 in D233-371.

⁴⁴ Harter, 10 and Paul Kruse, "Piracy and the Britannica: Unauthorized Reprintings of the Ninth Edition." *The Library Quarterly* 33 No.4 (Oct. 1963): 320-322

⁴⁵ Court decrees detailing the actions of the Receiver in the 1910 bankruptcy are delineated in Summit County Recorder's Office Deed 1848-375 captioned Circuit Court US Northern District of Ohio Eastern Division 7916 Civil Docket vs. Paul E. Werner, Edward P Werner, the Werner Company, et.al. dated December 1911, filed Sept 5, 1940.

The workers at the Werner Company were no exception. In the late 1880s there were five unions in the printing trades, compositors and typographers, lithographers, pressmen, feeders, and binders.⁴⁶ These unions trained apprentices, endorsed laymen, and certified foremen. All five were powerful and active in the early 1890s, and were present in the printing manufactory. Their presence would normally mean high productivity and good quality workmanship. The Werner Company was renowned for its high end products, including commercial job printing and the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, produced by skilled members of the typographer and pressmen labor unions.⁴⁷

It was during this decade that labor unions vied for control of their working conditions, often coming into direct conflict with each other and with owners. The workers' demands for better working conditions, better pay, and shorter work days and weeks rolled across the country affecting many types of businesses, printing included. The Gilded Age saw unrest in the printing trades at The Werner Company at about the same time as printing unions lobbied the government for better working conditions.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ The five printing labor unions "received a charter from the American Federation of Labor, on November 9, 1895." Baker, *Printers and Technology*, 110, fn 49.

⁴⁷ Baker, *Printers and Technology*, 94.

⁴⁸ James L. Harrison, Public Printer, *100 GPO Years 1861-1961* Sesquicentennial Edition, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2010): 63-74 and Elizabeth Faulkner Baker, *Printers and Technology* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1957), 89-93.

The reactions of owners and top managers were either to accede to union demands, or lock out workers. This was just one more challenge that would plague The Werner Company in the 1890s. Just as the company was expanding and bringing in more business from Chicago and points west, and just as the financial panic of 1893 was beginning to affect industry, Werner had to deal with labor unrest in his factory. The first strike was in 1894 and lasted for several months.⁴⁹ For the next sixteen years, on and off, strikes and labor issues that affected the quality of work produced in the factory.⁵⁰

In 1893 and 1894, Werner vied with the unions to control employment in his printing plant. In September 1893, he cut wages ten percent for six months to weather the financial panic of 1893. At the end of six months, the unions pressed for a restoration of wages. At the end of that six months, when pressmen asked for a restoration of wages Werner replied that "there was no such organization as the Akron Printing Pressmen in his employ, and he would not restore the former scale."⁵¹ The board of directors, Werner being out of town, locked the unions out of the factory and put seven hundred laborers out of work.⁵² Baker recounts that, "inflamed by empty promises, by secret agreements soon to be broken, by evasion and vituperation, it [the strike] highlighted not

⁴⁹ Baker, 94-112.

⁵⁰ Baker, 110-111.

⁵¹ Baker, 94, fn 15.

⁵² Baker, 94.

only the shifting relations between pressmen and compositors but also between organized craftsmen and aggressive anti-union employers."⁵³

Shutting unions out of his factory and bringing in non-union workers and armed guards was similar to Carnegie and Frick's actions during the Homestead Strike.⁵⁴ Werner's actions reflected the attitudes of the Robber Barons and hard nosed businessmen of the Gilded Age.⁵⁵ He was not going to work with the unions if he could avoid it. Returning from his trip to California, Werner refused to allow the striking pressmen in his plant. The *Typographical Journal* reported that Werner "was so incensed at their [the pressmen's and feeders'] arbitrary manner of doing business" that only members of the International Typographers' Union would run his presses.⁵⁶ For many months, Werner had pushed to remove the International Printing Pressmen's Union (IPPU) from his factory in favor of the International Typographers' Union (ITU).⁵⁷

Removing the unions meant keeping down costs. What he risked was a diminution in quality by having less skilled men, or men skilled in other trades,

⁵³ Baker, 93.

⁵⁴ "1892 Homestead Strike" *Labor History & Culture* (retrieved Oct. 6, 2011) http://www.aflcio.org/aboutus/history/history/homestead_strike.cfm

⁵⁵ This 1892 strike occurred over wage cuts at the Homestead Plant outside Pittsburgh. AFL-CIO, "1892 Homestead Strike" *Labor History & Culture* (retrieved Oct. 6, 2011) http://www.aflcio.org/aboutus/history/history/homestead_strike.cfm

⁵⁶ Baker, 95, fn 16.

⁵⁷ Baker, 96.

working in jobs that required years of experience.⁵⁸ According to the local paper, Werner continued to support the actions of his board and executive officers in their fight against the striking unions.⁵⁹

Paul E. Werner may have picked his battles but they would have far reaching repercussions. Baker explains that Henry C. McFarland, a Vice President of the International Typographers' Union (ITU), crossed picket lines of the IPPU and brought in skilled men in the IPPU trades to work at Werner Company during a strike.⁶⁰ Hiring ITU pressmen and feeders from outside Akron, McFarland negotiated a pay rate "\$1 per week above the scale paid to members of the IPPU pressmen"⁶¹ McFarland hired and assigned ITU members (compositors specifically) to be pressmen, running the all important and very complicated presses. The IPPU pressmen, when they were finally allowed to return to the manufactory, accused the feeders of ruining the high quality work and presses.⁶²

Working conditions were resolved by May of 1895 at the Werner Company, satisfying the Akron Printing Pressmen and the Bookbinders unions.⁶³ Mortimer Bookwalter was the new press foreman, brought in from W.B. Conkey

⁵⁸ Baker, 102.

⁵⁹ *Akron Beacon Journal* April 23, 1894: 1 col.8

⁶⁰ Baker, 102.

⁶¹ Baker, 95.

⁶² Baker, 95.

⁶³ *Akron Beacon Journal* May 16, 1895: 1 col. 6.

Company in Chicago.⁶⁴ When first hired he held IPPU membership and was ultimately granted ITU membership, as the unions worked out reciprocal agreements and memberships. By December 1895 ITU and IPPU came to an agreement with the Werner Company to rehire union pressmen and press feeders, establish union shop at prevailing wage at the plant. By January 1896, the ITU, IPPU and the IBB (International Book Binders Union) amalgamated with reciprocity.⁶⁵ Werner accepted the union in his shop and ITU members ran all mechanical equipment.⁶⁶ Baker, citing the *American Pressman*, writes that Werner “had grown tired of the quality of work done by the I.T.U. men” and wanted to reemploy union pressmen in his manufactory.⁶⁷ Werner wanted to restore his company’s reputation for its high quality product and so needed these highly skilled compositors and pressmen performing their jobs.⁶⁸

In the aftermath of the strike, Charles Thorpe’s description of the Werner Company plant and business was quite favorable.⁶⁹ Since *The American Pressman* was the official organ of the IPPU, it appears that the pressmen and union members were now happy and working well at Werner Company. In

⁶⁴ Memo from Bookwalter to the ITU in Baker, 100, and Literary and Trade Notes *Publishers’ Weekly* #1184 (Oct 6, 1894): 548.

⁶⁵ Baker, 107-109.

⁶⁶ Baker, 110.

⁶⁷ Baker, 99, fn 27.

⁶⁸ Thorpe, 15.

⁶⁹ Thorpe, 9-15.

addition to references to the strike, Thorpe's article provides numbers, types of machinery, and quantities of men and work. Both Baker and Thorpe use John Covert as a source when describing the factory and its output, the details will be enumerated in the chapters that follow.⁷⁰

Covert's "official" history of The Werner Company reflects the company's pride in its manufactory. He described the various departments along with their responsibilities. Every operation within the plant was explained in detail. The productivity and capacity of the printing plant in the mid-1890s was impressive. According to Covert, two thousand sets of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* were sold in Louisville in just four months in 1894.⁷¹ Sales of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* before 1894 amounted to more than two million dollars annually. These books were sold around the world, mainly by subscription.⁷² The Werner Company sold millions of dollars worth of this important work in the two short years since they merged with R.S. Peale Company and Belford-Clarke Company. Thorpe states that Werner Company printed the *Encyclopædia Britannica* six times a year for a total of 120,000 sets per year.⁷³ The Werner Company's sale of 120,000 copies

⁷⁰ John C. Covert, *The Werner Co.* (Chicago: The Werner Company, 1894).

⁷¹ Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): 31.

⁷² Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): 24-25.

⁷³ Thorpe, 12. Baker states that The Werner Company printed the twenty eight volume *Encyclopædia Britannica* using forty presses for six weeks at a time, six times per year. This resulted in 150 [railroad] carloads of *Encyclopædia Britannica* and school books left the factory every year. Baker, 94 see FN 15.

of Encyclopædia Britannica without paying a royalty or licensing fee to *Encyclopædia Britannica* or Hooper and Jackson as the Clarke Company Ltd. or Encyclopædia Britannica Co. was one of the justifications for lawsuits that were filed in 1905 against the company. If this pace continued into the early 1900s, then these numbers indicated a decided loss in income, real and potential for both Encyclopædia Britannica and Hooper and Jackson.

Baker includes a coda about Werner Company that in 1909 when contracts were up for negotiation, Paul E. Werner wanted "to place into operation non-union conditions and the continuation of the old and inadequate wage scale."⁷⁴ While pressmen struck against the Werner Company, working conditions deteriorated until few experienced hands were running the ever-aging equipment. Plagued with financial problems and slow cash-flow, The Werner Company closed and The New Werner Company was formed, basically reconstituting the firm with the hopes of forestalling debt.⁷⁵ The Werner Company cited the failure of the South Cleveland Banking Company, which held about one million dollars in loans, as one of the reasons for trying to circumvent debt.⁷⁶ In the same maneuver, The New Werner Company tried to renegotiate

⁷⁴ Baker, 110, and "The Passing of Werner's An Illustration" *American Pressman* XXI (Dec 1910): 79.

⁷⁵ Trade Notes *American Pressman* XXI (March 1911):104

⁷⁶ "Akron, O." *American Pressman* XXI (1910): 35 and "Bank Officers Indicted" *New York Times* (Jan 21, 1910).

wages, asking laborers to take a cut in pay and hoping to make the new factory union free.⁷⁷ This story was corroborated in *The American Pressman* in 1910 which reported the decline of the once proud printing company due to union strikes and the failure of the South Cleveland Banking Company.⁷⁸

These strikes and the working conditions and probably Paul E. Werner's inability to put more funds into his business caused the deterioration of the company, wages, and cash-flow, and in the end loss of business. These pieces of history about the union and its relationship with Werner Company provide a clear picture of why Werner Company failed financially in 1909 and then closed its doors in 1914.

This chapter examined how the growth and structure Werner's business fits within the Gilded Age. The era of big business brought about changes in managerial infrastructure in the corporate office and far-flung divisions. Werner dealt with labor unions that sought to control working conditions and wages. While The Werner Company never reached the size and complexity of the major big businesses of the era (railroads, steel, and oil), it struggled with cash flow and credit throughout its existence.

⁷⁷ Baker, 110-111 FN 52 and "Werner Bondholders Accept About 30 Per Cent." *The American Pressman* XXI (Dec 1910): 254.

⁷⁸ "Reports of Officers, I.P.P. and A.U. of N.A.: Akron, O." *The American Pressman* XXI (Dec 1910): 35; (March 1911): 147 and "Banker is Convicted" *The Atlantic Georgian and News* May 7, 1910: 5 and *New York Times* Jan 7, 1910 and Jan. 21, 1910. See also various articles in Akron Beacon Journal 1910 about the South Cleveland Banking Co and associated lawsuits.

Chapter 4

THE PRINTING BUSINESS IN THE GILDED AGE

Printing changed in form, shape, and technique throughout the nineteenth century in the United States. These changes were even more dramatic after the Civil War. To adequately address this topic, I will divide the subject into three parts: technology, skills, and types of printing. The first two parts will be described in this chapter and the third part in the chapter entitled "Werner's Printing Empire." Each part is a discipline unto itself so I will discuss the overall state of that aspect of printing, how it was transformed within the Gilded Age, and how these affected Paul E. Werner and The Werner Company from the beginning of his printing ventures in the mid-1870s until he closes the business in 1914.

In the nineteenth century the technology and equipment used to produce printed materials advanced more rapidly than in the four centuries before. Changes occurred in almost every segment of the printing business, including delivery of manuscripts. With these came the expensive and extensive cash outlay to acquire new equipment, maintain it, and replace what becomes

antiquated. While equipment obsolescence was slower in the late nineteenth century than in the twenty-first, it was still a considerable strain on finances. The owners of printing companies and book manufacturing enterprises had to take their profit and reinvest it in the company. In addition, printers depended upon steady sales of products and services to refill their coffers. The printer was caught between the need to continuously upgrade equipment and the need to repay the loans taken to acquire the equipment. If cash flow occurred at the wrong points in the business or in the wrong days of the month, it might be impossible to keep creditors at bay.

In addition to advances and upgrades in technology and equipment, the men and women who worked within the printing businesses needed to be trained and re-trained to work the various pieces of equipment. It is during this period that the printing industry unionized and strikes were fairly common. With labor unions came the division and subdivision of labor, the need to segregate training and a rigid division between types of laborers and task. Lastly there is the wide variety of types of printing. If a printing company specialized in only one type of printing, it ran the risk of fluctuating business. If the printing company offered a wide variety of services, then the workers and managers had to juggle the differing demands, skills, and deadlines of the various types of job work. Steady work was the key. Keep the presses running and there was steady

cash flow. If the presses sat idle and bills were not paid, payroll was not met and the business failed.

There were many changes in the printing industry during the Gilded Age. The evolution of the printing equipment, skills, and products in the Werner Company reflects these changes. It is easier to talk about the three pieces of the printing business or industry separately and then combine them together to see where and how they affected the viability of the Werner Company.

While British and American printing techniques and equipment kept pace with one another in terms of advances, the American market mechanized faster than the British because there were fewer skilled artisans, and the American market for equipment was larger and more competitive than the British. Richard Moses' dissertation provides an excellent outline of transformations in publishing and printing technology and highlights the equipment and techniques adopted in the US.¹ While we do not see this type of dichotomy between British and American printing in Akron, Ohio, there is definitely competition between local printers to upgrade equipment and gain clients.

¹ Richard P. Moses, *A Tapestry of Change* unpublished dissertation (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1998), iii, 4.

The Publishing Industry²

The publishing business is a more inclusive word when talking about the acquisition and ultimate delivery of books to the public. Printing is one of the facets of the publishing industry. In the Gilded Age and before, publishing and printing companies were often the same, that is, the publishing house owned the printing end of the business. There are four major parts or components of the process for taking a manuscript to the public: publisher or editor, printer, binder, and bookseller. Through the nineteenth century these components were often combined in one business, but could be separate. What follows is a description of these parts and outline of how each evolved up to the Gilded Age.

In the beginning, the printer owned a shop with printing equipment. An author came to this printer with a manuscript for publication. This manuscript was first edited, then set into type by a typesetter or compositor, the proof was edited, sometimes by an editor, sometimes a compositor, maybe the same person. Then the edited typeset pages were imposed and printed. Once all the sheets were printed, they were given or sold to the bookseller, from whom the

² For in-depth coverage of this topic see Meredith L. McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting 1834-1853* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); Donald Sheehan, *This Was Publishing* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1952); William Charvat, *Literary Publishing in America 1790-1850* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1959), Rosalind Remer, *Printers and Men of Capital: Philadelphia Book Publishers in the New Republic*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996): 2-3; and *A History of the Book in America* series David D. Hall General Editor, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000-2010).

public would purchase the book, most often unbound. Sometimes the leaves or sheets were sewn together and a paper wrapper placed around the pages to keep them from getting dirty. The bookseller could be part of the printing business or separate. The purchaser then took the loose sheets to a binder who sewed the leaves or printed pages together and put hard covers around the pages. Sometimes the bookseller was also the binder, and might bind some of the books for display or instant purchase. When books were transported from the printer to their ultimate destination, they were often shipped unbound, as loose sheets.

By the 1820s, printers and booksellers sold books already bound in what are called today publishers' bindings.³ Richer customers purchased books unbound and had bespoke or custom bindings made for their purchases. At this time, the publishing industry consisted of the publisher who accepted the manuscript from the author and did all the editing, and the printing arm of the business, or the contracted printer, who printed the manuscript and bound the pages into hard or soft covers, and shipped the materials to the bookseller, bookstore, or book jobber. Most often the publisher and printer were part of the same business, and the bookstore was one retail outlet for their publications.

³ For more information about publishers' bindings see: *Publishers' Bindings Online* <http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/>

After the Civil War, the publisher also distributed books and magazines through the mail to the customer. Many of these publications were sold by subscription and the books were designated as series or libraries. This marketing ploy did two things; it allowed the publisher to ship via U.S. Mail at a favorable rate, and it encouraged customers to purchase a rather large set of books one at a time.⁴ Many publishers still had a bookstore or retail outlet to market their imprints, although more independent bookstores existed and sold a number of publishers' imprints.

By the late Gilded Age, many publishers separated the business of acquiring manuscripts and marketing them from the actual printing side of the enterprise. This action stripped away the financial strain of continually purchasing new printing equipment, paying the wages of workers, union and non-union, and the costs of all the supplies. The publisher then took on the risk of acquiring a manuscript for sale, marketing, and distribution, while the printer dealt with fixed costs of equipment, and variable costs of labor and supplies.⁵ Since the bookselling aspect was pretty much segregated from publisher, there was the associated cost of warehousing those titles that did not sell immediately. There is some discussion in the literature, particularly in the early nineteenth

⁴ Modern examples of these types of books or purchases would be "Book of the Month Club" or any of the subject book clubs like the "History Book Club" or "Science Fiction Book Club".

⁵ Richard P Moses, *A Tapestry of Change* Unpublished dissertation (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1998): 83-84.

century about pricing books to sell, not printing too many copies, distributing copies of printed text across the country as a collaborative effort with each publisher and book seller inserting his own title page to those loose sheets. This resulted in a shared distribution of costs of printing amongst several publishers, thereby sharing the financial risk. In the late nineteenth century, selling by subscription provided a means of more accurately estimating the number of copies to produce. Pricing was fluid resulting in competition between publishers and booksellers. Books were sold directly to customers either by subscription or through the mail, undercutting both book jobber and bookshops. Subscription books were sold below the list price or the agreed upon discount.⁶ This disparity in pricing resulted in a variety of actions by publishers and booksellers including fixed prices for titles for a set period of time, a "National Book Trade System" in both the United States and Britain, and even boycotting certain distributors, including R.H. Macy.⁷

⁶ Donald Sheehan, *This Was Publishing* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1952): 200-201.

⁷ Michael Winship, "The Rise of a National Book Trade System in the United States" Ch. 3 in *A History of the Book in America* Volume 4: *Print in Motion The Expansion of Publishing and Reading in the United States, 1880-1940*, Kaestle, Carl F. and Janice A. Radway, editors, published in Association with The American Antiquarian Society. (Chapel Hill: The University of Chapel Hill Press and, 2009): 63. See also Raymond Howard Shove, *Cheap Book Production in the United States, 1870 To 1891* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Library, 1937); Frederick Orridge Macmillan, *The Net Book Agreement of 1899 and the Book War of 1906*, printed for the Author by Robert Maclehose & Co., Ltd. (Glasgow: The University Press, 1924) and Michael Hackenberg, "The Subscription Publishing Network in Nineteenth-Century America" Ch.3 in

Once the type was set, typographers and printers made electrotype or stereotype plates and printed continuously from these, until they set up a new edition or a new format. The publishers' representative sought authors, or books printed by authors not from the United States, or went to the semi-annual book fairs in Europe (usually Germany) looking for new titles to publish. They sent those books back to the publisher, who subsequently sent the text to the printer to create the plates. The publisher then registered the copyright with the U.S. Copyright Office at the Library of Congress.

For Moses, this is the most dramatic series of shifts, that the publisher and printer separated from one another and that each occupation or business function carried its own attendant risk.⁸ The printer took on the risk of printing the book or publication, the publisher the risk of selling the manuscript and recouping his money. By the middle 1800s, booksellers, printers, and publishers were separate professions and by 1900, even the companies that once offered both services focused on the most cost effective, less financially risky venture. In many cases, that was the publishing, not the printing end of the business.

Moses explains these changes succinctly. The Bookseller changed from "risk taking publisher to a retail outlet, selling books from many publishers"

Getting the Books Out, ed. by Michael Hackenberg (Washington, D.C.: The Center for the Book, Library of Congress, 1987): p 45-75.

⁸ Moses, iii, 4.

competing with lending libraries and vendors selling reading materials, and competing with stationery shops often adding stationery to their inventory.⁹ Book printers became risk takers, taking the credit risk of the industry. To remain competitive, they reinvested profits in new machines that increased the output of product.¹⁰

Publishers took “large inventory risks” backing their judgment of authors and their manuscripts. These investments became sellable merchandise and books that required skillful marketing and management.¹¹ The least risky investment was a known author whose works sold regardless of quality. This was the beauty and necessity of the backlist.

By the mid-nineteenth century, publishers’ roles changed from dealing with booksellers to dealing with authors.¹² Following the pattern, Paul E. Werner moved his interest from editing and publishing newspapers to printing them. Later he shifted his personal energies in the business from acquiring manuscripts and printing all materials, to hiring Arthur J. Saalfeld to deal with manuscript and the publishing end of business, and returned his focus to running his plant.¹³ Here we see Paul E. Werner and The Werner Company fitting solidly into this

⁹ Moses, 10.

¹⁰ Moses, 10.

¹¹ Moses, 10.

¹² Moses, 10.

¹³ Advertisement *Publishers' Weekly* #1460 (Jan 20, 1900): 79.

industry pattern outlined by Moses. He will suffer the same credit risks and issues as all the other large book manufacturing plants.

In 1880, substantial publishing and printing plants were common in the major printing centers in the United States. Werner's printing plant in Akron was no exception, except that he had fewer presses in 1880. As business increased, he added power presses. The operations in his plants included typesetting, printing, and binding. By 1890, printing and book manufacturing companies encompassed the following operations: composition, electrotyping, printing, binding, and warehousing.¹⁴ Werner's plant was just one of these vast operations.¹⁵

Paul E. Werner fits into this Gilded Age model of the book publishing and printing in the following ways. Since his business career began in 1873 as the editor and publisher of newspapers, he was involved on the manuscript to product side. With the acquisition of the printing side of both the *Sunday Gazette* and the Akron *Germania*, by 1879, the three aspects of the publishing-printing are merged together. Werner was now responsible for the acquisition of news and advertisements, printing the materials in timely fashion, on a daily or weekly basis, and then distributing and actually selling all the papers. Werner laid out

¹⁴ Moses, 21.

¹⁵ John C. Covert, *The Werner Co.* (Chicago: The Werner Company, 1894).

money to pay his reporters or news services, purchased paper and ink, paid his workers and the rent. In addition he had to maintain the equipment and type, purchasing new as needed, and paying those who delivered the newspapers from the printing press to either the retail outlets or the residences. It is possible to speculate where Werner derived his income, even without records. Advertising and sales of papers were his only profit points. The profit is in selling advertising, not in selling papers. While the sale of papers must have provided some profit, it was advertising that kept the business afloat and subsidized the printing of the newspapers. The cash flowed out until all the papers sell and the advertisements do their work. What profit there is in the business must be immediately put back in for the next day's paper. This early business most likely produced a slim margin of profit, if any. A newspaper subscription was five cents per copy or two dollars per year for the *Sunday Gazette* in 1879, and just \$1.50 per year for the *Akron Germania*.¹⁶

Of course, Werner was not alone in these printing and publishing endeavors in 1880. In Akron alone, he had several competitors. Most notable was the Beacon Printing Company which existed for the entire duration of The Werner Company. There were other printing companies that came and went. In 1880, Cutrice was a job printer for the Beacon Publishing Company. He joined

¹⁶ *The Sunday Gazette* Feb 18, 1879 p2 and advertisement for *Akron Germania* in *The Sunday Gazette* Feb 8, 1880 p3.

forces with Capron to form Cutrice and Capron which later absorbed some of the parts of The Werner Company when it was sold by the receiver. Richard H. Knight began his publishing and printing career, later to form the newspaper conglomerate of Knight-Ridder. Horace G. Canfield was a well-established job printer who edited newspapers and worked as his own agent for a variety of printers. In 1900, Saalfield purchased "the entire book publishing department of the Werner Company" through a bold ad that confirmed his relationship with the printing company.¹⁷ Saalfield Publishing was part of The Werner Company, then as its own entity, incorporating by 1909.¹⁸ In addition, Cleveland, just thirty-five miles to the north had a thriving printing and publishing industry. Burrows Brothers existed before The Werner Company was founded in November 1873 and sold to outsiders in 1912.¹⁹ Robert Clarke & Co. (1859-1909) and Strobridge (1849-1950) were just two of the large, well established printing companies in Gilded Age Cincinnati.²⁰ Heer was prominent in Columbus, dominating public printing contracts and book publishing.

¹⁷ Advertisement *Publishers' Weekly* #1460 #Jan 20, 1900): 79.

¹⁸ *Akron City Directory 1879-80* (Tribune and Germania Printing House Akron, OH: N.H. Burch & Co., Publishers. [1880]): 10, 319, and Advertisement *Publishers' Weekly* #1460 #Jan 20, 1900): 79.

¹⁹ *Who Was Who in America* vol. VI - 1897-1942 (Chicago: Marquis-Who's Who, 1896-): 173.

²⁰ Charles H. McMullen, "The Publishing Activities of Robert Clarke & Co., of Cincinnati, 1858-1909" *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 34 (1940): 315-326 and John W. Merten, "Stone by Stone along a Hundred Years with the House of Strobridge" *Bulletin of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio* 8 No. 1 (Jan 1950): 2-48.

While the printing part of the business can support the whole enterprise, or provide a profit, every minute the printing presses and pressroom are idle, the business loses money. Unless the workers are paid by the piece, the owner pays his employees for hours on the job. The owners of printing companies looked for other revenue streams to keep the presses running. As soon as Werner and his then partner Benjamin F. Nelson acquired the printing side of their newspapers (in 1879-1880), they added commercial job printing to their line of services.²¹ Within the first few years and with the departure of Nelson, Paul E. Werner separated himself from the daily business of editing the newspapers by hiring an editor, focusing his efforts on the printing of the paper and other materials.

Commercial job printing can be steady work. It usually entails printing stationery, bank drafts, blank books, catalogs, and advertising materials for other businesses. This type of printing keeps the compositors and pressmen busy and the presses running. When the presses run, income usually flows in. If the print shop can provide drafting, design, and illustrating services to customers, then there is always work. Over the years, the company expanded the types of printing offered to include engraving, lithographing, and illustrating.²²

²¹ *Akron City Directory 1879-80* (Tribune and Germania Printing House Akron, OH: N.H. Burch & Co., Publishers. [1880]): ad opposite page 48-49.

²² Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): 12.

It is difficult to limit a business to one or two types of printing, and Werner must have been enticed by book publishing, although this came along in the mid-1880s about ten years after his initial newspaper ventures. The newspapers in those days carried serialized stories which the Werner Company could then convert to bound publications.

Without corporate records, it is difficult to know what triggered the shift to books. A series of factors including a market to exploit and finally enough cash to purchase more up to date equipment and the necessary manuscripts may have been the turning point. Werner's financial status and the growth of his business are outlined in R.G. Dun credit reports and county tax records. County tax duplicates show that Werner's taxable worth increased from \$650 in 1874 to \$2200 in 1879 when he partnered with Nelson.²³

Throughout the late 1870s and early 1880s, Werner established partnerships with a number of businessmen who taught him about running a printing business and making a profit. The R.G. Dun credit reporter indicated that A.C. Lohman was a good choice for partner because he had business experience managing a dry goods store.²⁴ Lohman brought \$10,000 to the company, a much needed injection of cash which allowed them to purchase more modern printing

²³ Summit County Ohio. County Auditor Records. Tax Duplicates 1840-1946 (consulted 1870-1900). University of Akron Archives. Akron, OH.

²⁴ Ohio, Vol. 180, (Aug 9 & 19, 1885) p702, R.G. Dun & Co.

equipment.²⁵ Thomas Cornell came along in 1887 as Werner had finally established himself as a publisher and printer and ready to expand his business.²⁶ Lohman was still involved and is named secretary / treasurer²⁷. The officers of Werner Printing & Lithographing Co. were T.W. Cornell President, F.A. Seiberling Vice President, Paul E. Werner Superintendent, Charles H. Palmer, Director. In 1888, Werner changed the name of his company to The Werner Company as he incorporated with \$100,000 in shares. The new slate of officers was T.W. Cornell President, F.A. Seiberling Vice President, H.P. Hitchcock Secretary, P. E. Werner General Manager and Treasurer. Within the year, the number of shares increased from one hundred to five hundred thousand.²⁸

Publishing and printing centers expanded in the Gilded Age to include Chicago. To really take advantage of the market and industry, The Werner Company merged with two major publishing and printing companies in Chicago, R.S. Peale and Belford-Clarke.²⁹ Peale had printing presses and needed to keep them busy. It is unclear how much equipment Belford-Clark had but especially

²⁵ Ohio, Vol. 180 (Aug 19, 1885) p702. R.G. Dun & Co.

²⁶ Cornell's death in 1890 paved the way for dramatic growth in Werner's company and the ability to acquire additional property and equipment for his company.

²⁷ Ohio, Vol. 180 (Sept 9, 1886) and (Jan 13, 1887): 702. R.G. Dun & Co.

²⁸ Ohio, Vol. 180 (April 14-Aug 8, 1888): 790, R.G. Dun & Co.

²⁹ "Chicago A Publishing Center: A. Belford Talks Entertainingly About the Peale-Werner Combination" *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Dec 12, 1892): 1

after "a fire in 1886 destroyed the Chicago store."³⁰ Belford, Clarke & Company (1872-1899) known for its subscription sets, was founded in Toronto and moved to Chicago in 1875. Madeleine Stern writes that "in the 1890s the remaining reprint stock was sold to the Werner Company, with one brother, Alexander, taking command of Werner's publishing division."³¹ R.S. Peale had a printing plant in the Chicago area, which continued to print for local customers. More importantly for this study, Peale and Belford-Clark both have printing plates for the ninth edition of *the Encyclopædia Britannica* which The Werner Company put to good use producing out thousands of copies of the encyclopaedia every year starting in 1893.

Belford-Clarke printed their version of the ninth edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica beginning in May of 1890 but ceased publication shortly thereafter.³² On the other hand, R.S. Peale published their version of the ninth edition of Encyclopædia Britannica in early 1891 and won their lawsuit against owners of the Encyclopaedia, later that year. It was this reprint that the Werner

³⁰ "Belford, Clarke & Company" in *Publishers for Mass Entertainment in Nineteenth Century American*, edited by Madeleine B. Stern (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1980): 59.

³¹ "Belford, Clarke & Company" in *Publishers for Mass Entertainment in Nineteenth Century American*, edited by Madeleine B. Stern (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1980): 59.

³² Paul Kruse, "Piracy and the Britannica: Unauthorized Reprintings of the Ninth Edition" *The Library Quarterly* 33 No.4 (Oct. 1963): 319-320.

Company used as the basis for its issues or versions beginning in 1893.³³ As the printing industry gained in prominence in Chicago, it makes sense that Paul E. Werner, in an effort to grow his business and compete in the “big leagues,” moved the publishing end of his empire to the Windy City. There he had the opportunity to invest in both Belford Clarke and R.S. Peale, established companies with backlists and clients. This city was perfect for moving the growing and expanding Werner Company into a number of new markets.

Books, magazines, and other printed materials were shipped or distributed during the Gilded Age and early Progressive Era using the postal service, railroads, and book jobbers. Distribution networks were important as communications networks expanded and technology improved. These networks expanded after the Civil War to include department store book sections. Most fascinating was the growth of sales by subscription.³⁴ Publishers became incredibly aggressive in their sales tactics in an effort to keep the profits in house and move an ever increasing number of books and magazines directly into the hands of individual readers. Sheehan states, “by the 1890s, subscription selling

³³ Kruse, “Piracy and the Britannica,” 320-321. For definitions of descriptive bibliography terminology see Terry Bellinger, “Descriptive Bibliography” *BookCollecting: A Modern Guide* Jean Peters ed. (New York and London: R.R. Bowker, 1977): 97-101.

³⁴ Raymond Shove describes subscription books and methods for their distribution in *Cheap Book Production in the United States, 1870 To 1891* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Library, 1937).

reached a yearly volume of over twelve million dollars."³⁵ In the twentieth century, it was book clubs, such as the Book of the Month Club, that moved publications into the hands of readers.³⁶ Early twenty-first century marketing and sales of books through the internet are very similar to Gilded Age distribution of books by subscription. [See Fig.7.]

Other methods of making printed matter, particularly books and magazines available to readers, included sales through bookstores and stationery stores which sometimes carried only one publisher's imprint, sometimes many; news vendors and news stands; and some dry goods and department stores sold books. This venue for distribution of books and magazines became more popular starting in the 1890s and continues today in all types of stores including supermarkets and big box stores. Individuals could also acquire books through subscriptions, book clubs, "libraries" and series and through lending libraries.

Changes in manufacturing methods combined with decreased costs and increased readership changed the types of financial risk incurred by both publisher and printer. The increased ability of publishers to reach readers meant that more people were reading, raising the demand for printed materials. This trend is coupled with late nineteenth and early twentieth century "merchandising

³⁵ Sheehan, 191.

³⁶ Janice A. Radway, *A Feeling for Books: The Book-Of-The-Month Club, Literary Taste, and Middle-Class Desire* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

methods to move books off shelves” and into homes or libraries.³⁷ We see this clearly in the marketing methods of Stoddart, Werner, and Hooper and Jackson for sales of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, where customers purchased by subscription, over time.

There was a veritable feeding frenzy for consumers and readers. Marketing techniques for selling books, encyclopaedias, and magazines echoed advertisements for clothing and furniture. Salesmen and marketers developed painless methods for moving merchandise from warehouses into the hands of individuals. During the Gilded Age, American book markets moved west with migrants and immigrants, especially as they settled west of the Mississippi River. It was during this era that competition for authors, job printing, and book printing moved from Boston, New York City, and Philadelphia to Cincinnati, Chicago, and St. Louis.³⁸ It was even easier for companies to move products today using the internet and e-mail.

The Werner Company was right in the thick of these changes, taking advantage of the movement of the markets and customers west. It has to be a motivating factor for moving the company headquarters to Chicago. At the same time, Werner added offices across the country, and then to the major western

³⁷ Moses, iii, 4.

³⁸ Moses, 8, and Walter Sutton, *The Western Book Trade: Cincinnati as a 19th Century Publishing & Book-trade Center* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press and The Ohio Historical Society, 1961): 285.

European capitals.³⁹ As books and printed materials decreased in cost, and the ability to obtain newspapers, magazines and books increased, the demand for printed materials also increased, driving down unit costs in a spiral effect. The more copies printed, the lower the per item cost. Factory work, whether assembly line or production line, spread out the costs and increased productivity and output. One way to keep operations running was to bid for printing jobs to keep the presses running. In 1889, Werner submitted a single bid for a public printing contract in Ohio to keep the presses running, which was a departure from his business routine. Although this contract would garner reprint work throughout the 1890s, he never bid again for state printing work.

Throughout its long history, the Werner Company was a book manufacturing plant and not necessarily, or always, a publisher. Werner kept the two aspects of his business, printing and publishing separate by moving his company headquarters and publishing operations to Chicago in 1890. The entire operation of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, except the actual printing, was run from the Chicago headquarters, and not from Akron. The complex,

³⁹ In 1894, The Werner Company has business and editorial offices in Chicago, Akron, New York City, Philadelphia, Boston Minneapolis, San Francisco and Los Angeles, London, Berlin & Paris. His company markets the Encyclopædia Britannica in numerous cities across the US including NY, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, Louisville, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Kansas City, Minneapolis, Omaha, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): back cover.

interconnected production of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* included editing and supplementing the multivolume work, writing, editing and managing *Self Culture Magazine*, and coordinating the operations of the Home University League. Of course, by 1890, Chicago was a prime printing center, where Akron was still very much a backwater. That did not mean skilled labor was unwilling to come to Akron, but why would authors seek out Akron as a place to sell and market their manuscripts? In Chicago, authors could shop their manuscript around to a variety of publishing houses, just as they would in New York City, Boston, or Philadelphia. Of course, the cost of printing was lower by keeping the printing plant in Akron. Perhaps that was why the Werner Company survived for many years while some of the huge printing and publishing entities sold off the printing and book manufacturing side of the business. D. Appleton's Co., for example, sold off their plant in 1900 while Harper Bros, established 1817, kept their printing plant as late as 1917⁴⁰

The Werner Company reorganized at least two if not three times between 1885 and 1909. According to Moses, "virtually every American publisher committed to printing as well as publishing went through bankruptcy, Appleton, Harper, Lippincott are only three examples, whose printing operation was sold off during the reorganization phase to use the proceeds of the plant's sale to pay

⁴⁰ Moses, 99-100.

claims to creditors.⁴¹ Werner struggled to keep cash flow even while he continued to invest in new equipment, stock, manuscripts, and employees. Steady cash flow was a continual challenge then as it is today.

All aspects of the publishing and printing business, no matter the era, are risky. The publisher, the individual or organization that acquires and represents the manuscript for sale to the public, takes the most financial risk. John Thompson describes the publishing business and its attendant risks.⁴² His study focuses on the industry in the twenty-first century, but can easily be used to understand financial and business risks in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.⁴³ The business models and work that Thompson describes so ably have not changed radically since the beginning of writing and producing books, even before the printing press.⁴⁴ In this model, “publishers act as the banker who makes resources available up front...cover[ing the] costs of production.”⁴⁵ This separation in the business is even more dramatic today. Thompson’s statement, concurring with Moses’ description of the separation of the publishing and printing business, explains some of the motivation behind Paul E. Werner’s move to bring in A.J. Saalfield as publisher of Werner Books.

⁴¹ Moses, 29-30.

⁴² John B. Thompson, *Merchants of Culture* (Malden, MA and Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2010): 5-6.

⁴³ Thompson, 6 and 20.

⁴⁴ Thompson, 14-16.

⁴⁵ Thompson, 20.

The Book Manufactory

As with many industries in the nineteenth century, improvements in equipment and the shift from water power to gas and electricity brought about changes in production of materials. In the printing and book manufacturing industry, these changes involved the introduction of various pieces of equipment that either sped up production or reduced the number of skilled workers in the factory, or both. For Paul E. Werner and his printing companies to be competitive, he had to invest in both equipment and skilled workers. Piece by piece the company acquired equipment for setting type and composing pages, for printing the pages and illustrations, and for binding the finished product. Each innovation in technology increased the speed of the printing process and, once equipment was paid for, decreased the overall price of production. Skilled workers were hired to run the equipment. As discussed in the previous chapter, these workers were usually members of the printing unions and performed the specialized tasks associated with each piece of equipment.

In this section, I will discuss the types of printing equipment in the Werner Company. The next section will describe the skills needed to run the presses and print the various products the Werner Company manufactured. The next chapter will discuss the types of printing jobs that The Werner Company

handled. Interspersed in these sections will be descriptions of publications printed by The Werner Company over the decades.

Printing equipment in the Gilded Age included type and type setting machines, printing plates, paper, printing presses, and binding equipment. Covert's two marketing pieces about the Werner Company and the Summit County centennial history provide the best descriptions of the types of equipment in the printing plant. Thorpe's article about The Werner Company in 1895 draws much of his information from Covert's publication.⁴⁶ Other than snippets found in newspapers and trade journals, these three sources provide the only recorded information about the types of equipment found in the vast book manufacturing plant in Akron.

In the late nineteenth century, type setting was mechanized. Modifying the typewriter and incorporating electrotyping techniques, typesetting by Linotype was introduced onto the printing factory floor by 1885. In 1888, the Mergenthaler was introduced which increased the speed of typesetting. Compositors no longer set each piece of type by hand, but now type in the

⁴⁶ Covert, *The Werner Co. (1894), A Centennial History of Akron. Akron: 1825-1925* Published under the auspices of the General Committee of The City's First Centennial Celebration, July 19-23, 1925 (The Summit County Historical Society, 1925), and Charles Thorpe, "Printing Plant of the Werner Co., Akron Ohio." *American Pressman* VI No. 1 (Dec 1895): 9-15.

letters and the machine pushed out type by the line.⁴⁷ Ottmar Mergenthaler was the inventor of this machine. Its competitor was Monotype, which produced type one letter at a time as opposed to Linotype, “which produces a ‘line o’ type’, a metal slug for each line.”⁴⁸ The two machines competed with one another in the production of books and newspapers. According to Loxley, *The Times* (London) “always used Monotype for the stock market prices” because all the characters of type were the same size, even the numbers.⁴⁹ Linotype was adopted by many book manufacturers and newspaper printers. It made the composition of pages easy. The typist or typewriter typed each letter onto a paper strip that was then used to cast type. Lines of hot metal were pushed from the machine then arranged accordingly to compose the page.

In the 1880s almost all books in the United States were still composed using hand set type.⁵⁰ While both the Linotype and Monotype machines were in use in the late 1880s, they were not adopted wholesale into book printing manufactories until the mid 1890s. A wide variety of compositing machines were displayed at the Worlds Fair in Chicago in 1893. These pieces of equipment used typewriters to cast type “instantly” so lines of type could be set at one time

⁴⁷ Moses, 6, and Ottmar Mergenthaler, *The Biography of Ottmar Mergenthaler: Inventor of the Linotype* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Books, 1989): xiii-xiv.

⁴⁸ Simon Loxley, *TYPE: The Secret History of Letters* (London and NY: I.B. Tauris, 2004, 2005): 58-59.

⁴⁹ Loxley, 58.

⁵⁰ Mergenthaler, xiv.

rather than each letter separately. These machines increased the speed of setting type as much as 12,000 ems per hour.⁵¹ Most compositors could set 1000 ems per hour. This dramatically increased the output of printing plants that routinely printed newspapers and books. Between the early 1890s and 1910, twelve thousand compositors were displaced by linotype machines. All was not lost for these skilled workers as they soon adapted to the new technology and ran the linotype machines.⁵² The typographers union soon found that their members could produce just as many books in an eight hour day using linotype as they did setting type by hand in a twelve hour day.⁵³

To keep up with the times, the Werner Printing Company and the Beacon Publishing Company both ran linotype machines in their printing plants as early as 1888. The *Akron Evening Journal*, with Paul E. Werner as a backer, was housed at 219-221 E Market Street. This newspaper printed on two Mergenthalers, and brought in the first linotype to Akron.⁵⁴ Werner's commercial jobbing plant at 224-230 Howard Street until mid 1890s used these same

⁵¹ "The Compositor's New Rival" *Publishers' Weekly* #1135 (Oct 28, 1893): 631. The article discusses the Lanston Monotype machine, a rival to the Mergenthaler.

⁵² Mergenthaler, xiii.

⁵³ Mergenthaler, xiv.

⁵⁴ Henry Wolf. *The Akron Beacon Journal: The First 100 Years*. 4 vol. Unpublished manuscript, Akron, OH, in possession ABJ Library, 1939, 409.

machines. The Beacon Publishing Company had several Linotype Machines in operation in its plant by 1888.⁵⁵

Even before type setting machines, printers began using printing plates as a method for printing book multiple times using the same imposition. Printing plates, both stereotypes and electrotypes, were made from hand set type. Gascoigne describes how printing plates are created. "Stereotyping involved the casting of metal plates from molds taken from set type."⁵⁶ According to Covert, electrotyping "is the creation of a metal facsimile through the deposition of copper by electrolysis."⁵⁷ Once the plates were made, the printer put the plate on the press for the entire run. The used plates were then stored away in fireproof vaults for the next issue.⁵⁸ Printers also sold or leased plates to other printing companies. Once made, the plates saved money and space.

⁵⁵ *A Centennial History of Akron. Akron: 1825-1925* Published under the auspices of the General Committee of The City's First Centennial Celebration, July 19-23, 1925 (The Summit County Historical Society, 1925) and Henry Wolf. *The Akron Beacon Journal: The First 100 Years*. 4 vol. Unpublished manuscript, Akron, OH, in possession ABJ Library, 1939, 409.

⁵⁶ Rosalind Remer, *Printers and Men of Capital: Philadelphia Book Publishers in the New Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996): 96. See also Bamber Gascoigne, *How to Identify Prints: A Complete Guide to Manual and mechanical Processes from Woodcut to Inkjet*. 2nd Edition. (New York: Thames & Hudson Inc., 1986, 2004): 71

⁵⁷ This complex process is explained in The Werner Company, *Twenty Years: 1887-1907*. (Akron, OH: The Werner Company, 1907): 11-13. See also Bamber Gascoigne, *How to Identify Prints: A Complete Guide to Manual and mechanical Processes from Woodcut to Inkjet*. 2nd Edition. (New York: Thames & Hudson Inc., 1986, 2004): 72.

⁵⁸ Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): 7-8.

Printers adapted photography for printing, replacing letter press and lithography. The printer could take a photograph of a type set page, and create a printing plate using photo-emulsion processes. The process consists of taking a photograph of the page or design which is printed out onto whatever surface the printer wants (stone, steel or zinc), etching the plate, then printing from the stereotyped or electrotyped plate. The resulting plate was an exact replica of the original page.

Printers started experimenting with photo-emulsions in the 1850s.⁵⁹ This process transferred photographs directly to printing plates and was a quick method for reproducing pages or illustrations.⁶⁰ A skilled printer could reproduce any printed page using this process. This photographic emulsion technique was the process used by Henry G. Allen Company to make reproductions of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The accusation of pirating the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* leveled against Allen by Scribners' Sons claimed the reproductions were dirty and on poor quality paper.⁶¹ When examining printed copies of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, we

⁵⁹ Gascoigne, 40

⁶⁰ Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, *The Book in America* 2nd ed. (NY: RR Bowker, 1952): 170-175.

⁶¹ Herman Kogan, *The Great Encyclopædia Britannica: The Story of the Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958): 65 and Paul Kruse, *The Story of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1768-1943* (PhD diss. The University of Chicago, 1959): 205-6.

can see that the printed pages are marred by broken and dirty characters. [See Fig.8.]

The Belford-Clarke reprint also used photoengraving to print their pirated version of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.⁶² Immediately after the Werner Company merger with R.S. Peale, they began reprinting the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* using Peale's plates. In subsequent versions, The Werner Company created its own plates for its massive printing enterprise of the multi-volume set.⁶³ [See Fig.9-10.]

Electrotype and stereotype plates were usually used to print books and magazines pages. Illustrations and designs were printed using wood blocks, metal etching and engraving blocks and lithographic or stone plates. Wood blocks could be used to print illustrations and designs at the same time as the type set page, using a relief printing process. Full page illustrations were usually printed using metal etched plates using an intaglio press. By the Gilded Age, these printing processes were superseded by lithographic printing. Munson explains that lithography or offset printing is "one of the three principal means of printing on paper or other flat surfaces such as metal, cloth, or plastic. The other processes are letterpress, which prints from a raised surface, and gravure, which

⁶² Kruse, *The Story of Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 206-7.

⁶³ Kruse, *The Story of Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 212-13.

prints from a smooth cylinder on which the image has been etched beneath the surface."⁶⁴

Lithography involves printing "from flat images on a thin plate, usually of zinc or aluminum" if not from stone.⁶⁵ This printing process utilizes the skills of highly trained artisans, artists, and craftsmen. According to Munson, the types of skills these union members needed included handling cameras and film as well as producing printing and art plates, and operating presses, "large and expensive equipment."⁶⁶

In 1868, R. Hoe steam presses begin to be used by lithographers. Even with the aid of mechanization and steam, this process was still slower than text printing.⁶⁷ The Werner Company had a quite a few of these steam lithographic presses in the factory to keep up with the demand for commercial job printing, illustrations, and specialty books.⁶⁸

Early in the decade, Werner's Germania Printing Company owned a number of steam powered presses. Perrin enumerates the various pieces of equipment including "a Cottrell & Babcock cylinder, with 33x46 inch bed; a Cottrell & Babcock, air spring with 25x38 in bed, a Potter Pony; a quarter and an

⁶⁴ Fred C. Munson, *The History of the Lithographers Union* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), x.

⁶⁵ Munson, x.

⁶⁶ Munson, x, and Gascoigne, 19.

⁶⁷ Moses, 16.

⁶⁸ Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): 22-36, 39-40.

eighth medium Liberty jobbers and a 'Model' card press", worked by twenty-five employees.⁶⁹ This equipment helped Werner remain competitive with the other printing companies in Akron.

While paper manufacturing mechanized, lithography remained the preferred method for printing illustrations. As time went on, designs that began on stones were quickly transferred to light metal plates for printing on rotary presses.⁷⁰

Along with changes to printing processes and printing presses, there were similar dramatic modifications in the paper manufacturing process. The faster paper was delivered to and through the press, the more efficiently presses printed books and magazines. Within 150 years, manufacture of paper evolved from handmade to machine made sheets, to rolls of paper.

Paper sheets have been produced in the United States both by hand and by machine for printing, particularly for fine or art presses and for job printing. By 1690, there were paper mills in North America pounding and mashing pulp for paper making. This paper was made by hand using moulds, the pulp coalescing into sheets for printing. Paper machines increased the output of paper from 60-

⁶⁹ William Henry Perrin, *History of Summit County, with an Outline Sketch of Ohio*, Illustrated (Chicago: Baskin & Battey, Historical Publishers, 1881, Reproduced by Unigraphic Inc, Evansville, IN, 1972): 286.

⁷⁰ Moses, 36, 38.

100 pounds per day for hand-made paper to 1000 pounds per day by machine.⁷¹ Add to this increased input, the ability to control size, thickness, and color, and the entire book industry changed. One of the first mechanical paper manufacturing machines was developed by Louis Roberts in 1799. This machine manufactured paper in long continuous rolls which are later cut into sheets for sale to printers. His invention dramatically increased the speed with which paper was manufactured.⁷² In 1803, the Fourdrinier machine was introduced that produced one thousand pounds of 30" wide paper every day. This equates to a market of approximately ten thousand dollars per year.⁷³ Hand paper makers could produce only 65-100 pounds of paper per day. By the Civil War, hand made paper became a specialty market for illustrators, lithographers, artists, and print makers. By this time, book manufacturers used paper on rolls. This paper was uniform in texture, size, and thickness. The paper was fed into printing presses in sheets cut from the rolls. By the late nineteenth century, printing presses took paper directly from the rolls.⁷⁴

In 1895, the Dexter Pile Feed was introduced. This machine fed paper into presses and bindery machines. These machines were quickly adopted in both printing and binding operations within book manufacturing plants. The

⁷¹ Moses, 5.

⁷² Moses, 13,36

⁷³ . Moses, 36, 38.

⁷⁴ Moses, 36, 38.

mechanical feeders separated sheets of paper and fed them into the printing press one sheet at a time. These machines increased the speed of printing exponentially. In addition, because of these machines, the operation was less technical and physically taxing, allowing women to take over this step in the book manufacturing process.⁷⁵

Along with changes in the manufacture of paper and the creation of printed pages, came changes in printing presses. Their basic function continued, but the plates they used to print pages and the speed with which they produced a finished product, increased dramatically between 1800 and the beginning of the twentieth century. Presses evolved from those run by hand to those powered by steam and electricity. Within one hundred years, the job of skilled individuals who ran presses changed. Where a team of three men ran hand presses, only two people were needed for the power presses, one to feed the paper into the machine, and one to mind the press.

Rotary presses, which use curved stereotype or electrotype plates, increased the speed of book printing from 250 impressions per hour by hand to one thousand per hour by platen presses, and to 1500-2000 impressions per hour on cylinder or rotary presses. Steam power meant printers increased the

⁷⁵ Moses, 62, 31.

number and size of sheets running through the presses.⁷⁶ The number of books that can be printed each day increased geometrically.

When Paul E. Werner started out in the newspaper publishing and printing business, his factory had a few hand presses. By the time the Werner Company was churning out books, encyclopaedia, and magazines, his manufacturing plants had over one hundred presses. A few were hand presses for the commercial job printing and for specialty items, the rest were powerful single and double cylinder presses that printed in one or two color. These steam presses could print anywhere from one to twenty thousand impressions per hour.⁷⁷ According to Thorpe in 1895, Werner Company owned Cottrell, double Huber and Potter presses, two imported presses from Germany, Hoe, and two color and double Huber machines, all typical presses for large book manufacturing plants of the Gilded Age.⁷⁸

Thorpe's article in *The American Pressman* provided a fairly romantic view of printing and its explosion in the late nineteenth century. Thorpe described the speed at which type was set and books or printed matter produced. In 1895, both Thorpe and Covert use the same figures to describe equipment and production at the Werner Company plant. This was the year the major printing

⁷⁶ Moses, 19-20.

⁷⁷ The Werner Company, *Twenty Years: 1887-1907* 14.

⁷⁸ Thorpe, 10.

union strike was settled, and the company was working hard to get its plant back in shape, producing the highest quality books possible. At this time, the Werner Company was about ten years old, meaning Werner started to print books in 1885.⁷⁹

A description of the book manufacturing process is incomplete without a discussion of bindings. By the Gilded Age, book binders begin to mechanize their labor intensive trade. Book binding equipment, while mechanized, basically takes the sweat out of the process, using horsepower, steam, and electricity to perform all the various steps. While mechanization of printing equipment changed that process completely, book binding equipment merely mechanized each task. Sewing machines were mechanized to stitch folded leaves together while massive stamping presses decorated covers before they were adhered to text blocks. Commercial book binding flourished in this period with beautiful decorative publishers' bindings, designed by artists who often illustrate the text. These illustrators also designed elaborate covers to match. The designs are stamped on the cloth covers before they were affixed to the text. The decorative publishers' bindings were the forerunners of today's book jackets.⁸⁰ [See Fig.11.]

⁷⁹ Thorpe, 11.

⁸⁰ "The Development of Commercial bookbinding in America" *Publishers' Weekly* #1160 (April 21 1894): 618-619. See also *Publishers' Bindings Online 1815-1930: The Art of the Book* <http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/>

In his article, Thorpe reminisced over the changes for pressmen and in printing presses in the past 20 years (1875-1895) and declaimed "what a victory for the will and genius of man, when in so short a time he emerges from the slow stint of a token of two hundred and fifty sheets an hour to the wonderful endless sheet and the Web perfecting presses that will print and fold twenty thousand an hour."⁸¹ He used Werner Company as an example of progress in the Gilded Age. According to Thorpe, "the nearly one hundred power presses there in use will in a day do the work that it took three thousand hand presses, three thousand men and an equal number of roller boys, to do in a week fifty years ago."⁸²

Printing Skills

At the end of the last chapter, I discussed printing labor unions. These lithographers, typographers, pressmen, and bookbinders were the skilled laborers who worked in Werner's large book manufacturing plant. They ran the equipment described in the earlier sections of this chapter. The financial health and well-being of industrialized companies depended upon the skills of the laborers, whether they were union members or not. With increasing

⁸¹ Thorpe, 9.

⁸² Thorpe, 10.

mechanization, tasks were broken into minute parts according to machine.⁸³ The more the industry mechanized, the more printing labor union members specialized and prided themselves in their specific skills.

This section will examine changes in the skills needed to print books from the time the manuscript was delivered to the printer from the publisher or author through its finished form. All of these changes occurred as publishing and printing companies were dividing up responsibilities and risk to become the industries we are familiar with in the twentieth and very early twenty-first centuries.

The printing or manufacture of books is divided into three distinct parts: layout of the text which includes composition, imposition and editing; printing on the various pieces of equipment, which includes running the paper through the presses, inking the type, running the actual presses and positioning the illustrations in the correct place on either the printed page or between the pages. The final step is to collate and bind the book, which includes making certain the pages are in their correct order, stitching or gluing the signatures together, and finally placing the pages within the covers.

When the book passed through the complete construction or manufacturing process, the volumes were shipped to booksellers, book dealers,

⁸³ "Division of Labor" *Scientific American* XLIV (April 30, 1881): 272.

and publishers for sale to customers. The workers at The Werner Company performed all the tasks described above.⁸⁴ Since The Werner Company also published books and magazines, there was a vast manuscript editing and publishing component to the business. The main offices for the editing part of The Werner Company were based in the Rand-McNally building in Chicago from 1890 until the close of the Werner Company in 1909. The five printing labor unions at The Werner Company were typographers, lithographers, feeders, pressmen, and binders. Let's look at the specific skills and the laborers who performed them.⁸⁵

The first step in the book manufacture process is composition, imposition, and proof-reading. The individuals who performed this type of work in the printing company were members of the International Typographical Union, and can be lumped together as typographers. Within this grouping, the compositor is the person who sets the manuscript into type. Each page of type is then imposed or laid out so that the printed sheets, when folded into pages, will read in the correct order. The pages are then proofread to make certain there are no spelling or grammatical errors. Once the pages have been proofread, then they

⁸⁴ The book manufacturing process at The Werner Company is described in detail in The Werner Company, *Twenty Years: 1887-1907* (Akron, OH: The Werner Company, 1907) and Charles Thorpe, "Printing Plant of the Werner Co., Akron Ohio." *American Pressman* VI No. 1 (Dec 1895): 9-15.

⁸⁵ The processes below are described by both Covert and Thrope.

are made into electrotpe or stereotype plates that are used to print both sides of each page. This series of skills requires a high literacy rate and many years experience. Similar skills are needed to produce newspapers and even commercial job printing.

Once the pages are laid out and the printing plates made, then the feeders and pressmen go to work. These individuals run the presses. The feeders feed sheets of paper into the printing press so that the pages are printed square to the press. When paper feeding machines were developed, feeders put the paper into the machines and monitored the equipment. As this process became more mechanized and reliable, women took over this position as unskilled laborers. The pressmen ran the presses, making certain the pages are printed properly and line up on both sides of the paper. This was a highly skilled job and required many years of experience.

In the 1890s 100 power presses replaced 3000 hand presses, and this occurred in a "Middle West Pressroom," which is how Baker refers to The Werner Company.⁸⁶ There was a shift from hand compositors to unskilled laborers as linotype machines entered the factory floor, displacing more skilled craftsmen.

⁸⁶ Elizabeth Faulkner Baker, *Printers and Technology* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1957), 27 and footnote 22.

The change in speed of composition changes from 1000 ems per hour to 4000-5000 ems per hour.⁸⁷

In addition, there are other printing labor union members who created and printed illustrations and decorative materials. [See Fig.12.] These individuals are called lithographers because they work with the huge printing stones. Lithography entails drawing images or text on stone, using a grease or waxy resist to coat areas that will not be printed, and then printing with black or colored ink to create intricately detailed images for books, but mostly for artists. Color or Chromolithography takes lithography to the next level. In this process, artists create multiple versions of the image. Each version was printed with a different color and when layered atop one another, the final image was created.⁸⁸ [See Fig.13.] As the stones were printed one upon another, the color builds until the finished image shines forth.

From the first year that Paul E. Werner owned a printing company, his printers produced high quality lithographs for advertising and for commercial job printing. According to Kenfield, as early as 1875 the Werner Printing & Lithographing Company was the first to offer printing with Lithography in Akron

⁸⁷ Baker, 22-23, 27-28.

⁸⁸ Gascoigne, 19. See also Chromolithographs (progressive proofs and prints) Louis Prang (1824-1909) *Prang's Prize Babies: How This Picture Is Made* Boston: L. Prang & Co., [1888] Print Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, The New York Public Library <http://seeing.nypl.org/2781-6.html>

and a few years later was the first to make electrotypes plates. Werner Printing and Lithographing Company also had a “considerable wood engraving business”.⁸⁹

Book binders were a separate trade. These individuals sewed the folded sheets of pages into text blocks. They stamped cases with decorative designs created or copied by the lithographers onto small stamping plates. These stamping presses impressed decorative designs onto covering materials, which could be paper, cloth or leather. The covering material was then affixed to boards and made into book covers. The covers were attached to the text block and the book was finished. As described above, there were many changes in bookbinding equipment over the late nineteenth century that mechanized the process. However bookbinding then and now still includes as many as twenty steps and requires both highly skilled and lesser skilled laborers. In book manufacturing plants, many of the lesser skilled laborers were women, and Werner’s factory was no exception.⁹⁰ [See Fig.14-15.]

The Werner Company looked for skilled workers as far afield as Chicago to come to the Akron plant. Of course, Chicago had a large printing industry and many laborers and union members to draw from. When the Werner Company

⁸⁹ Scott Dix Kenfield, ed, *Akron and Summit County, Ohio, 1825-1928* (Chicago and Akron: S. J. Clarke, 1928): 387.

⁹⁰ Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): 53-64.

established its corporate headquarters in Chicago in early 1890, the managers moved many of the ancillary and editing operations out of Akron into their new facility.⁹¹ When the Werner Printing and Lithographing Company merged with R.S. Peale and Belford-Clarke of Chicago, the combined firm (now called the Werner Company), had many skilled union members who produced some of the finest printed books in the country.

In addition to the various jobs held by members of the labor union, there were the various foremen for each trade. During and after the strike of 1894, The Werner Company brought Morton Bookwalter from the W.B. Conkey Publishing Company of Chicago to Akron to be the foreman and run the presses.⁹² Managers and foremen from R.S. Peale and Belford-Clarke look for skilled workers from that same labor pool as the other Chicago printing firms, enticing them to Akron with good salaries in an affordable city with a continuing, steady amount of printing work.⁹³ Job ads abound in local and regional papers and most include wages, giving wages to judge. The Cleveland *Leader* in 1870 sought a printing foreman at \$36 per week, a skilled job printer at \$30 per week

⁹¹ John C. Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): 19-23.

⁹² *Publishers' Weekly* #1184 (Oct 6, 1894): 548.

⁹³ Job ads *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Sept 28, 1891): p7 col 2. and (Sept 29, 1891): 10 col

and a book printer with imposition experience at \$30 per week.⁹⁴ Job ads for The Werner Company in the Akron and Chicago papers in the 1890s asked for skills and promised the prospective hires steady work.⁹⁵

As described above, The Werner Company acquired technology to manufacture printed matter and hired skilled laborers to perform each task. As the technology changed and improved new equipment was acquired to turn out high quality products for a diverse clientele. Books and magazines, the core of Werner's business, were constructed or manufactured in numerous steps, each requiring a range of skills. Highly skilled members of the printing labor unions ran the equipment and performed each of the requisite tasks.

The next chapter examines the types of printing the Werner Company offered, including the various types of commercial and book printing and the costs of producing these projects. These products were essential for the financial solvency of the business. In the end, they will cause the downfall of this vast and profitable book manufacturing concern.

⁹⁴ Cleveland *Leader* Advertisement (Jan 3 1870) p4 col 6 in *Annals of Cleveland* LII (1870) #3829.

⁹⁵ Job ads *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Sept 28, 1891): p7 col 2. and (Sept 29, 1891): 10 col 2.

Chapter 5

Werner's Printing Empire

In the Gilded Age, printers produced a wide range of products serving publishers, businesses, and individuals. There were three main categories of printing: commercial jobs, books, and newspapers. Each had its own specialized needs, laborers, schedules, and of course equipment. Printing firms, large and small, served a variety of clients and businesses all to keep the cash flow steady. Werner's companies produced a wide variety of printed products including commercial jobs, books, magazines, newspapers, and fine art. There were few jobs his company turned away. The commercial job printing provided steady money from both letter press work and specialized engraving or etching. Newspapers could also be a constant source of work with editions due out with a frequency that could vary from weekly to daily and anything in between. Magazines of course required composition and production on a regular schedule, with book printing filling out any left over time on the presses. A successful printer juggled many types of printing jobs on a weekly basis in an effort to keep equipment running and employees busy. Idle presses and workers are

expensive, so each printing company strove to run the presses steadily and cost effectively.

This chapter discusses the scope and variety of materials printed by Werner. There are many publications still in existence that can be examined for intellectual content, potential audience, and use of printing and illustration techniques. The products printed ranged from school books and self-improvement materials, to *Self-Culture Magazine* and reprints of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The vast printing enterprise produced books and magazines in such large quantities it was essential to examine the costs of printing multi-volume sets.

The extant items examined in this chapter showcase the types of printing Werner Company's craftsmen produced. From newspaper and magazine accounts, advertisements, and the all important marketing pieces written by Covert, we know that Werner Company provided commercial job printing from the very beginning starting in 1875. Commercial job printing includes stationery, bank notes, business cards, advertisements, blank books, and more. This is skilled and steady work. Few extant examples of these items survive as they are ephemeral. Newspapers were part of this early business, with Werner Company churning out at least three different papers on three different schedules, including the *Akron Germania* which used beautiful *Fraktur* type.

The craftsmen at the Werner Company had the skills, capabilities, and equipment to print any type of materials or product customers desired. While there is no indication that Werner Company printed fabric or wall paper, it is not inconceivable that they could have in the beginning. By 1880, Werner Company was definitely providing a full range of commercial job printing as well as newspapers, books and advertisements. Advertisements in the city directory in 1880 market these services.¹

While the evidence of commercial job printing is slim, there are many examples of book and magazine printing sitting in libraries and personal collections. The Werner Company printed books in series, as individual titles, and as premiums with subscriptions. The books printed in series and stand alone titles contain a number of wood engravings for illustrations, as was typical of published books of the period.² They often contain decorative designs on title pages, chapter headings, and colophons, while others have engravings and lithographs on the frontispiece. As mentioned earlier, the covers were often decorated with designs and pictures finely crafted by the artists and illustrators in the Werner Company plant. As late as 1909, the Werner Company was bidding on high quality, large quantity projects as outlined in this announcement in the

¹ N.H. Burch & Co., Publishers, *Akron City Directory 1879-1880* (Akron, OH: Tribune and Germania Printing House, 1879.): opposite pages 48-49.

² John C. Covert, *The Werner Co.* (Chicago: The Werner Company, 1894): 39.

Richwood Gazette. [See Fig.16.] The printing company took on a fourteen million dollar contract, "the largest publishing venture ever undertaken."³ The article lists quantities of supplies needed to complete the contract for an undisclosed project. Supplies included twenty million pounds of paper, fifty thousand cattle for leather bindings, and one hundred thousand pounds of ink. The article continues "if only one press was used it would take fifty-one years to complete the work." The reader is left with the impression that this contract would be fulfilled within a year.

Fine art printing in the Gilded Age included chromolithographs and photogravure that Werner Company's illustrators, artists, and printers could produce this type of work in abundance.⁴ Thorpe mentions the printing of "color work, fine cut work of all kinds, and especially half-tone."⁵ "Here is where that much heralded and justly praised work 'Beautiful Britain' is printed."⁶ This book is full of wonderful photographs of castles and aristocratic homes throughout Britain. "No work of the portfolio series ever issued has met with such favorable criticism, nor has had such an extensive sale, being shipped to all parts of the

³ "Some Size: To This Printing Contract to be Filled By the Werner Printing Company of Akron" *The Richwood Gazette and Marysville (Ohio) Republican* June 3, 1909): 2.

⁴ Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): 27-28.

⁵ Charles Thorpe, "Printing Plant of the Werner Co., Akron Ohio" *American Pressman* VI No. 1 (Dec 1895): 11.

⁶ "Literary and Trade Notes" *Publishers' Weekly* #1230 (Aug 24, 1895): 254.

world wherever the English language is used.”⁷ [See Fig.17-18.] Each image is accompanied by a facing page of text wrapped in decorative borders. The printed work is an excellent example of the highest quality work Werner Company produced.

Works of art and photography were also sold as series to the consumer throughout the late nineteenth century. These works were printed as individual sheets suitable for framing or for binding later. The text or description of the image would be printed on the facing page with small captions below. One of the earliest examples of this type of work is a series of photogravures of the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. [See 19.]

The black and white images show the splendor of the various buildings that lined the causeway and delighted visitors to the Exposition. Another book of photogravure with accompanying text is John Stoddard’s *From the Atlantic to the Pacific* (1899). [See Fig.20.]

Werner was fascinated with military regalia and uniforms from the United States and Germany. There were at least two magnificent examples of chromolithography and military history produced by the Werner Company for sale across the world. The first, issued in 1899, showcased the history, ships, and military uniforms of the United States Army and Navy from its beginnings in

⁷ Thorpe, 10

the Revolutionary War through the Spanish American War.⁸ This large format book is replete with chromolithographs. [See Fig.21.] Each image is accompanied by extensive text. There are elaborate decorative chapter headings and colophons.

The other military book printed in German and English, in 1900, presents German army and navy uniforms and battles in splendid chromolithographs.⁹ These highly collectable items are examples of the highest quality artwork and chromolithography that the Werner Company produced.

It is not difficult to make the leap from appearance to use and imagine that the hardbound books issued by the Werner Company were designed to keep forever and to be educational or spiritual in nature. At the same time there was a change in the physical construction of the book and its case, the advertising and marketing of books took on a new dimension. Werner, Stoddart, and even Hooper and Jackson, books were sold on subscription. Now publishers and printers began advertising products that promised a book at a special price when you purchased the advertised item. They were sold as premiums. While Radway writes about these premiums in connection with the Book of the Month Club, a

⁸ Arthur Lockwood Wagner, *Our Country's Defensive Forces in War and Peace: The United States Army and Navy* (Akron, OH: The Werner Company, 1899).

⁹ Gustav A. Sigel, *Deutschlands Heer und Flotte in Wort und Bild Germany's Army and Navy by Pen and Pencil Compiled from the Latest and Best Authorities* (Akron, OH: The Werner Company, 1900).

look backward shows where the idea came from.¹⁰ Both the Werner Company and Hooper and Jackson sold the *Encyclopædia Britannica* not only on subscription, but in combination with other products, in some instances with bookcases and library shelves.¹¹ In the case of Home University League and *Self-Culture Magazine*, both affiliates of the Werner Company, the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was an integral part of that product.¹² From the Werner Company's own marketing materials, we find that magazine and newspaper publishers sold *Encyclopædia Britannica* or other books printed by Werner Company as premiums when customers took out subscriptions. In the case of Hooper and Jackson, they sold The Times Books through the *London Times*. Books were sold as premiums at reduced rates or along with other products.¹³

Werner School Book Company

Fine art books and portfolios were just a small segment of the Werner Company's business. It also printed a wide range of books including several

¹⁰ Janice A. Radway, *A Feeling for Books: The Book-Of-The-Month Club, Literary Taste, and Middle-Class Desire* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997): 1-2.

¹¹ Other publishers also sold series of books with free items. See "How to Get a Bookcase Free" *Public Opinion* XXXIX No. 20 (Sept 9, 1905):321, 636.

¹² Advertisements for *Encyclopædia Britannica Modern Culture* 12 (1900) image 623 and *Modern Culture* 11 (1899) image 620.

¹³ Frederick Orridge Macmillan, *The Net Book Agreement of 1899 and the Book War of 1906* (Glasgow: The University Press, 1924):31-33.

series marketed to schools and teachers. Topics for school books included mathematics, reading, spelling, and grammar. Reasonably priced and sold throughout the country, this line of books brought in steady income in the late 1890s and early 1900s.

The Werner School Book Company was a new venture for Paul E. Werner in November of 1895.¹⁴ The company expanded its market and reach to serve school districts in the hopes of the line of books was officially adopted for students. As one might imagine, school books were a huge market and one that could keep the Werner Company solvent for many years. Remember, the more types of printing a company did and the steadier the demand for those types of printing, the more stable the cash flow.

Even before Paul E. Werner incorporated the school book venture, his company was acquiring texts, editing manuscripts, publishing, printing, and advertising this line of materials. The very first advertisements showed up in *Publishers' Weekly* in July 1895.¹⁵ To publish, print, and distribute textbooks in this market meant the Werner Company competed head to head with The American Book Company, which controlled the school book market in the United States. The American Book Company acquired the school books of five different publishers in an effort to standardize texts, prices, and availability of text

¹⁴ "It Will Publish School Books" *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Nov 28, 1895): 10.

¹⁵ *Publishers' Weekly* #1224 (July 13, 1895): 90.

books.¹⁶ By 1894, this conglomerate was based in New York City, where it published, printed, and distributed thousands of textbooks. The market for this type of publication was over \$6.5 million dollars in 1893.¹⁷ By 1895, that market was even more lucrative. The American School Book Company saturated the market with well-respected texts. Even so, schools found errors and misstatements in a number of the more than sixteen hundred school books The American Book Company distributed.¹⁸ Of course there were also questions from the court concerning the legality of such a trust, but that is beyond the scope of this project.¹⁹

In addition to writing, editing, and publishing their own materials, the Werner Company began acquiring a host of small and large school book companies. Each new acquisition increased the Werner Company's market and influence in that region. With offices across the country, it is easy to see that this was a sensible and potentially viable venture.

The Werner School Book Company was incorporated on November 26, 1895 in Springfield Illinois.²⁰ This company operated out of Chicago with Paul E. Werner, William M. Northrop, and Harry Goodman as officers and one million

¹⁶ "American Book Company" *Publishers' Weekly* #1225 (July 20, 1895): 114-115.

¹⁷ Literary and Trade Notes *Publishers' Weekly* #1105 (April 1893): 563.

¹⁸ "Errors in Text-Books" *Publishers' Weekly* #1119 (July 8, 1895): 38.

¹⁹ *Publishers' Weekly* #1105 (April 1, 1893): 562.

²⁰ "Werner Company Incorporated" *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Nov. 27, 1895): 3.

shares of capital stock.²¹ Werner had great plans for this new venture, telling newspaper reporters that the Werner School Book Company would become such a large part of his business that it needed to be incorporated separately, with its headquarters in Chicago. This branch of the Werner Company focused exclusively on educational materials. Nevertheless, all the books were printed at the book manufactory in Akron.²²

Paul E. Werner retained control of both companies and places the officers of the Werner Company in the same position in the Werner School Book Company. Since both companies were now headquartered in Chicago, oversight was simple. As to printing, binding, and distributing school books, the factory easily incorporated the new line of materials into their production line. With equipment humming, the Werner *Kindergarten Primer* of 96 pages "sold 100,000 copies in 3 months across the country."²³

Wading into this well-established market, the Werner School Book Company started with a small line of textbooks and subsequently purchased the Columbian Book Company based in St. Louis and specializing in books for schools and teachers in 1894.²⁴ During the same year, the Werner School Book Company purchased Porter & Coates, along with all their titles, copyrights, and customer

²¹ "Werner Company Incorporated" *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Nov 27, 1895): 3.

²² "Werner Company Incorporated" *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Nov 28, 1895): 10

²³ Thorpe, 12.

²⁴ "The Werner Co. of Chicago" *Publishers' Weekly* #1171 (July 7, 1894): 11.

lists.²⁵ In the beginning, the Werner Company offered the Werner Educational Series focusing on spelling, basic math, and civics.²⁶ Advertisements for this series read "Some New Text Books of Incomparable Superiority" suggesting that these books were much better than the established lines of other companies.²⁷ Advertisements for this educational series, with many new titles, were aimed at teachers and school boards. The placement of this advertisement in *Self-Culture Magazine* also suggests that individuals who subscribed to that magazine would be interested in acquiring copies for themselves.

Within a year, the Werner Educational Series expanded their offerings to German, music, various sciences, and of course spelling, geography and grammar.²⁸ Each book was a nominal price, most selling for less than one dollar. Keeping the educational books affordable meant that most teachers and school districts could own them.

The Werner Educational Series, along with other titles advertised in the magazine, were designed to sharpen intellectual skills and fell in line with Werner's ideas about self-education. Werner's publications encouraged individuals to learn on their own if they had not had formal classes in the various subjects, including bookkeeping, civics, and languages. The *Philadelphia Press* is

²⁵ "The Werner Co. of Chicago" *Publishers' Weekly* #1171 (July 7, 1894): 11.

²⁶ Advertisement, *Publishers' Weekly* #1224 (July 13, 1895): 90.

²⁷ Advertisement "The Werner Educational Series" *Self Culture* 1 (Sept 1895): 440.

²⁸ Advertisement *Publishers' Weekly* #1276 (July 11, 1896): 100.

quoted at length in this ad, replete with its suggestion that the book entitled *American Government* by Hinsdale was perfect for college students, teachers in high schools, and those who wish to educate themselves. The ad was a perfect foil for Werner's newest venture.²⁹

Publishers' Weekly and *Self Culture* were not the only publications to run ads for the Werner Education Text Books or School Books.³⁰ The Werner Company ran ads in *Primary Education*, *The School Journal*, *School Education*, and even *Inland Educator*. Ads continued to run for as long as school boards adopted Werner's texts. School boards found the books affordable and reputable into the early 1900s. One after another, school boards announced in educational journals that they were using Werner School Books. That meant steady income, because new editions were printed every few years incorporating new information or responding to the demands of school boards. As long as Werner Company printed and distributed school books at a reasonable price and with good, solid information, school board continued to adopt the texts.

Most impressive was the speed with which the Werner School Book Company filled the market with its books and competed with established

²⁹ Advertisement "The Werner Educational Series" *Publishers' Weekly* #1224 (July 13, 1895): 90 and *Publishers' Weekly* #1276 (July 11, 1896): 100.

³⁰ Advertisement *The Inland Educator* 8 (Feb 1899): 38; Advertisement *School Education* 20 (Sept 1901): 26; Advertisement *School Education* 20 (Sept 1901): 23, 26; and advertisement *The School Journal* 65 (July 1902): 1.

organizations. The school board of Chicago was already considering changing its arithmetic and geography texts a mere six months after Paul E. Werner incorporated Werner School Books.³¹ Werner School Books and Education Series were adopted by school districts throughout the country. By 1899, New Haven, Connecticut, had adopted arithmetic books.³² In 1901, Minneapolis, Minnesota, also adopted the text books.³³ St. Paul and Boston followed the other school districts that same year.³⁴ The State of Utah announced they were using Werner School Books exclusively in 1902.³⁵ When you calculate how many school books that might be, the numbers grow exponentially. Together with the Werner Company's other ventures, the School Book line kept work flowing and people employed in the factory in Akron.

As an extension of this line of books, the Werner Company also printed "The Working Teachers' Library". Advertisements found within *The Manual of Useful Information*, part of the series written and sold by Werner Company, described this set of books as "standard, reliable, and comparatively inexpensive," suggesting that public school teachers needed these titles for their

³¹ "Revision of Text Books" *Chicago Daily Tribune* (June 1, 1896): 5.

³² Advertisement *The Inland Educator* 8 (Feb 1899): 38.

³³ Advertisement *School Education* 20 (Sept 1901): 26.

³⁴ Advertisement *School Education* 20 (Sept 1901): 23, 26.

³⁵ Advertisement *The School Journal* 65 (July 1902): 1.

own edification.³⁶ [See Fig.22.] The Werner Company took as much care designing and printing these books as with all their titles. Beautiful decorative, stamped covers and easy to read typeface enhance the steady stream of information that is packed into each book. [See Fig.14.]

The Educational Books fit very well into the overall philosophy of the Werner Company. At the same time that Paul E. Werner invested in school books for teachers and school boards, he funded and promoted the Home University League.³⁷ The underlying mission of both initiatives was the same, education. Regardless of whether you received your education at school or at home, the Werner Company had books to fill your shelves. The Werner School Book Company venture fit well with the *Self-Culture* Magazine and Home University League. Here was a way to supplement a rudimentary education with school books and simple texts, perfect for new immigrants as well as school age children.

School books were not the only series of publications the Werner Company produced. They had similar series of books on literature and military history.³⁸ The largest and most intricately connected venture was the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *Self-Culture Magazine*, and Home University League.

³⁶ *Manual of Useful Information*, (Akron: The Werner Company, 1893): 4.

³⁷ Advertisement "Home University League" *Self Culture* 1 No. 2 (May 1895): 29-32.

³⁸ Advertisement "The Werner Company" *Publishers' Weekly* #1965 (Sept 25, 1909):

This venture consumed the Werner Company's resources and energies as the Chicago office edited, the Akron plant printed, and salesmen marketed these products across the United States for more than a decade.

Self-Education and Self-Improvement – A Gilded Age Notion

Self-Education and Self-Improvement were integral attitudes of the last half of nineteenth century America. During this period there was a massive influx of immigrants to the United States, many of whom were seeking a better life or a change in their lives. As discussed in chapter 3, those in America were confronted with changes in modes and types of work, and a drive to improve their lives monetarily and materialistically. Werner is an excellent example of this period. Immigrating in 1867 he experienced all the various changes in American society, from increased mechanization to a drive to own material things. To succeed, Werner needed to educate himself, improve his English, learn about running a business, and more. As the owner of a printing and publishing company, he needed to be familiar with reading habits and interests of Americans of his day. The wide variety of publications written for and printed by the Werner Company demonstrates that the business catered to those who wished to improve and to succeed in life, whether on farms, in rural communities or big cities.

The multi-million dollar venture of *Self-Culture* Magazine and Home University League was just one example of filling that need to improve one's education and status in American Society. Designing the materials for *Self-Culture* and Home University League to integrate with *Encyclopædia Britannica* was a great idea, as it combined the drive to improve oneself with the need to use 'free time' constructively, to become better educated.

Encyclopædia Britannica, *Self-Culture* Magazine, and Home University League promoted this aspect of American society. Werner seemed driven to sell publications that provided an opportunity for self-education and self-improvement to the masses. Two of his publishing ventures reflect societal notion of self-improvement; the magazine *Self-Culture* and his educational endeavor The Home University League, both of which were used with the *Encyclopædia Britannica* extensively.

The editors and columnists of *Self-Culture* were often employees of the Werner Company, working as editors specifically for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The encyclopedia division of Werner Company was "the most important branch of the business, transacted in the offices in Chicago."³⁹ Covert described the editing offices for the Werner Company Americanized *Encyclopædia Britannica* as filling four offices in the Rand McNally Building in Chicago, "one large store in

³⁹ Covert, *The Werner Company* (1894): 20.

Chicago and stores in over twenty-five cities in the Union."⁴⁰ The sales of this book alone amounted to over two million dollars annually in publications and products.

Twenty five different departments took up over twenty thousand square feet in the Rand-McNally building, handling editing, advertising, and subscriptions.⁴¹ These departments included *Self Culture*, The Home University League and *the Encyclopædia Britannica*. Covert said there was an entire floor devoted to *Encyclopædia Britannica*, with staff dedicated just to writing and editing articles for *Self-Culture* and supplemental articles for the Werner reprint of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. According to Covert, "in May 1894, twenty carloads of encyclopaedia were shipped from Akron, and in June the shipments were one carload per day."⁴²

Self-Culture Magazine was subtitled "A Magazine of Knowledge Devoted to the interests of The Home University League." Its motto taken from Gibbon reads "every person has two educations, one which he receives from others, and one more important, which he gives to himself."⁴³ Although the magazine was based in the Chicago headquarters, it was printed in Akron. The Home University League itself was founded by The Werner Company of Chicago with an initial

⁴⁰ Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): 22-25.

⁴¹ Covert, *The Werner Company* (1894): 14, 22.

⁴² Covert, *The Werner Company* (1894): 20-21.

⁴³ *Self Culture* 1 No. 6 (Sept. 1895) Front Cover.

investment of \$3.5 million. The announcements proclaim that the objectives of the organization and publication are “to assist its members in acquiring that education which they can give to themselves,” expanding upon the education individuals received in high school and college.⁴⁴ This is the credo of the self-made man. Here was an opportunity to give yourself the education you wanted or needed.

Self-Culture listed a topic to explore each day that month. The free-lance writers, historians, and editors working for his company referenced a wide variety of publications in their articles. Many of these publications are published and printed by Werner Company. They even write book reviews of titles published and printed by the Werner Company.⁴⁵ These topics were keyed to the new *Encyclopædia Britannica*, the version that the Werner Company printed and advertised in the magazine. In one fell swoop, they promoted education, a subscription to their journal, and the acquisition of the encyclopaedia. Indeed, many of the articles and inquiries refer readers to the new *Encyclopædia Britannica*. *Self-Culture* also worked in tandem with the Home University League. By reading the information in *Self-Culture*, the subscriber expanded his or her knowledge of the world every day. The Home University League encouraged its

⁴⁴ *Self-Culture* 1 No. 2 (May 1895): 29-32.

⁴⁵ Another publication that was heavily referenced was Werner's *Manual of Useful Information* compiled by J.C. Thomas. (Chicago: Werner Co, 1894). See also Fig.22.

subscribers to commit to self-education, to learn a new topic every day. The topics were enumerated monthly *Self Culture*, for an extra fee of just two dollars per year. More extensive accounts of each topic were available in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, which was offered at a discount to subscribers of just one dollar down and ten cents a day.⁴⁶ The magazine and the university fed into one another and brought the Werner Company steady income. Of course Werner Company also wanted the reader to subscribe to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*

By 1900, *Self-Culture* changed its name to *Modern Culture* and was based in Cleveland, while it continued to be printed out of the Akron plant. But by 1902/3, the publication was sold to another publishing venture outside of Paul E. Werner's companies. Even so, the Werner Company continued to advertise *Encyclopædia Britannica* in *Modern Culture* along with many ads to acquire the magazine, the Home University League membership, and the *Encyclopædia Britannica* on subscription.

The two major complaints about *Encyclopædia Britannica* ninth edition were that it was out of date, having taken fifteen years to produce and publish and so that all the articles were old and stale by the time the newest volumes were released. The second complaint was the encyclopaedia lacked biographies

⁴⁶ Advertisement *Self-Culture* 11 (July 1900): 603. See also Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): 25.

of living people.⁴⁷ It was not current enough, hence the need for cross reference and supplementary tools. Thus articles in *Self-Culture* provided much needed supplemental information for readers of the encyclopaedia.

Werner and others in the United States listened to the complaints about the datedness of *Encyclopædia Britannica* and tried to fill in the gap, for which they were sued by *Encyclopædia Britannica*.⁴⁸ At the Werner Company, "minute attention is paid to biography and necrology, and if a man becomes prominent anywhere in the world, his life is at once looked into and his biography prepared."⁴⁹

The Werner Company created supplements and reprinted the ninth edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, frequently and ably. These large multivolume sets were expensive to run and took time to recoup costs. Subscriptions through *Self-Culture* and the Home University League carried some of the costs of production. Outright sales were also important and were a steady revenue stream for the Werner Company. Covert, Thorpe and even Baker recount details about printing

⁴⁷ *The Independent* reminded its readers that the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was written and printed over a 15 year period ending in 1875, so that articles in the earlier volumes were bound to be out of date. The New Amer. Supplement by the Werner Company was supposed to update and revise all articles. Review of *New American Supplement to the Latest Edition to the Encyclopaedia Britannica*. *The Independent* 49 #2524 (April 15, 1897): 20.

⁴⁸ A brief discussion of these suits can be found in chapter 7. For more complete information about the *Encyclopædia Britannica* lawsuits see Paul Kruse, "Piracy and the Britannica: Unauthorized Reprintings of the Ninth Edition." *The Library Quarterly* 33 No.4 (Oct. 1963): 313-328.

⁴⁹ Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): 24.

the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. While the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was just one series of book printed by the Werner Company, it provided a major revenue stream. To add that revenue to its coffers, the Werner Company had to devote an enormous proportion of its factory production to printing, tying up equipment, supplies, and laborers for weeks and months at a time.

Printing Costs

The cost to acquire, edit, compose, impose, print, raw and finished product, binding, shipping, advertising and stocking product was always high. This step in producing a book was the most expensive. Kerr provides a detailed description of the many steps to publish and print a book, from the acquisition of the manuscript to the finished bound product.⁵⁰ Since this publication was printed at the same time Paul E. Werner's company began to print the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, these steps and prices are similar. We can also compare with the figures for printing provided by Covert in his marketing pieces. If all the preliminary, intellectual work of editing, proofing, and original composition was already done, there were many fewer costs. Without royalties or fees to the intellectual property holder, the costs decreased yet again.

⁵⁰ R.W. Kerr *The History of the Government Printing Office (at Washington D.C.) With a Brief Record of the Public Printing for a Century 1789-1881* 2nd ed. (Lancaster, PA: Inquirer Printing and Publishing Co., 1881), 7-13.

Reprinting from existing printing plates or making photographic plates from pages was much more cost effective than original composition, design, and printing. Werner's use of R.S. Peale and Belford-Clarke Company printing plates, after their merger, for his reprint or issue of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was much less expensive than resetting all the type.

For all publishers, costs are incurred at each step of the process from manuscript to finished product. These costs included composition and imposition, purchase of raw products (paper, board, binding material), printing, collation, binding, advertising, distribution, and warehousing. If the publisher or printer already owns the printing plates, then the printing process is all the more cost effective, for both parties.

Books in multiple volumes are quite expensive for they take years or even decades to edit, publish, and produce. That means that the plates were retained for the life of the project so the earlier volumes could be reprinted when new volumes were ready for distribution. In many cases, sales of volumes were predicated upon sales and profits from earlier volumes.⁵¹ This is the case with the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and with any other publication in multiple parts. The Werner Company printed many sets or series of books, as did many other publishers. To be the first printer of the set was to take all the risk, because that

⁵¹ Herman Kogan, *The Great EB* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958): 47.

printer had to compose, or set the type for all the pages, edit, and make the plates. Once the plates were made, the printer produced the requisite number of copies and a few extra. The copies were bound and either warehoused at the printer or the publisher, awaiting sale. A large publication with multiple volumes required the outlay of time and money for the production of each volume, and as stated above, earlier volumes were often reprinted as new volumes were ready. That meant the storage of old plates until they were needed. Of course once photo-emulsion was possible, it was easy to make new plates from old ones, providing the printer did not need to reset the type. In the end, it is the time it takes for the publication to be finished that creates the biggest problem. It was not the fact that there were twenty-five volumes to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* rather that it took fifteen years to edit, publish, and print the entire run. Each volume cost more than the previous one, and of course the next volume would be printed depending upon orders and sales for each volume.⁵²

Reprinters did not bear any of these costs, just the cost of printing, purchasing plates, or creating new plates from photographs of existing pages. This was why the unauthorized printers of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, or any series for that matter, could sell their volumes and sets at much lower prices than the authorized distributors.

⁵² Kogan, 63.

It is easy to recognize that the cost of printing multi-volume sets was expensive and labor intensive. Finding the figures for these publications was more difficult. Since the production records of the Werner Company no longer exist, and I was unable to find printed information about the costs for first printing the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* in England, I looked for other multi-volume sets of books that were produced in the Gilded Age. I was able to find an excellent contemporary example, the printing history of *The Official Records*. This printed compilation of missives sent by officers to generals and government officials during the Civil War is well documented in the *Congressional Record*, histories of the Government Printing Office, and in *Publishers' Weekly*.⁵³ Another example is the printing allocation from the Ohio State Assembly for production the twelve volume set of *The Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio in the War of the Rebellion*. The Werner Company printed volumes XI and XII, between 1889 and 1890, and reprinted the series over the years. We can use this information for basic comparison.⁵⁴ The printing information for the *Official Record* and even for the *Official Roster* will have to

⁵³ Additional figures for printing and distribution of the Official Records of the War of the Rebellion are found in Kerr, 187-188.

⁵⁴ "Under the provisions of the law, the Commissioners of Public Printing, together with the Adjutant-General, awarded the contract on December 16, 1889 for furnishing two volumes (XI and XII), 10,000 copies each, to the Werner Printing and Lithographing Company, of Akron at 76 9-10 cents per volume." *Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio in the War of the Rebellion 1861-1866*. (Akron, OH: The Werner Company, 1890): iv. NOTE: this statement is also found in later reprinted volumes by the Werner Company.

serve as comparisons for editing and printing costs for the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.⁵⁵

When *The Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* was printed, it took twenty years for the set to be printed *in toto*. The set was “120 huge royal octavo volumes of 1000 pages each, and a gigantic atlas and the ultimate cost [was] \$2.5 million dollars for the 11,000 copies” printed by order of the 47th Congress in 1882.⁵⁶ Kerr reported that the Secretary of War allocated \$15,000 to begin the project of producing ten thousand copies of 96 large octavo volumes containing approximately eight hundred pages each or a total of 76,800 pages.⁵⁷ By 1881, Congress had spent \$40,000 to produce seven thousand copies for the House, two thousand for the Senate, one thousand for other offices and the balance for sale.⁵⁸ These costs merely covered the first year of printing, which continued for many years until the set was finally completed. The public printer estimated the printing costs would include fifty thousand reams of paper at four dollars a ream or \$200,000. Composition, that is type setting, would “exceed 250,000,000 ems” for the approximately 960,000 books.⁵⁹ The

⁵⁵ I had hoped to find information and even advertisements for subscriptions for other multi-volume sets printed during the Gilded Age on either side of the Atlantic. This information is difficult to ferret out.

⁵⁶ “The Official History of the War of the Rebellion” *Publishers’ Weekly* #1151 (Feb 17 1894): 329.

⁵⁷ Kerr, 46.

⁵⁸ Kerr, 187-188.

⁵⁹ Kerr, 47.

government printing office calculated profits from this publication to be ten percent above cost, each volume selling for "50 to 80 cents per volume, if bound in black cloth, and \$1 extra per volume if bound in red turkey. The 89 serial parts already published [sold for] \$56.10 in cloth." The Atlas, printed in 30 parts sold for forty cents each or \$12 bound."⁶⁰

Publishers' Weekly reported the cost of printing the Official Record was ten thousand dollars just for printing and binding each volume, "preparation of each volume for the printer's hands cost an equal sum of \$10,000."⁶¹ By 1893, the GPO had expended \$1.8 million dollars to publish and print the first 89 of the 1200 volume set.⁶² Because this was a government publication, much of the cost of publishing and printing was borne by the government, which explains the low costs and the limited number of sets that were actually available for purchase, somewhere between 700 and 1200 sets out of the 11,000 printed.

The *Encyclopædia Britannica* was printed in parts as were many of the books and serials printed by the Werner Company. The company allocated three million dollars to create the plates and print the volumes. These figures provide

⁶⁰ "The Official History of the War of the Rebellion" *Publishers' Weekly* #1151 (Feb 17 1894): 329.

⁶¹ "The Official History of the War of the Rebellion" *Publishers' Weekly* #1151 (Feb 17, 1894): 329. *Publishers' Weekly* estimated costs to complete this huge series would run to \$2.5 million, the government having spent \$1.8 million or \$20,000 per volume by 1894.

⁶² "The Official History of the War of the Rebellion" *Publishers' Weekly* #1151 (Feb 17 1894): 329.

an idea of the costs and profits to be had. They also indicate that there was little margin for error in pricing books. An error in pricing at the beginning would mean a loss of profits, or even bankruptcy by the time the set was completed.

The Government Printing Office annual reports provide a contemporary source for both base costs and changes in mechanization. The Ohio State Printing Office annual reports included prices they expected to get for bids on various types of work in the late 1880s and early 1890s. Prices included the cost of supplies, labor, and salary, and some small profit for the printer. Even when Government Printing Office was the printer, there had to be some small profit margin to put back into the coffers for future print runs.

The Werner Company printed the *Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio in the War of the Rebellion* under one of its contracts as public printer in 1889-1891.⁶³ This twelve volume set was costly to print and distribute. We can use similar costs from the *Official Record* and apply them to the *Official Roster*. Even if each volume of the set was priced at one dollar, it is conceivable that the cost barely covered the expense of the first printing. If the printer kept the printing plates, all subsequent impressions and issues were much less expensive. When reprinting, the publisher assumed the financial risk for sale of

⁶³ Werner won the bid for second class printing. State of Ohio, Office of the Commissioner of Public Printing, Columbus, OH (August 21, 1888) This type of printing paid thirty six cents per one thousand ems for composition and thirty cents per token or forme for presswork. State of Ohio, Annual Report of the Public Printer Sept 26, 1884.

each volume. The printer assumed the financial risk of purchasing supplies, running the presses, and perhaps warehousing the bound and unbound volumes. Since the Werner Company was both publisher and printer in the 1890s, the business assumed both types of risk, potentially tying up funds for many years.

Encyclopædia Britannica Printing Costs

With this knowledge about the costs of producing large sets of books or multi-volume sets in general, let us look at the costs for printing the *Encyclopædia Britannica* over the years.⁶⁴

Herman Kogan wrote the definitive history of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* to 1958. The book focuses on the British side of this publication, particularly the efforts of Hooper to market and distribute the ninth edition of *Encyclopædia Britannica* in England in the 1890s and early 1900s. Kogan devotes almost half the book to Hooper. And indeed, when I read other books about the ninth edition of *Encyclopædia Britannica*, particularly the letters and reminiscences of C.E. Moberly Bell, General Manager of The Times (London), Kruse's dissertation

⁶⁴ Since the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was originally published and printed in Great Britain, some figures are in pounds. For simplicity sake, I will not covert amounts to dollars. I will use whichever currency the articles and books on the subject provide a good site of converting currency "Measuring Worth" which provides information about historic economic data <http://measuringworth.com/exchangepond/>

about the history of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and the various masters theses produced at Columbia University in the late 1920s and early 1930s, all included discussions about the various business arrangements and marketing schemes of Hooper and Jackson.⁶⁵

The twenty-five volumes of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* were first printed over a fifteen year period. It took that long because each article had to be written, edited, formatted to fit in the style of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and then printed at the factory. Then the costs had to be recouped through sales of that volume which would fund printing of the next. In this and many other ways, the very first printing was the most expensive.⁶⁶

Costs for printing the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* were borne by Adam and Charles Black, the Edinburgh publishers. As the original owners, publishers, and printers of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, they paid for everything from writing and editing each article, to printing and binding each

⁶⁵ E.H.C. Moberly Bell, *The Life & Letters of C.F. Moberly Bell* (London: The Richards Press Limited, 1927) and F. Harcourt. Kitchin, *Moberly Bell and His Times: An Unofficial Narrative* (London: Philip Allan & Co. Quality Court, 1925). See also Rose B. Phelps, *The Encyclopædia Britannica, Ninth Edition, A Critical and Historical Study*, Unpublished MA Thesis for the School of Library Service. (NY: Columbia University, 1930) and Doris Mary Reed, *The Encyclopaedia Britannica: A Critical and Historical Study of the Eleventh Edition and its Relation to the Ninth Edition*, Unpublished MA Thesis for the School of Library Service (NY: Columbia University School of Library Service, 1931).

⁶⁶ Kogan, 47.

volume. All the profits went back to A. & C. Black, which were applied to the production of the next volume.

The Blacks began working on the ninth edition in 1870, assigning and collecting the articles and editing them to the appropriate style. The ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was printed between 1875-1889 at 30-36 shillings (approximately \$7.25 to \$8.50) per volume for 24 volumes plus a separate index to the whole set.⁶⁷ All told, there were sixteen thousand articles in the 25 volumes for a total of 20,504 pages with illustrations and index. This edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* included birth and death dates for persons for the first time ever.⁶⁸ Long important articles included their own bibliographies. A. & C. Black touted the inclusive index, which was an important addition to the series. In spite of all this innovation, the first volume received mixed reviews, with complaints that the period between the first and the twenty-fourth volume made the encyclopaedia too dated, there was nothing about live people, nor were there articles about current events.⁶⁹

With its debut in 1875, printers in the United States began to reprint the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, mostly without permission from the Blacks. The authorized printers and distributors were Scribners' and Sons and Little, Brown

⁶⁷ Kogan, 51, 53.

⁶⁸ Kogan, 63.

⁶⁹ Kogan, 63, 121-129.

and Co. The original price for Scribner's edition, or more precisely reprint, sold at nine dollars per volume or one hundred eighty nine dollars per set. They sold their volumes of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* at nine. Stoddart, one of the first unauthorized reprinters, sold his volumes at five dollars per volume on subscription or one hundred five dollars per set. To compete with Stoddart, *Encyclopædia Britannica* and Scribner lost \$84 per set or more to their competitors.⁷⁰

The Werner Company, allocating between \$3 and \$3.5 million, set up an extensive operation editing, setting type, making plates, and printing the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.⁷¹ Both Covert and Thorpe write that the Werner Company used editors in their offices in Chicago to writing articles for inclusion in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, editing the articles for the supplement, marketing, and dealing with subscriptions coming from all over the country.

⁷⁰ Circuit Court of the United States, Eastern District of Pennsylvania. Charles Scribner v. Joseph M. Stoddart, Jr., et al. Henry C. Lodge and C. Scribner v. J. M. Stoddart, Jr., et al. James T. Black et al., Trading as A. & C. Black, v. Joseph M. Stoddart, Jr., et al. Source: The *American Law Register (1852-1891)*, 28, No. 7, New Series Vol. 19 (Jul.1880): 433-441. Other reprints of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* include Henry G. Allen's edition, which was made from photograph emulsion plates, was sold for \$2.50 per volume, John Wanamaker sold his photoreprographic version for \$38 / set as opposed to the authorized set price of \$225. Funk & Wagnalls priced their pirated edition at \$40/set, and Belford-Clarke Company (est. 1875), sold a pirated edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* which they touted as the *Americanized Encyclopaedia Britannica Revised and Amended* as a 10 volume set. The set was sold through subscriptions and advertisements, so the costs to the subscriber varied between \$60 and \$125 per set Herman Kogan, *The Great EB: The Story of the Encyclopaedia Britannica*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958): 65-68.

⁷¹ Covert, *The Werner Co.* (1894): 20-21.

Thorpe describes the Werner Company printing operation for the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and the supplemental volumes. Every year, the Werner Company printed at least 5000 sets of 28 volumes each. That was 20,000 pages or approximately 800 in each volume, which consumed 7,500 reams of paper.⁷²

The Werner Company book manufacturing plant printed the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and supplements six times per year. According to Baker, "to print the twenty-eight volume edition of the *Britannica* the entire capacity of forty of these presses was kept busy for over six weeks, and there were six printings a year, highly skilled, meticulous work."⁷³ That was about half the plant's capacity. In other words, for 36 weeks a year, the Werner Company devoted half its labor force to this particular printing venture, an enormous expenditure of time and manpower. A substantial portion of budget and profits rested upon sales of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. According to Thorpe, between 1891 and 1895, the Werner Company printed 120,000 sets (3,360,000 books) of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. They shipped out 150 35-foot box car loads per year, of just the encyclopaedia.⁷⁴

⁷² Thorpe, 11.

⁷³ Elizabeth Faulkner Baker, *Printers and Technology: A History of the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1957), 94, fn 15 *American Pressman* 6 (Dec 1895): 9-15.

⁷⁴ Thorpe, 11, and Baker, 94, fn 15 citing *American Pressman* 6 (Dec 1895): 94.

What is really amazing is that the *Encyclopædia Britannica* endeavor occupied only half of the equipment and staff of the Werner Company. The plant also printed other books, serials, and materials, as described above. There was a continuous, never-ending stream of books and printed materials leaving the plant and, of course, the corresponding outlay of funds for raw supplies and products entering the plant. According to Thorpe and Covert, the printing presses consumed 700 reams of paper or two car loads of paper per day and 350 pounds of ink per day.⁷⁵

Reprinting the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was integral to the financial well-being of Werner Company. Werner's merger with Peale and Belford-Clark brought in an extremely valuable asset just when the company needed an infusion of money. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* was just one plank of Werner's campaign to promote self-education and self-improvement using the publications of his vast printing empire.

This chapter examined the vast printing empire of Paul E. Werner and the types of materials Werner Company printed. Production and printing costs contributed the financial risks and rewards for printing vast quantities of books. For Werner the fifteen years between 1890 and 1905 were filled with financial stress, labor strikes, and massive expansion efforts. The plant weathered several

⁷⁵ Thorpe, 13-14.

labor union strikes beginning in 1894 which were settled more or less favorably for both sides. The Werner Company began its massive printing campaign of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and its associated publications. The plant stayed open and flourished during the financial panic of 1893 and managed to expand, adding buildings and equipment on new pieces of property. This period marks the high point in Werner Company's history. After 1905, Werner struggled with lawsuits, more labor unrest and a decline in profits, all of which brought about the downfall of his printing empire.

Conclusion

The End of the Empire

Publishers, authors, and printers between 1870 and 1920 adjusted to a number of changes in the copyright laws and, as they do today, dealt with a series of issues involving ownership of copyright, payment of royalties, definition of derivatives, and protections from copyright infringement. Werner's career spanned these changes and his business was affected by the introduction of international copyright laws, or copyright for works published in the United States by foreign authors, which played havoc with his *Encyclopædia Britannica* printing operation.

In 1891, the International Copyright act put a stop to the printing and reprinting "free-for-all". This new law protected the intellectual property of foreign authors and provided for reciprocal copyright protection of foreign books in the United States.¹ Under this act, books by foreign authors had to be manufactured in the United States and deposited with the copyright office to

¹ "Importation of Copyright Books into Foreign Countries" *Publishers' Weekly* #1953 (July 3, 1909): 25-26.

receive protections.² These changes affected the publishing and printing industry and defined limitations for reprinting books.

The Werner Company was barely affected by changes in the copyright law in 1891; however, his future partners, R.S. Peale and Belford-Clarke were. They both fought and won law suits filed by *Encyclopædia Britannica* copyright holders for infringement of copyright.³ When these companies merged with Werner Company, and they began to print the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, the joint owners assumed the court decisions applied to the Werner Company also. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Werner Company embarked in a major publishing and printing campaign that centered on the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Having acquired reprint rights from R.S. Peale and Belford-Clarke, editors in the Chicago offices wrote supplemental articles to refresh the many out of date entries in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. As discussed in the previous chapter, many of these

² Book manufacture included typesetting or composition, imposition or page layout, printing, and binding. This requirement precluded the purchase of stereotype and electrotype plates from European printers to be used in the United States. Domestic printers had to pay compositors and typesetters to actually set the type and create new plates. Nor could the printed sheets be shipped to the United States for binding here, or the printed sheets shipped to the continent for binding (which was less expensive), then reshipped back to the States for sale at a lower price. This new international copyright law, enforceable in 1891, required foreign authors or publishers bring the text to the United States and have it set, printed, and bound here in order to obtain copyright protection. With a few tweaks, this law was modified in 1909 and was in force until the copyright act of 1976. See also Histories of the copyright office at the Library of Congress are available at <http://www.copyright.gov/history/index.html>

³ Paul Kruse, "Piracy and the Britannica" *The Library Quarterly* 33 No.4 (Oct. 1963): 314, 321-322 and "Belford v. Scribner" 144 US 488 (US Supreme Court – submitted March 24, 1892 – decided April 11, 1892) in United States. Copyright Office. Decisions of the United States Courts involving Copyright and Literary Property 1789-1909 with an Analytical Index. Bulletin 13 (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1978): 201-213.

articles and emendations were showcased in *Self-Culture* magazine as subject to explore for the subscribers own edification. Before 1900, The Werner Company marketed its *Americanized Encyclopædia Britannica* along with a five-volume supplement and an index.⁴

The first major suit in 1903 revolved around the sale of volumes with articles previously copyrighted by Encyclopædia Britannica Company. An injunction was issued to prohibit the sale and distribution through the Werner Company offices and that of its affiliate the American Newspaper Association.⁵ In the spirit of the order, Werner ordered that any orders that included articles named in the lawsuit be held until new entries could be written and inserted in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. At the same time the injunction was filed and Werner issued his orders, Encyclopædia Britannica Company agents managed to purchase four sets. The courts found that while the Werner Company and the American Newspaper Association complied with the injunction and Werner's orders, some of their clerks were unaware of management's orders and filled the Encyclopædia Britannica Company's orders. In the end, the court found in favor

⁴ Paul Kruse, *The Story of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1768-1943* (PhD diss., The University of Chicago, 1959): 213.

⁵ Encyclopædia Britannica Co. v. American Newspaper Ass'n Circuit Court D. New Jersey (June 23, 1904) 130 F 460; Encyclopædia Britannica Co. v. American Newspaper Ass'n Circuit Court D. New Jersey (June 28, 1904) 130 F 493; Werner Co. v. Encyclopædia Britannica Co. Circuit Court D. New Jersey (June 28, 1904): 134 F. 831.

of The Werner Company and the American Newspaper Association.⁶ This was a small victory followed by yet another lawsuit.

The Interim Copyright Act of 1905 was proposed and passed to encourage foreign publishers and authors to exhibit their work at the World Fair and International Exposition (in St. Louis) of 1904.⁷ This interim copyright act granted two years of copyright protection to foreign authors and publishers provided the works included a copyright statement in accordance with the law, and copies of the work(s) was deposited with the copyright office at Library of Congress within the appropriate time period. Library of Congress. Using the Interim Copyright Act of 1905, Hooper and Jackson, successors to the copyright of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and owners of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* Company of Illinois, deposited all twenty-five volumes of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* originally printed from 1875 to 1889 with the Library of Congress and claimed copyright protection.⁸ Under this act, the *Encyclopædia Britannica* Company sued the Werner Company for copyright infringement.⁹ The *Encyclopædia Britannica* Company continued to sue and fight the Werner

⁶ Kruse, *The Story of Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 271, FN 1

⁷ Act of March 3, 1905 Senate Report 2280 58th Congress 3rd Session.

⁸ By this time, copyrights to the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* are held by Hooper and Jackson as The Encyclopaedia Britannica Company and the encyclopaedia is printed in the United States and in England. See also Paul Kruse, *The Story of Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 214 and FN2.

⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica Co. v. Werner Co. et.al.* Circuit Court, D. New Jersey (March 10, 1905): 135 F 841.

Company for many years and in many courts. According to Harter, "the largest law suit on record, concerning copyrights and publishing rights, was started against Mr. Werner and his company by the then publishers of the English Encyclopædia Britannica."¹⁰ Fees mounted for both sides, but particularly for the Werner Company, which expended many millions of dollars in legal fees.¹¹ The courts failed to side with Encyclopædia Britannica Company citing that the law was not passed so that publishers could file for copyright protection long after the fact.¹²

A third suit was brought by the Encyclopædia Britannica Company to restrain the use of the words "Encyclopædia Britannica" and "Britannica" on the title pages of any of the volumes printed by The Werner Company.¹³ The suit ended with an agreement between the two companies that between February 23, 1906 and March 1, 1908 The Werner Company would sell the *Encyclopædia Britannica* directly to individuals and not through salesmen or distributors. In addition, The Werner Company would cease to use the words "Encyclopædia

¹⁰ Edward S. Harter, *Paul E. Werner: in Honor of his 80th Birthday* (Akron, OH: The Akron Beacon Journal, 1930): 10.

¹¹ Harter, 10.

¹² Kruse, "Piracy and the Britannica," 322-324. See also "Encyclopaedia Britannica Co v. Werner Co. et.al." Circuit Court D. New Jersey (March 10, 1905) 135 F 841, as reported in United States. Copyright Office. *Decisions of the United States Courts* Bulletin 13 (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1978): 887-892. Additional suits were filed in an attempt to prohibit Werner Company from printing and distributing the work including Circuit Court D. New Jersey (May 31, 1905) 135 F 461; and Circuit Court D. New Jersey (Sept 9, 1909) 172 F 1012.

¹³ Kruse, *The Story of Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 221 fn 3; and Encyclopædia Britannica Company v. Werner Company 135 Fed. 841 (1905)

Britannica" and "Britannica" on all title pages of all issues, editions, and versions of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* it printed. In exchange, Encyclopædia Britannica Company would drop all other lawsuits and pay the Werner Company sixty thousand dollars at the end of the agreement. When the agreement lapsed, The Werner Company could resume printing and distribution of the encyclopaedia using "any plates then in existence including 'Werner plates', 'Stoddart plates', and 'Allen plates'."¹⁴ A few months before the agreement concluded, both parties met privately and renegotiated the deal verbally, filing no new papers with the courts. When the Encyclopædia Britannica Company went to court to sue for contempt of court, the judge ruled that this was a breach of contract and dismissed the case.¹⁵ An attempt to negotiate use of printing plates and title pages sounds as though the two companies came to some accord after years of litigation. Indeed when consulting the index of copyright decisions through 1909, there are no legal actions listed. Kruse and Kogan recount that Hooper and Jackson's partnership was failing and Cambridge University was due to publish the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

Whether Paul E. Werner won or lost the lawsuits filed by Encyclopædia Britannica Company in 1905, the company began to fail. "While he won every

¹⁴ Encyclopædia Britannica Co. v. Werner Co. et.al. Circuit Court D. New Jersey (Sept 9, 1909) 172 F 1012

¹⁵ Encyclopædia Britannica Co. v. Werner Co. et.al. Circuit Court D. New Jersey (Sept 9, 1909) 172 F 1012

case in the courts, his financial strength was broken," according to Harter's account. The cost of the suits, counter suits, appeals, and lawyers was too much for the company to absorb. Injunctions filed between 1906 and 1908 forced Werner Company to cease distributing copies of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* to subscribers who had already paid for copies.¹⁶ Each legal action struck another blow against the Werner Company and for Encyclopædia Britannica Company. Werner's factory had much money, time, and labor wrapped up in the printing and reprinting of various versions of the encyclopædia, the inability to publish and distribute it was crippling.¹⁷ To make matters worse, the Encyclopædia Britannica Company also sued Saalfield Publishing Company, in an effort to stop Werner Company printing for their subsidiary.¹⁸ Eventually, the money from this huge printing operation had to dry up.

On top of all Werner's financial troubles, newspaper articles reported that the South Cleveland Banking Company was also in trouble, due to extensive outstanding loans of \$500,000 or more to the Werner Company.¹⁹ This bank had

¹⁶ "Encyclopaedia Britannica Co v. Werner Co. et.al." Circuit Court D. New Jersey (May 31, 1905) 135 F 461, and Circuit Court D. New Jersey (Sept 9, 1909) 172 F 1012 as reported in United States. Copyright Office. *Decisions of the United States Courts* Bulletin 13 (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1978):894-898. See also Kruse, "Piracy and the Britannica," 325-327.

¹⁷ Kruse, "Piracy and the Britannica," 327-328.

¹⁸ Paul Kruse, "Piracy and the Britannica," 323.

¹⁹ "Cleveland Bank Assigns," *New York Times*, Jan 7, 1911.

extended funds to Werner to erect the Music Hall in downtown Akron, and provided cash for basic operational needs at the book manufacturing plant. It failed when Werner could no longer make payments on the loans.

Between 1909 and 1914, Paul E. Werner's empire was collapsing. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* lawsuits were expensive with fees running into the millions of dollars, and putting an enormous strain on the financial well-being of his company.²⁰ From various real estate records we see that The Werner Company declared bankruptcy yet again in an effort to protect the assets of the company.²¹ As part of the bankruptcy proceedings, the Werner Company reorganized.

By this time, Saalfield was well established as its own entity, publishing and producing its own books. Saalfield began specializing in children's books and was making a decent living. When he incorporated to create Saalfield Publishing, Arthur J. Saalfield brought his son Albert G. into the business as VP.²²

Between 1909 and 1911, William H. Marlatt, receiver for The Werner Company, sold the printing plant and all its properties in an effort to recoup

²⁰ Harter, 10.

²¹ Summit County, Ohio. County Recorder's Office. Bankruptcy of The New Werner Company, Paul E. Werner, Edward P. Werner, et.al. filed in Circuit Court, US Northern District of Ohio Eastern Division, civil docket 7916 D1848-375 dated December 1911 filed Sept 5, 1940.

²² Karl H. Grismer, *Akron and Summit County* (Akron, Ohio: Summit County Historical Society, 1952): 642.

losses from outstanding debts.²³ In 1910, the property was sold first by Werner to family members then transferred to the New Werner Company.²⁴

According to newspaper articles, the New Werner Company was much like its previous incarnation except it was limping along. Paul E. Werner was now sixty years old and must have been exhausted defending the integrity of the business, fighting legal battles, and trying to keep his workers paid. Over the next few years, the receiver for Werner Company worked with the New Werner Company to get the company back on its feet and the cash flow working in its favor. The records of the Cuyahoga County Insolvency Court hearings attached to the Werner Company deeds tell this sad tale.²⁵ Where once the Werner Company could purchase any supplies needed to print massive runs of books, now managers had to ask the courts for funds just to purchase enough paper and ink to print books to fulfill outstanding printing contracts. The cash flow never readjusted itself. The New Werner Company could not get ahead of the debt cycle.

²³ Summit County, Ohio, County Recorder's Office. Sale of property of The Werner Company, Paul E. Werner, Edward P. Werner et.al. by Special master Commissioner by order of the District Court of the United State Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division Case 7916D1848-412 sold March 1911 filed Sept 5, 1940.

²⁴ Scott Dix Kenfield, ed, *Akron and Summit County, Ohio, 1825-1928* (Chicago and Akron: S. J. Clarke, 1928): 388.

²⁵ Summit County, Ohio, County Recorder's Office. Sale of property of The Werner Company, Paul E. Werner, Edward P. Werner et.al. by Special master Commissioner by order of the District Court of the United State Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division Case 7916D1848-382 sold March 1911 filed Sept 5, 1940 and "Notice of Special Master Commissioner's Sale" *Chicago Daily Tribune* Feb 14, 1911 p15 and Feb 21, 1911 p13.

Nineteen fourteen heralded a new era, a time without a Werner printing company in Akron. For the first time since 1875, there was no printing company with the Werner name in its title. On January 7, 1914, the New Werner Company board members amended the articles of incorporation, changing the name of the company to the Superior Printing Company, and appointing J.A. Russell President and General Manager, E.L. Brooks Vice President, and H. Stover Secretary Treasurer.²⁶ Paul E. Werner's son Edward Paul moved the lithographing operation to a new site and, joining with Howard H. Wright, formed the Akron Lithographing Company.²⁷

In 1916, the Akron Lithographing company merged with The Commercial Printing Co. to become the Commercial Printing & Lithographing Co. and expanded its plant on W. Exchange Street to accommodate additional workers and equipment.²⁸ Edward P. Werner continued to work in the printing industry in Akron until his death in 1973.

Paul E. Werner, although still the president of Klages Coal & Ice Co, was out of the printing business. While he continued to maintain his ties with his fellow businessmen in Akron, it was time for a new start. A widower since 1900, Werner married the much younger, thirty-three year old Mary Elizabeth Keiser in

²⁶ Kenfield, 388 and Ohio Secretary of State. Articles of Incorporation Vol. 174, page 359.

²⁷ Kenfield, 388.

²⁸ Kenfield, 388.

Boston. They headed off to Kansas City starting a new life together.²⁹ Werner purchased two rubber companies, one in West Virginia and the second in Missouri. Calling them the Kansas City Tire and Rubber Corporation, Werner served as president and general manager from 1914 until 1927.³⁰

In late 1927, Paul E. Werner and Mary Elizabeth Keiser returned to Akron for good. They set up home in Cuyahoga Falls where they lived a quiet life.³¹

Paul E. Werner was not ready to retire. At close to eighty, he had come full circle and was again publishing and editing the *Akron Germania*, filling his days with words and the smell of printers' ink. According to Harter, Frank A. Seiberling purchased the paper for Paul E. Werner so that he would have something to do with his time in his last remaining years.³²

Living a long life, Paul E. Werner succumbed to old age, passing away on February 6, 1931.³³ He was buried in Glendale Cemetery in Akron on February ninth with many friends and relatives there to memorialize his life and

²⁹ Harter, 10, 16 and Massachusetts Marriage Records. Town of Brookline, 1914, page 10. (Marriage of Paul. E. Werner to Mary Elizabeth Keiser, June 6, 1914). US Bureau of the Census Fourteenth Census 1920 Population Jackson County, Missouri, 4th Ward Kansas City, T625 Roll 925 P194 Sup 5, ED 72 Sheet 9A lines 49-50.

³⁰ Kenfield, 388; *Akron Beacon Journal* 17 May 1915, p7 col 3; Edward S. Harter, *Paul E. Werner: in Honor of his 80th Birthday* (Akron, OH: The Akron Beacon Journal, 1930): 10-11 and "Werner, Paul E." *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York: J.T. White, 1898-) Vol. 2, 251.

³¹ US Bureau of the Census Fifteenth Census 1930 Population Cuyahoga Falls City, Summit County, Ohio, 3rd Ward T626 Roll 1881, Sup 92, ED 77-178 Sheet 8A lines 23-24.

³² Harter, 11.

³³ State of Ohio. Death Certificate. Paul E. Werner died Feb 6, 1931 Certificate number 12852.

accomplishments. Paul E. Werner's two sons Edward Paul and Richard continued to live in Akron. Edward Paul Werner was the superintendent of The Commercial Printing & Lithographing Co. while Richard Werner continued to work for Goodyear, where he started his career.

The Werner Castle, once the Akron headquarters for the company at the corner of Union and Perkins, still stands. First transferred to Enterprise Manufacturing Co., the predecessor of Pfleuger Co., which made fishing lures, the castle is now owned by Famous Supply Company, a plumbing supply company. Only two of the many buildings built by the Werner Company still stand. The complex is a silent memorial to the once vast printing empire of Paul E. Werner.

This dissertation demonstrates that it is possible to revive an invisible company and man regardless of his station in life. By mining public records and published materials, it is possible to learn about the lives of men and women of all classes. Paul E. Werner is an example of the type of man who succeeded in building a business, growing it from a local concern to a national and international company and influencing, for a time, printing and book manufacturing in the Gilded Age. Werner is the tip of the iceberg, just one of many men and women who were prominent locally, influenced local politics and

civic matters in their communities, and disappeared into obscurity after their deaths. Today they are barely recognized except as names carved deeply into stone lintels, in fading, peeling paint on buildings, and as long-forgotten sponsors of festivals and parades. Werner was one of these local prominent businessmen who financed parades and festivals, and built a stone monument that bears his company's name to this day.

Documenting Werner's life and business helps us understand this upwardly mobile, business class, this group of industrialists of the Gilded Age, albeit the ones less well documented, and now forgotten. Successful local businesses of the Gilded Age influenced the financial decisions and issues in their local communities. Many local businesses bought up their competitors near and far, as Knight purchased all the newspapers in Akron. Local businessmen like Werner played an integral part in local civic organizations, charities, philanthropy, and ideals within their hometowns and regions.

Just as some historians are re-evaluating the lives, business practices, and importance of the richest men of the late nineteenth century, there are others who are studying the less known, poorly documented white collar workers of the same era, asking what were their lives like, how they succeeded and failed locally, and why were they less successful than their contemporaries who

succeeded.³⁴ More important than remembering who these middle class workers and business owners were is the study of the factors that caused their success and failure, and what drove them to succeed a second time. Studying these businesses and their owners helps historians and economics understand the factors in a society and culture that contribute to the development and growth of a small business.

The study of the Werner Company and others like it helps us understand financial success on the local and regional scale. When we place the businesses and their owners into the cultural and economic context of their era, we recognize external influences such the drive for self-education and self-betterment. Studies of local businessmen help us understand their contributions to the local and national economy, the markets that are beyond the community, county, and region.

Studies of the publishing and printing industry in the nineteenth century state that while other businesses could grow to become hugely successful, this industry could not because of slim profit margins and fluctuating demand for the

³⁴ Charles R. Morris, *The Tycoons: How Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, Jay Gould, and J.P. Morgan Invented the American Supereconomy* (NY: Holt, 2006.) and Ron Chernow, *Titan: The Life of John D. Rockefeller, Sr.* (NY: Vantage, 2004) are just two examples of reconsiderations of rich businessmen of the Gilded Age. Jocelyn Wills, *Boosters, Hustlers, and Speculators* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005) and Scott A. Sandage, *Born Losers* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2005) mine public records to learn about the local businessman and undocumented working class.

printed word. This study shows that Werner was able to expand his printing empire beyond the state, purchasing other companies, adding new services and products, and integrating as much of the industry into his company as possible. While financially successful, that economic prosperity didn't survive the closure of his plants. Nevertheless, it is important to examine how Werner made his money and his business decisions.

this active publishing and printing company adds to the study of nineteenth century history of the book and publishing. It shows the variety of publishing ventures a printer embarked upon, his attempts at sustaining cash flow, and serving the reading needs of an ever growing reading public. Books sold on subscription, magazines, and other ventures were all part of the late nineteenth publishing industry. Werner embarked on all these publishing and printing ventures and was a financial success.

In reconstructing the life of Paul E. Werner and his printing empire, I used a combination of primary and secondary sources, from maps, deeds, and tax records, to board minutes, journal and newspaper articles, and company marketing materials. Each source led me to the next answering many questions and raising others. While some of the research was an exercise in discovery, the rest was proof that the sources and tools used by historians to document history from below can be used to study people, events, and companies from above. These tools and techniques fleshed out the life and accomplishments of a

forgotten man and business, one as invisible as those who leave no written record. The resulting research and dissertation uncovered more information than I could use, leaving some questions unanswered, and some answers and threads for another project.

In the end, the primary and secondary sources revealed a man who was very much of his time, determined, self-educated, and persistent. Werner and his company are one example, one case-study that supports the sweeping generalized notions of business practices in the late nineteenth century. More importantly, Werner proves that there were many variations in the construction, growth, and success of businesses that do not fit the overarching theories of business and management. Acknowledging that no business or business person fits the model perfectly provides fodder for future research in our understanding of how businesses evolve, succeed and fail.

Werner was one of these men, successful locally. He brought work to the city of Akron, prosperity to his family, and funded civic organizations and activities. He ran a successful printing empire that operated on an enormous scale and distributing publications on a national and international scale. But in the end, his empire crumbled. His business and family are virtually unknown even within the confines of Akron. Only a crenellated castle just north of downtown marks his once powerful empire. Many other local businessmen, now forgotten and barely visible, are out there just waiting to be discovered.

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retirement, both on account of our past pleasant official associations, and especially on account of the institution for which he has so long and so faithfully labored; and that we owe all extended to him our thanks and remembrance with courtesy.

Upon Motion the minutes of this meeting were read and approved.

Adjourned *and die*
 Paul E. Werner
 Secy

Akron, June 27, 1879.

Regular session of Board. Present
 Messrs. Chalkin, Edmonson, Baker & Chapman.
 Upon Motion Mr. E. P. Green was
 Elected president of the Board &
 P. E. Werner, Secy.

The following Bills were ordered
 paid

For Takant	\$152
John Stehr	7.60
Beacon Publ Co	5.75
Akron Gas Co	5.75
Paul E. Werner	10.50

The Librarian's report of \$9.10
 was received & ordered placed
 on file

Messrs. Werner, Edmonson & Chapman
 were appointed a com. to close
 up contract with Mr. Chalkin, the
 attorney of Mr. De Moller for the
 2 Rooms, to be rented in addition
 to Library.

Adjourned
 P. E. Werner
 Secy

Fig.1: Akron Public Library Board Minutes June 27, 1879

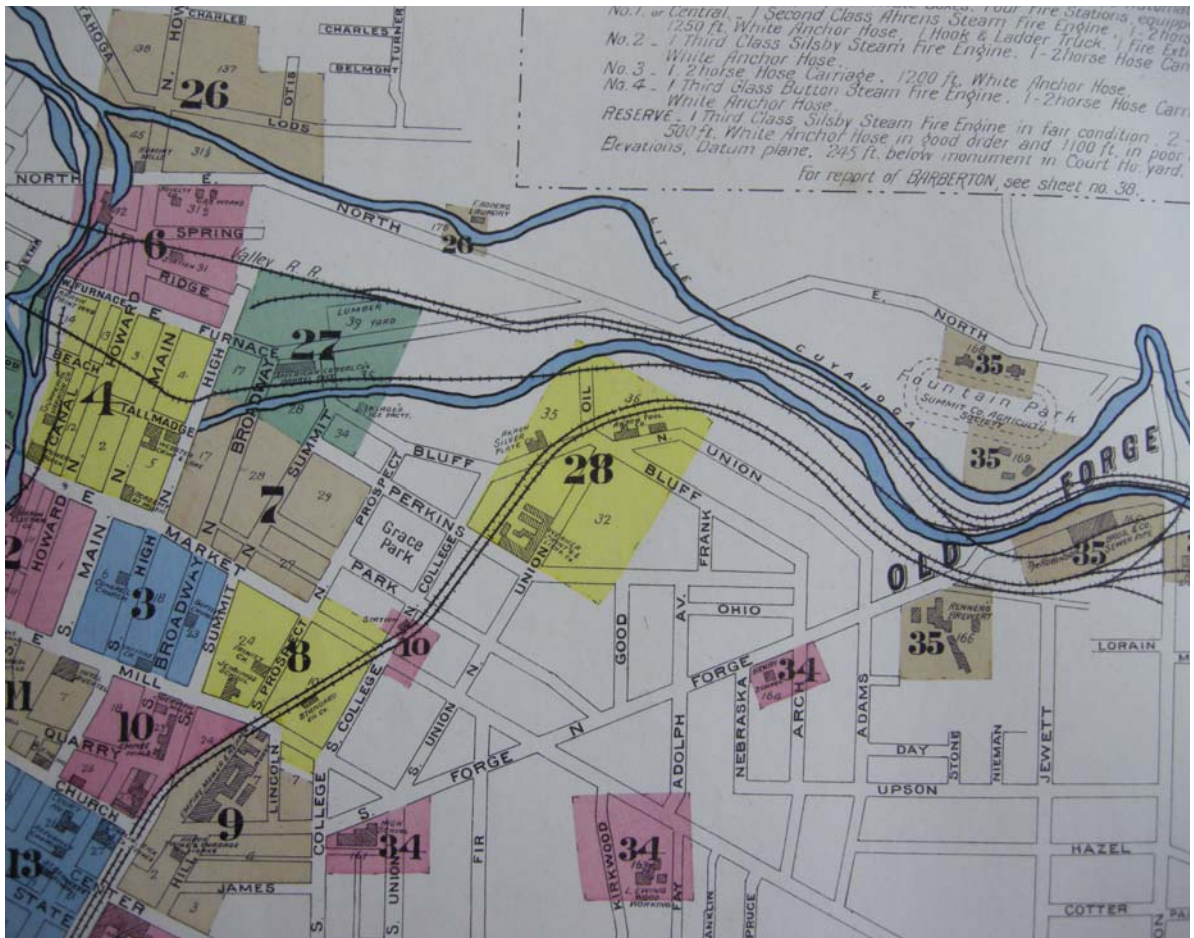


Fig.2: Sanborn Map, Akron Ohio 1892 Map 1

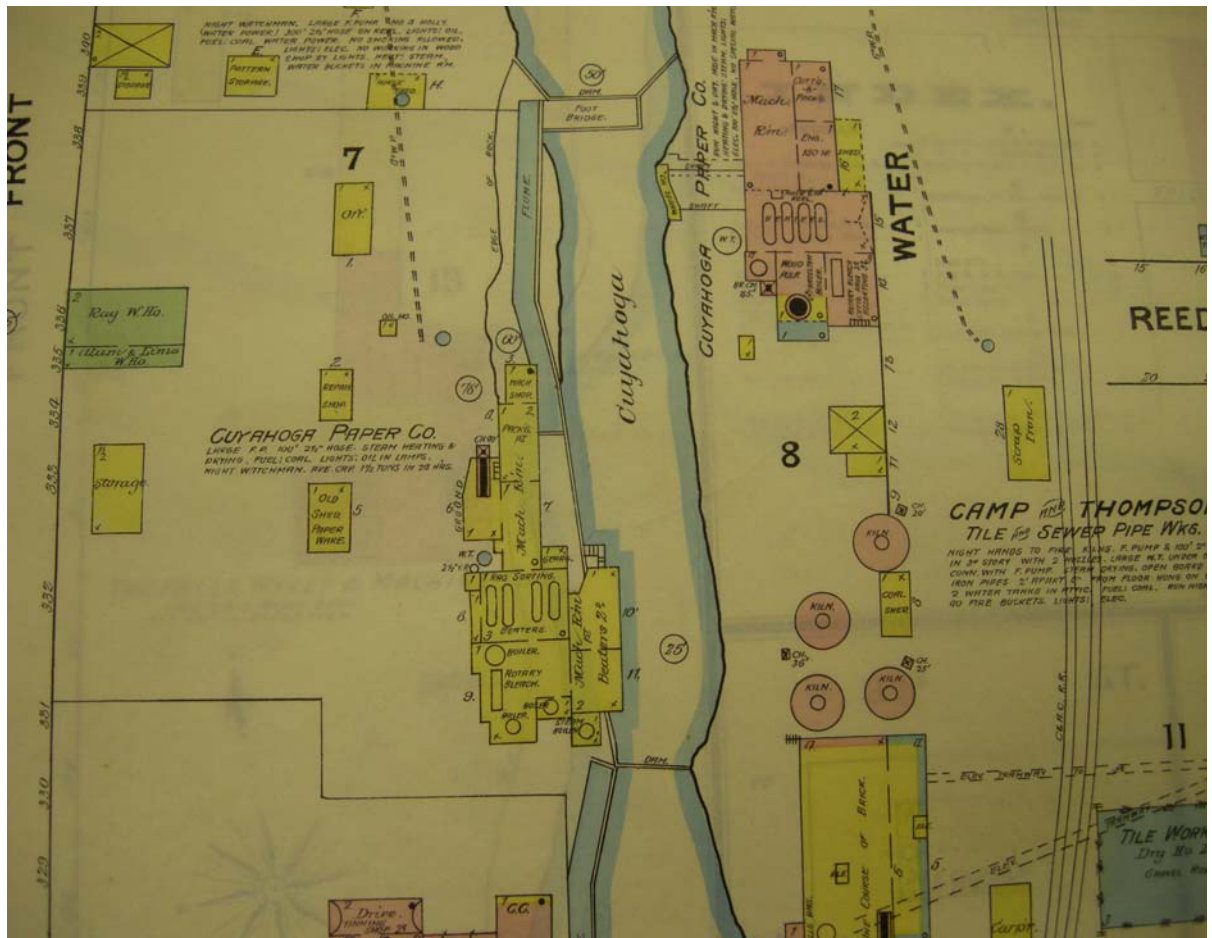


Fig.3: Sanborn Map, Cuyahoga Falls, 1884, map 2.

Akron, February 24. 1877.

Meeting of Board pursuant to adjournment.
 Present: Messrs. J. W. Baker, M. W. Henry,
 R. P. Green, D. L. Bucksted & P. E. Warner.
 The minutes of the previous meeting were
 approved.

Motion by Mr. Green to appoint a committee
 to confer with the Librarian in reference
 to a revision of rules, By-laws &c. and recom-
 mend such changes at the next regular meeting
 as may be deemed necessary. Adopted.
 Messrs. Green & Henry were appointed the
 Committee.

On motion by Mr. Green it was decided to
 extend the term of the present assistant Librarian
 until April 1st 77.

The Com. on Selection of Books asked for
 further time. Granted.

Motion by Mr. Henry that the Librarian
 keep a record of Books frequently called for
 and that he should present the same at the
 regular Meetings of the Board. Adopted.

On motion by Mr. Henry the Secretary
 was instructed to pay the Librarian and
 assistant Librarian monthly.

Motion by Mr. Henry that a regular Stated
 account be kept by the Librarian of fines &
 other moneys received and submit it to the
 Board at the regular monthly meetings,
 and that the amounts received be handed
 to the secretary, who will deposit it at
 the City Treasury and take receipts for
 same. Adopted.

On motion by Mr. Henry it was decided
 that the regular meetings of the Board
 be held on the last Friday of each month.
 Adjourned.

Paul E. Henry
 Secretary

Fig.4: Akron Summit County Public Library Board Minutes Feb 27, 1877

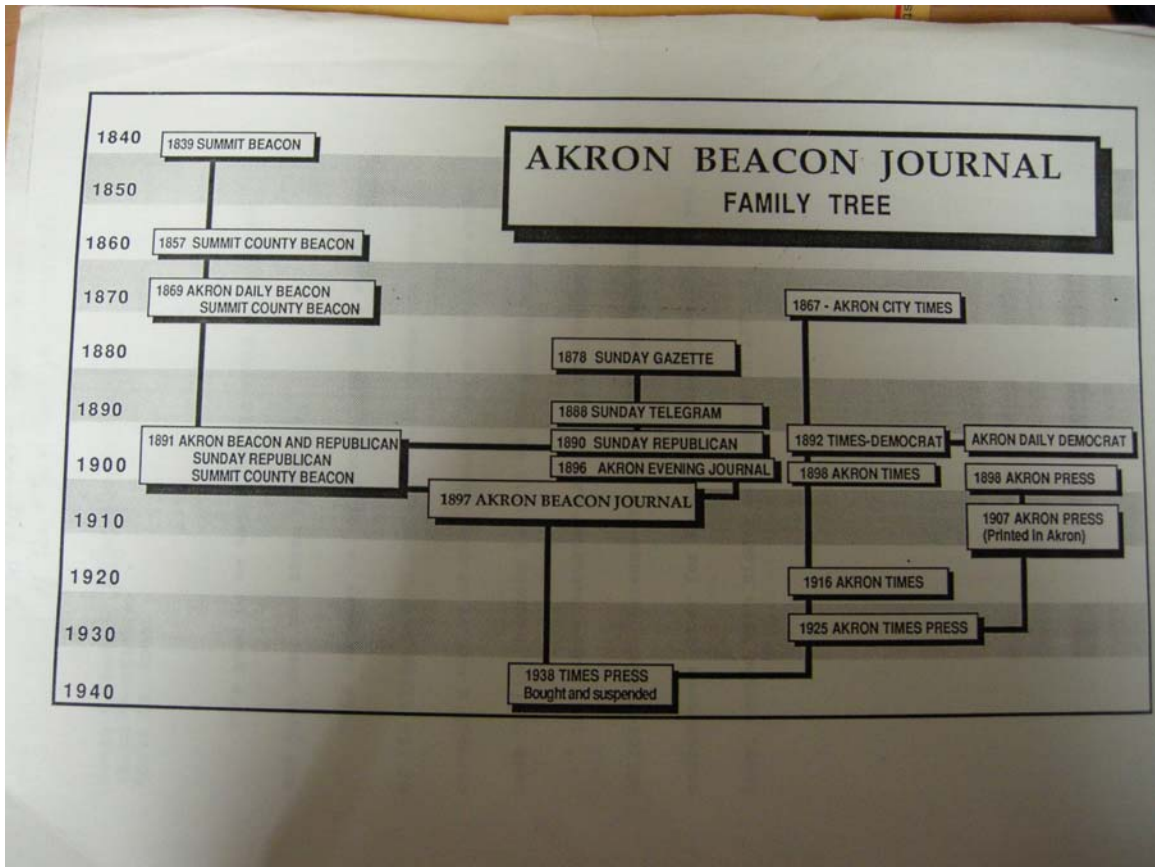


Fig.5: Genealogy of the Akron Beacon Journal, courtesy of the newspaper.

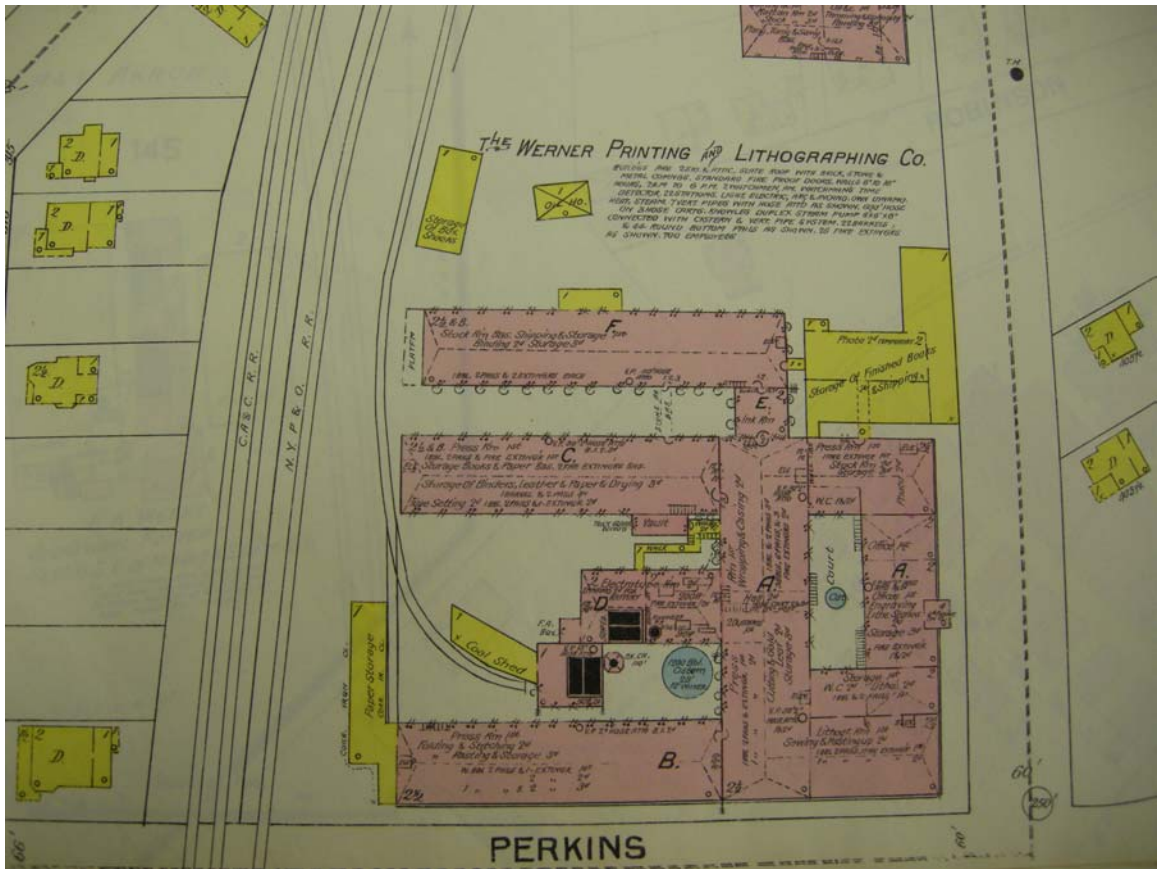


Fig.6: Sanborn map 1884, Akron Ohio, corner of Perkins and Union, sheet 32.

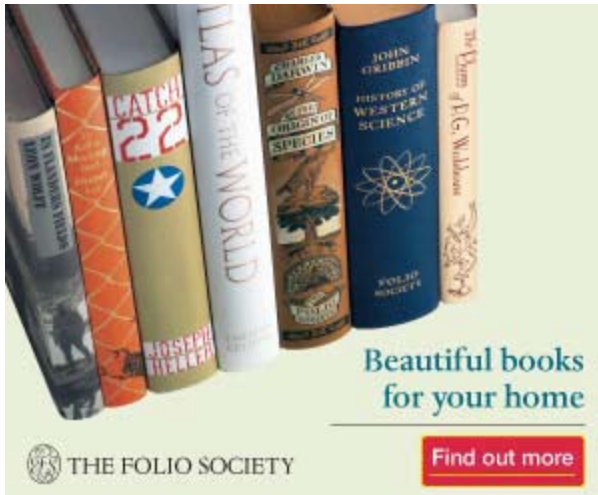


Fig.7: Special Offer from The Folio Society

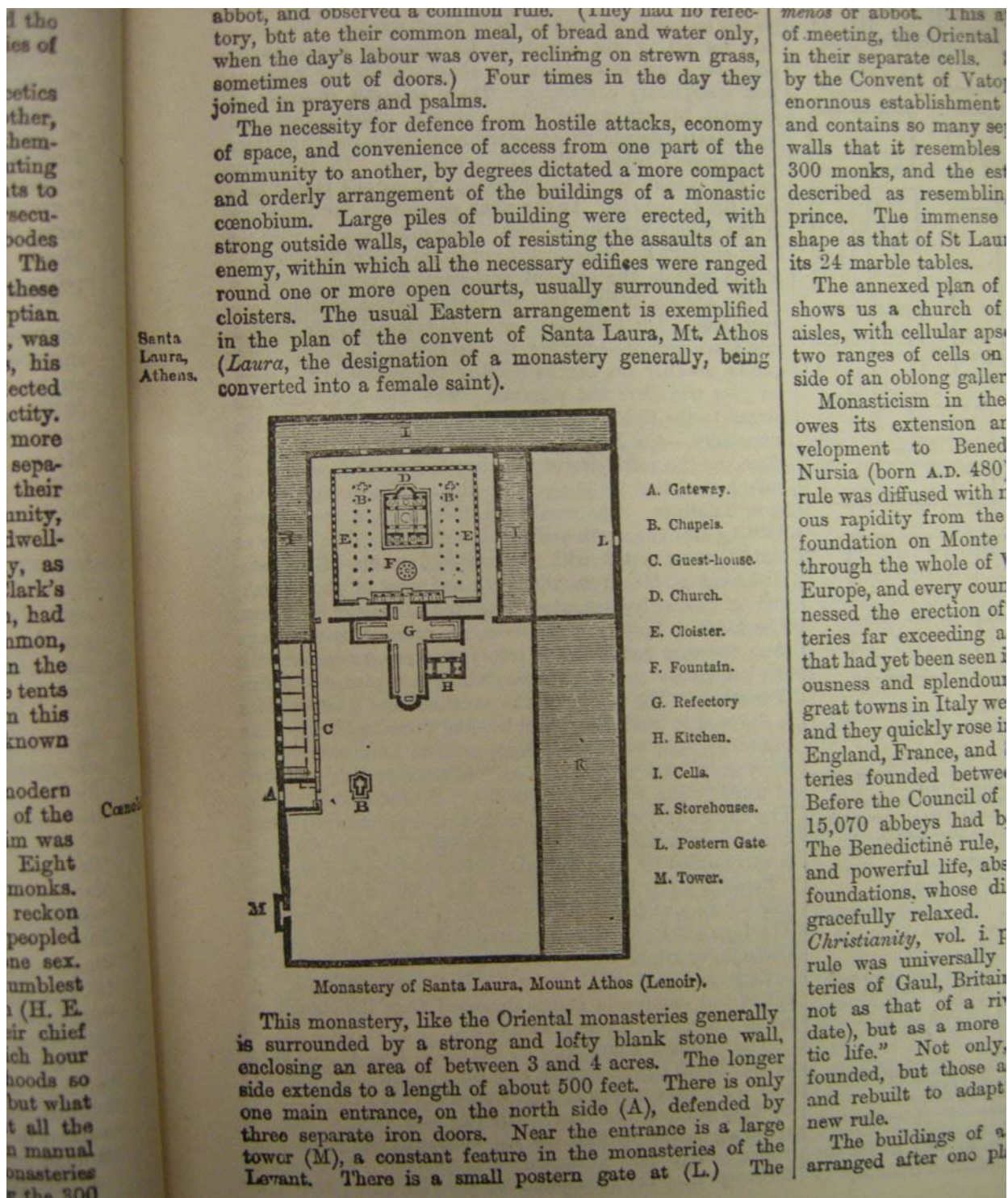


Fig.8: "Abbey" *The Encyclopædia Britannica*. Ninth Edition – Complete Reprint. Vol. 1. New York: The Henry G. Allen Company, Publishers, 1890.

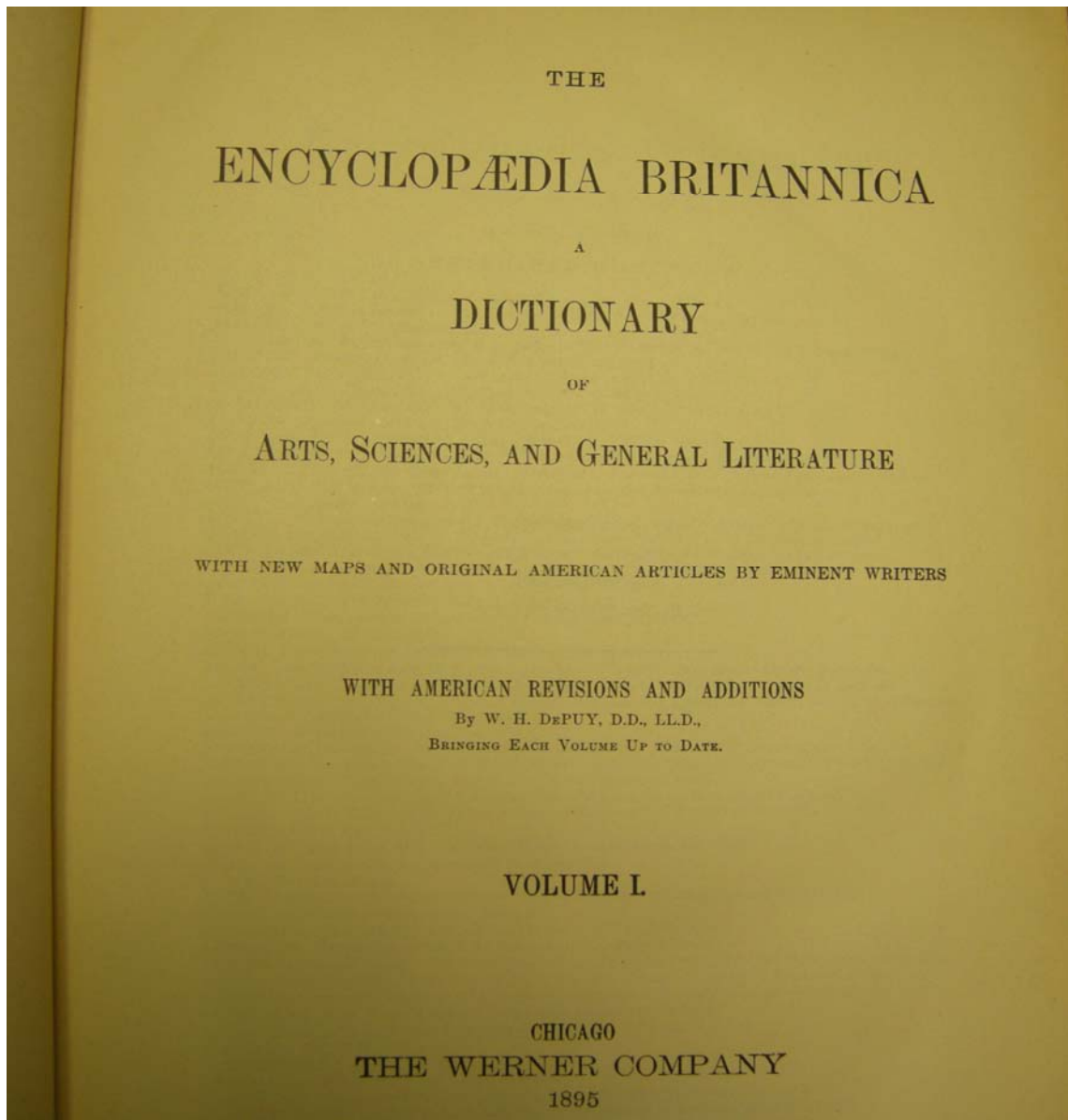


Fig.9: Title Page, *The Encyclopædia Britannica* Vol. 1. Chicago: The Werner Company, 1895 using R.S. Peale 1891 edition.

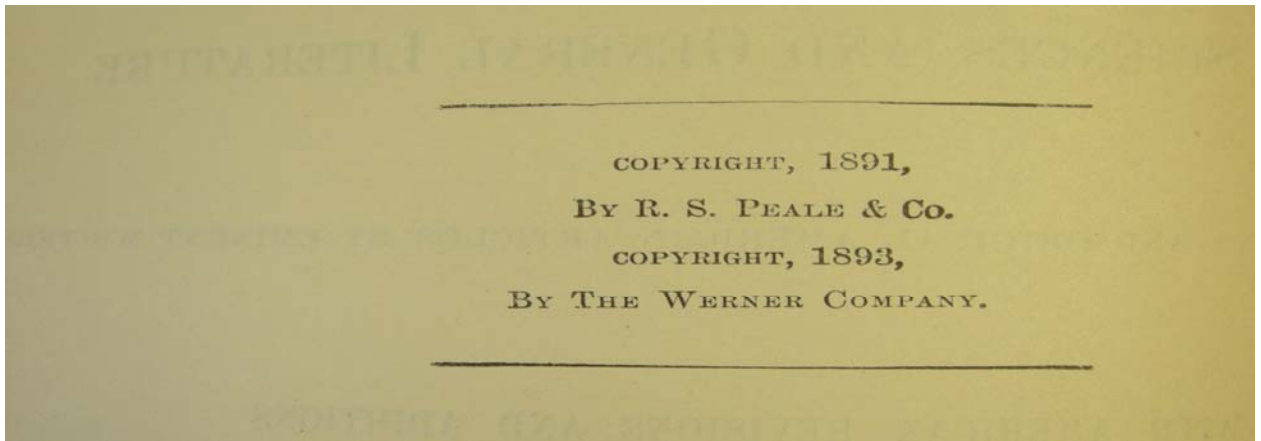


Fig.10: Verso, *The Encyclopædia Britannica* Vol. 1 Chicago: The Werner Company, 1895 using R.S. Peale 1891 edition.



Fig. 11: "Publisher's Announcement" Arthur Lockwood Wagner and Jerrold Kelley. *The United States Army and Navy 1776-1899: Their Histories from the Era of the Revolution to the Close of the Spanish American war, with Accounts of Their Organization, Administration, and Duties.* Akron, OH: The Werner Company, 1899, 4.

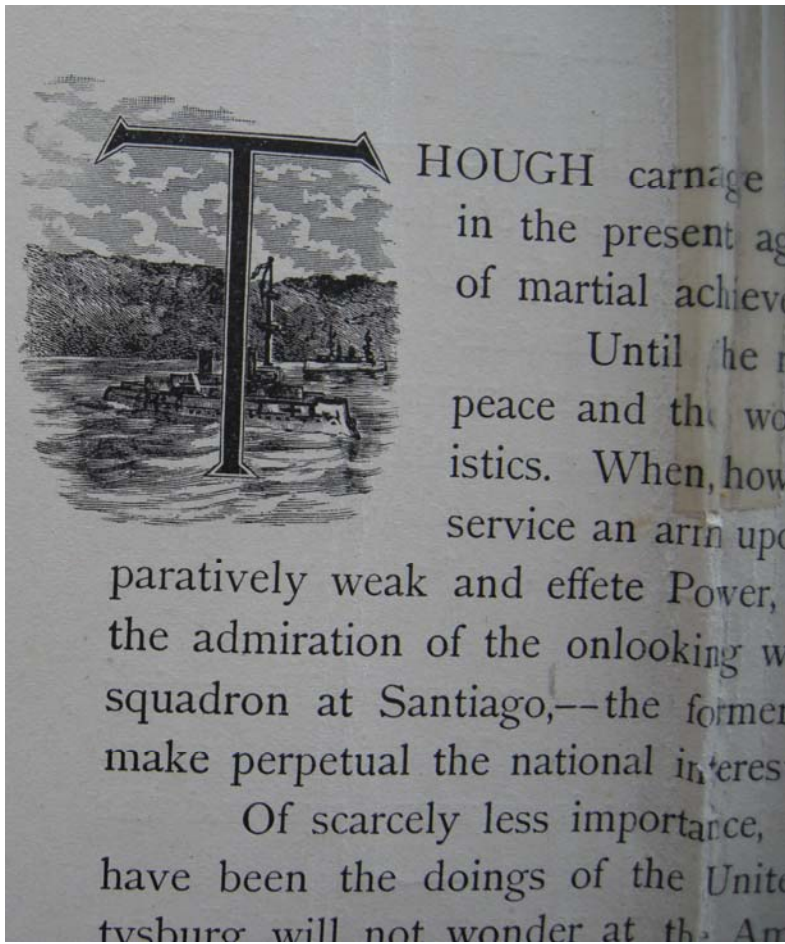


Fig.12: Example of decorative letter Arthur Lockwood Wagner. *Our Country's Defensive Forces in War and Peace: The United States Army and Navy: Their Histories from the Era of the Revolution to the Close of the Spanish American war, with Accounts of Their Organization, Administration, and Duties.* Akron, OH: The Werner Company, 1899, page iii.



Fig.13: "Revolutionary War Soldiers" detail. Arthur Lockwood Wagner, *Our Country's Defensive Forces in War and Peace: The United States Army and Navy: Their Histories from the Era of the Revolution to the Close of the Spanish American war, with Accounts of Their Organization, Administration, and Duties*. Akron, OH: The Werner Company, 1899.

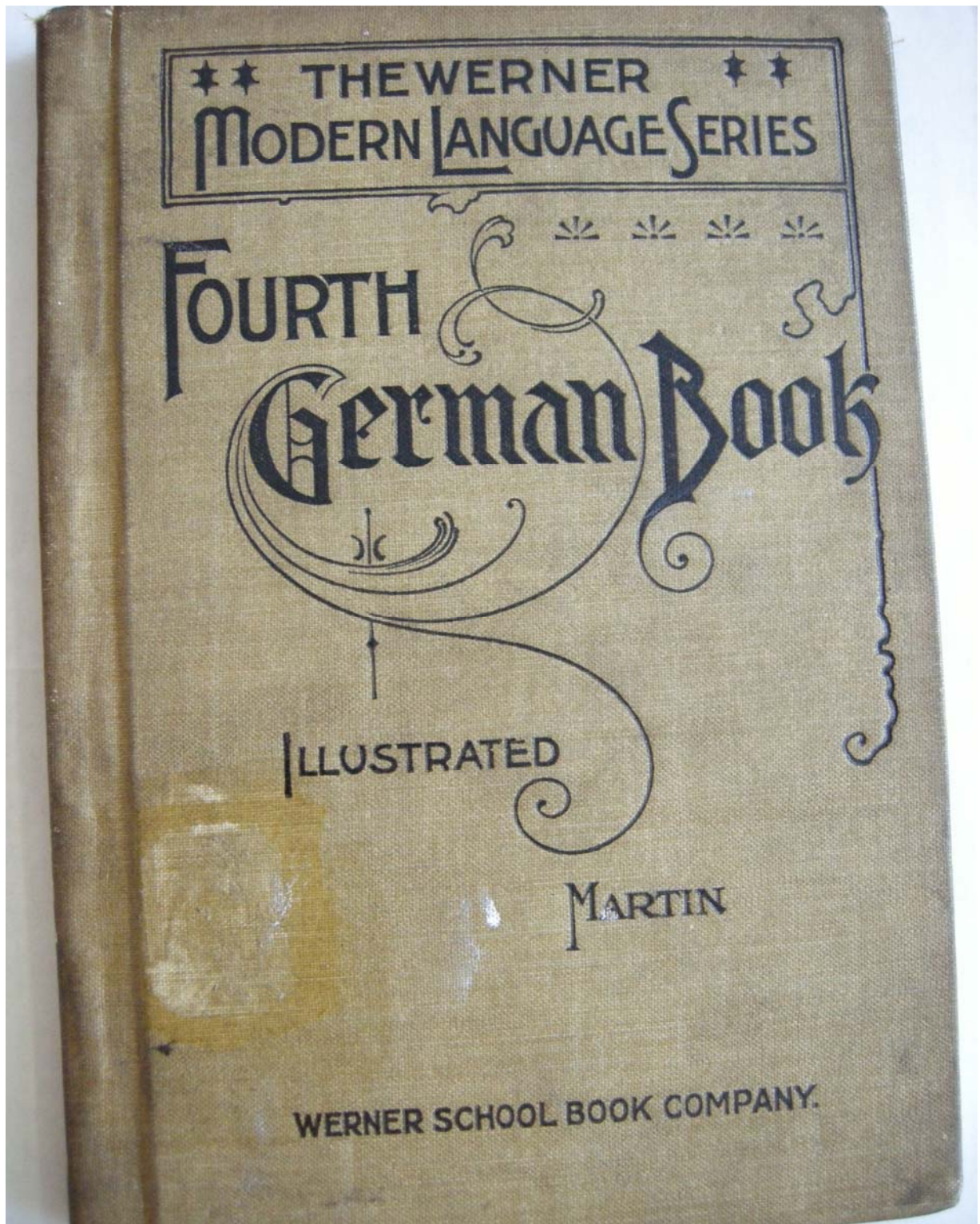


Fig. 14: Cover - M.J. Martin, *Inductive German Method: Fourth German Books*. Chicago: Werner School Book Company, 1896.

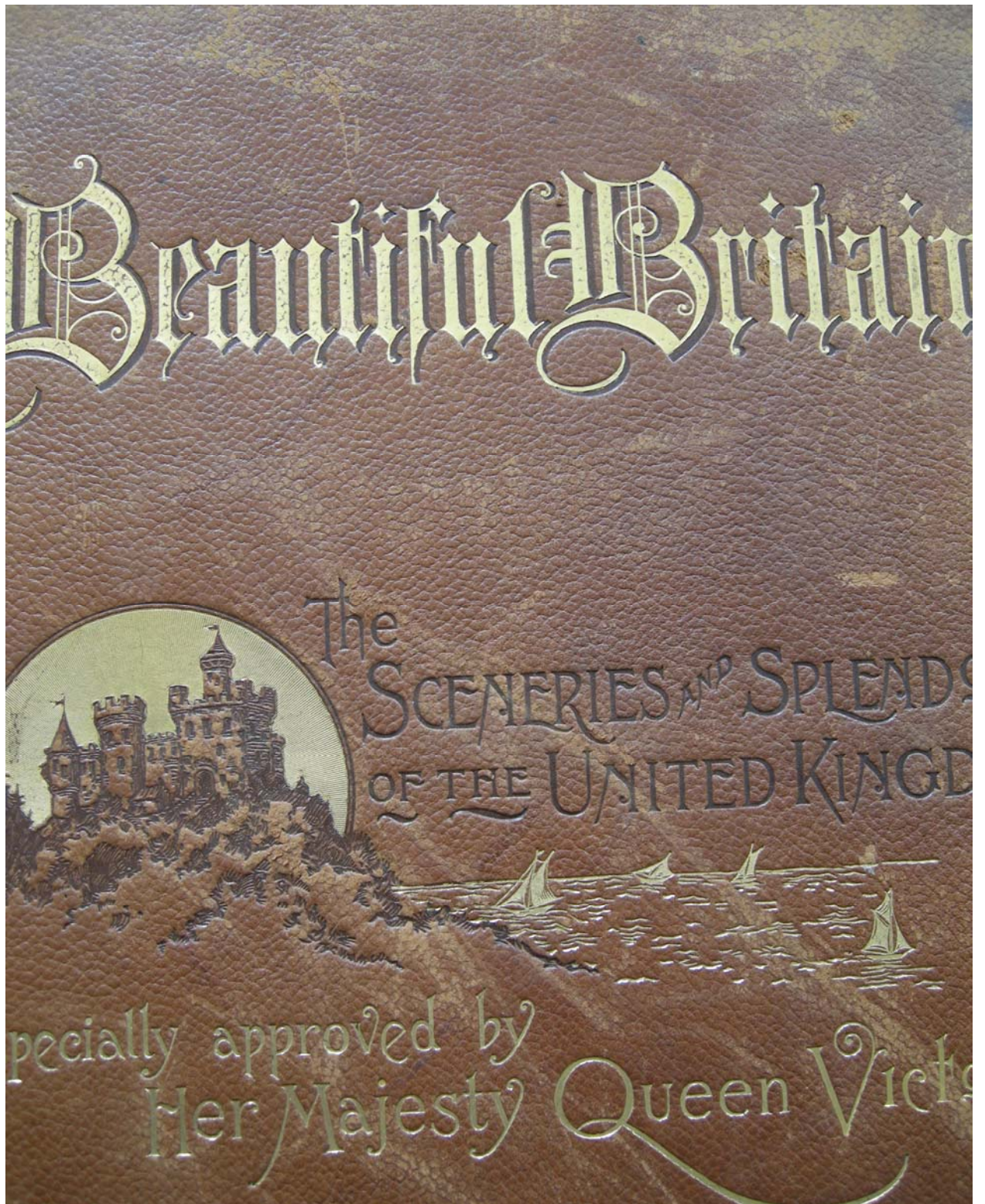


Fig.15: *Beautiful Britain*. Chicago: The Werner Company, 1895.

SOME SIZE

To This Printing Contract to be Filled By the Werner Printing Company Of Akron.

The Werner Printing Co. of Akron, has just closed a \$14,000,000 printing contract, the details of which are not yet announced, which will be one of the largest publishing venture ever undertaken.

To fill the order 20,000,000 pounds of paper will be used; 500,000 cattle must be slaughtered to furnish leather for the binding; 20,000,000 leaves of pure gold will be used in embellishments; 100,000 pounds of ink will be used in the printing and if only one press was used it would take fifty-one years to complete the work.

Fig.15: "Some Size: To This Printing Contract to be Filled By the Werner Printing Company of Akron" *The Richwood Gazette and Marysville (Ohio) Republican* June 3, 1909): 2.



Fig.17: Image of Castle, *Beautiful Britain*. Chicago: The Werner Company, 1895, p19

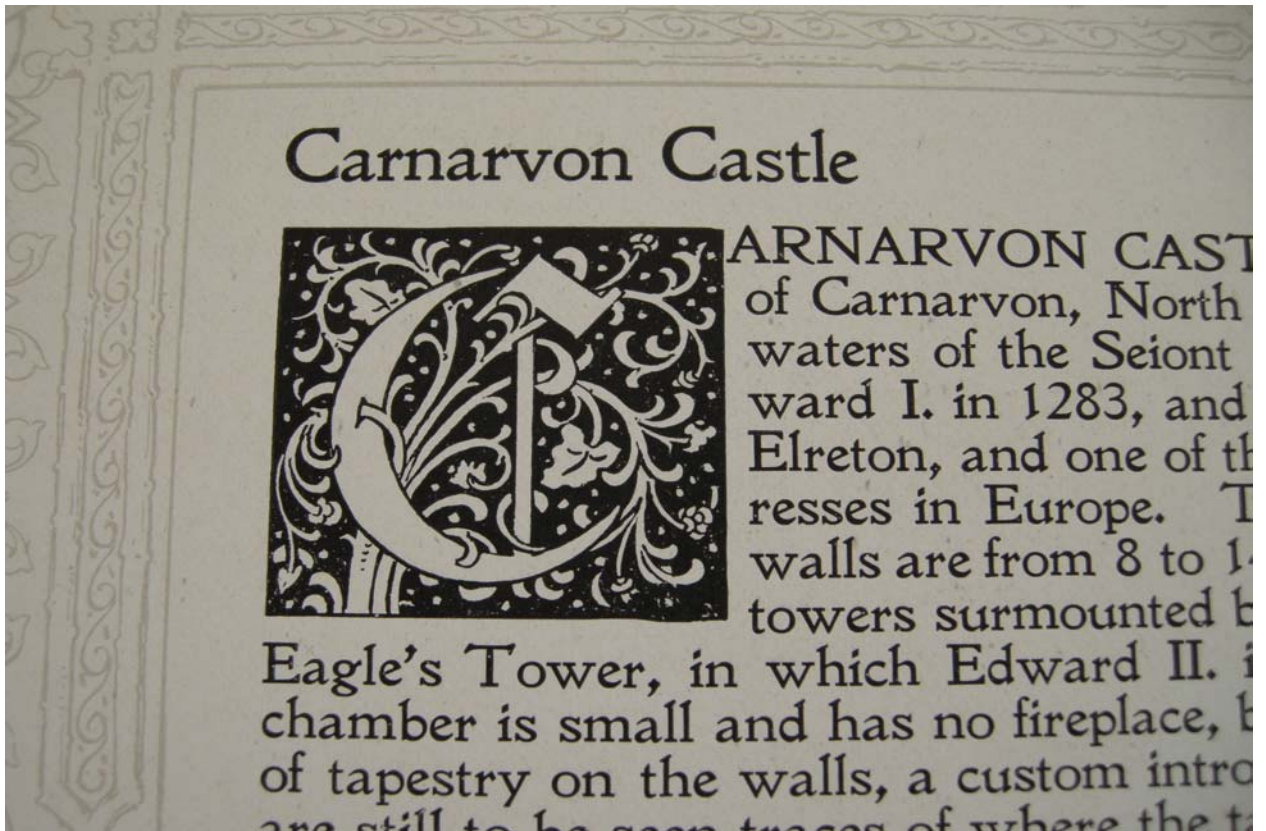


Fig.18: Example of decorative letter, *Beautiful Britain*. Chicago: The Werner Company, 1895, p18

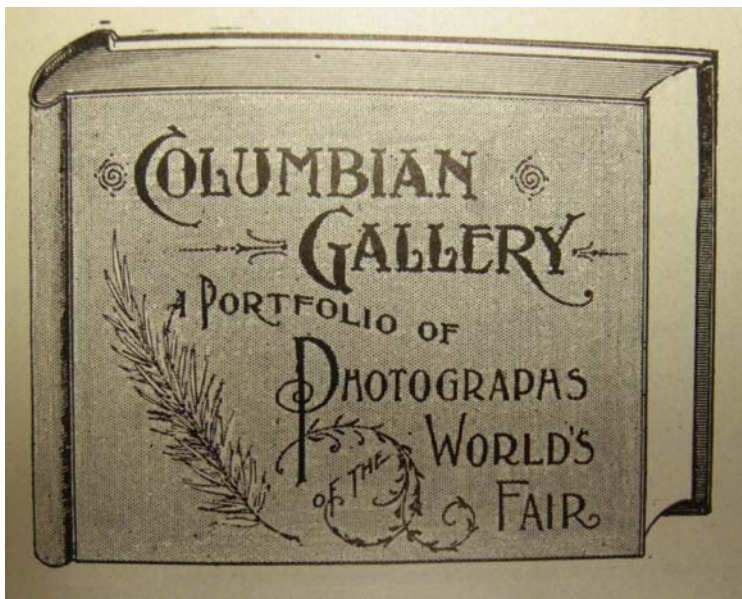


Fig.19: Advertisement for "Columbian Gallery" *The Werner Company's Illustrated Book Catalogue*. Akron, OH: Werner Company, 1899, p51.

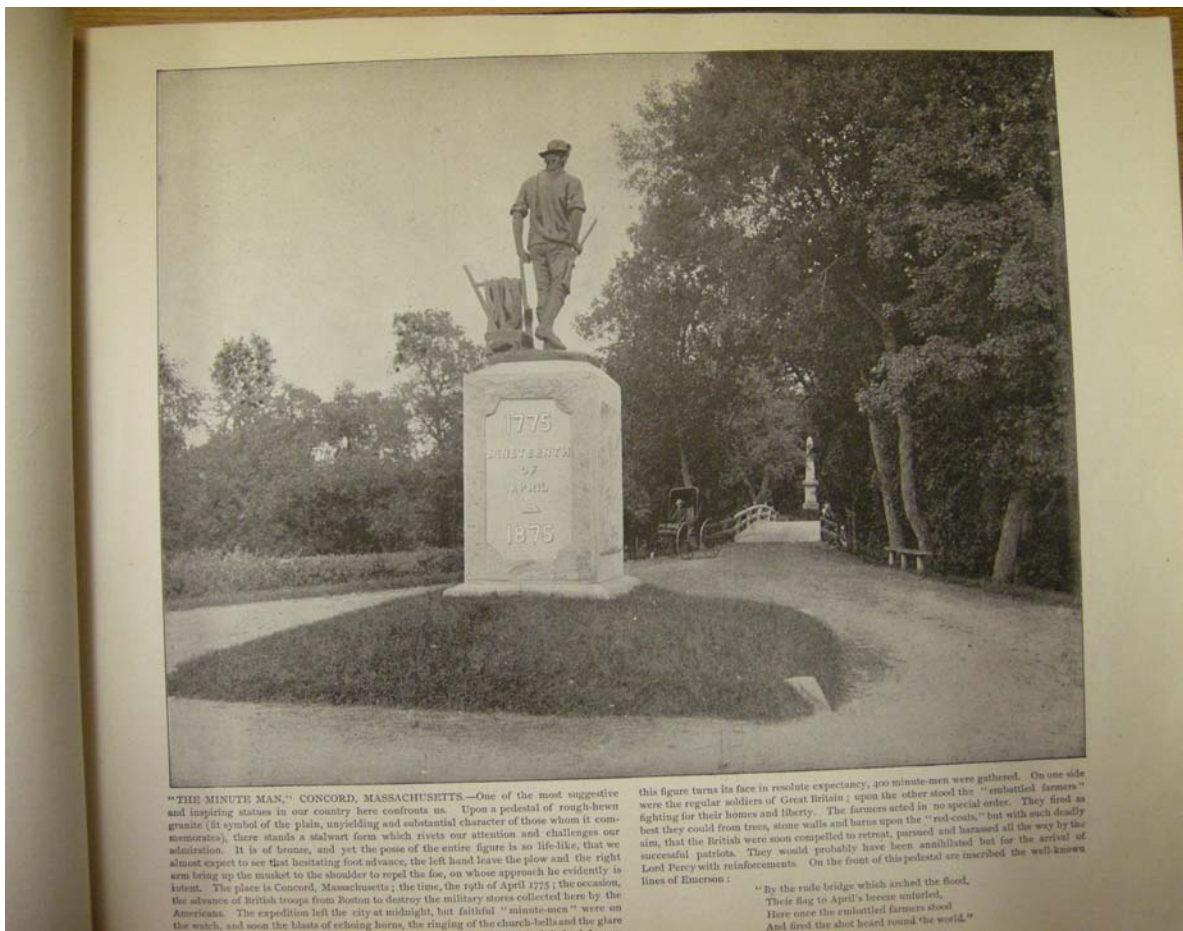


Fig.20: John L. Stoddard *From the Atlantic to the Pacific: An Illustrated Tour with Descriptions*. Akron, OH: The Saalfeld Publishing Company, printed by The Werner Company, 1899.



Fig.21: "Revolutionary War Soldiers" Arthur Lockwood Wagner, *Our Country's Defensive Forces in War and Peace: The United States Army and Navy: Their Histories from the Era of the Revolution to the Close of the Spanish American war, with Accounts of Their Organization, Administration, and Duties*. Akron, OH: The Werner Company, 1899.

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Fig.22: Advertisement for "Manual of Useful Information" in *The Werner Company's Illustrated Book Catalogue*. Akron, OH: Werner Company, 1899, p68.

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[Werner Company Building](#) 109 N Union76001533AkronSummit

[Werner, Edward P, House](#) 258 W Market St05001146AkronSummit

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