

## DRAFT

### Watermarks in English incunabula..

Summary of a meeting held at the British Library on 28 January 2008 in preparation of the project ('WIGB') supported by the Bibliographical Society.

Present: John Goldfinch (BL, ISTC), Lotte Hellinga (project coordinator), Elisabeth Leedham-Green (Bibliographical Society), Paul Needham (Princeton, WIGB), Marieke van Delft (KB, The Hague, Bernstein project), Gerard van Thienen (WILC, Bernstein project).

Elisabet Leedham-Green opened the meeting and expressed the Bibliographical Society's delight in the speed with which the project was started. Lotte Hellinga set out that the outcome of the project is intended to be a database that in structure is compatible with the WILC database recording watermarks in paper used in the Low Countries before 1501 ('WILC'). Like WILC, the new database should in due course be accessible via the Bernstein project and also by linking it to the ISTC database. Although the project is small, there are distinct steps: scanning, inputting of data, linking. The purpose of the present meeting is to ensure that procedures are clearly understood by all involved, and that experience gained during the development of the WILC project is brought to bear. The WILC database had already proved to be a versatile and robust instrument for research. The meeting saw no cause for amendments at this stage.

Paul Needham stressed the technical and organisational help he was receiving at Princeton from Stephen Ferguson, who had also indicated that he might be able to find funding from the Davieson Fund, matching that of the Bibliographical Society, to pay students for additional time required for inputting of data.

Scanning. Under the direction of Paul Needham, scanning will be commissioned from a commercial firm in Princeton. The standard / quality of the electronic images will be judged by him on their adequacy for purposes of identification. He noted that some betaradiographs, especially a few delivered on an experimental basis by collections in Great Britain, were not of the same quality as the majority made by the BL and by himself. He also raised the issue that he could not always be certain that some of the betaradiographs made in the BL in the 1980s were correctly oriented, taken from the mould-side of the paper. This may require some verification, and, if necessary, the images might even electronically be reversed.

#### Practical points:

- each image to include a mm-scale.
- The electronic formats in which the images are to be delivered to be verified by PN: JPEG images are to be used for the Web-site (TIFFs are too big). PDF can be used for manipulation in Photoshop.
- Storage: PN is to verify if TIFF images can be stored at Princeton (with back-up).
- Numbering: the numbering system that is already developed by PN is to be used. Duff numbers to be used for bibliographical reference.

### Inputting of data:

Data will be input by students at Princeton under the direction of Paul Needham, as work practice during the summer. Data will be derived from PN's existing recording system, and from ISTC, where necessary amended.

Marieke van Delft had brought a CD with the empty ACCESS 2000 database, which was used for WILC, and which will conveniently enable the compatibility between the two databases, WILC and WIGB. She also undertook to provide free of charge the software for conversion to an XML format, which will keep the two databases in step. She had extensive instructions for inputting and using the Access database, written in Dutch, which Lotte Hellinga undertook to translate into English (by May 2008).

The meeting discussed the data:

- There are mandatory fields.
- Editions are identified by printer, date (or dating), and Duff number, but not by author / title.
- Bibliographical format and number of leaves / sheets are included.
- Gerard van Thienen recommended the use of a measuring instrument devised for the Bernstein project; Measurements are an important identifier. The instrument will be made available.
- A Briquet or Piccard reference is not mandatory.

The terminology for describing the images ('themes') was discussed. At present there are some differences in denoting 'themes', e.g. 'Dog' in WILC has to date been indicated by Needham as 'Chien'. The Bernstein project is experimenting with the level of descriptive detail; Marieke van Delft and Gerard van Thienen advised that a high level of detail is probably not practicable.

The 'themes' field is searchable, and an illustrated index may be developed.

Paul Needham has already developed a system for identifying twins and 'multigeminate' watermarks.

He has also developed cross-referencing between printing houses within printing in England. However, there is as yet to be no cross-referencing to WILC or to the Iberian WIES now under development. Once indexing systems have been made fully compatible, federated searching and cross-referencing may be a matter for future development. The immediate objective is to create a stand-alone database, compatible with the two related projects.

### Link with ISTC:

John Goldfinch's experience with WILC and its linking with ISTC was that this could be achieved by a simple programme developed at Liverpool University (in the context of the Bernstein project). WILC was linked with ISTC by using the ILC references systematically quoted in ISTC's reference field. The same system can be applied by using Duff-numbers, also systematically quoted. The 'Revised Duff' to be published by the Bibliographical Society keeps the former numeration, and adds 45 supplementary items with their own numerical sequence, which should be quoted including the search term 'Duff'.

The meeting ended with a demonstration by Marieke van Delft and Gerard van Thienen of the Access 2000 database and of WILC and Bernstein. This helped to confirm the issues raised in the previous discussion.

Lotte Hellinga