

IMMIGRANT PUBLISHERS

THE IMPACT OF EXPATRIATE PUBLISHERS
IN BRITAIN AND AMERICA
IN THE 20TH CENTURY



RICHARD ABEL
GORDON GRAHAM
EDITORS

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 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2009 by Transaction Publishers

Published 2017 by Routledge

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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Library of Congress Catalog Number: 2008031100

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication

Immigrant publishers : the impact of expatriate publishers in Britain and America in the 20th century / Richard Abel and Gordon Graham, editors.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4128-0871-2 (acid-free paper)

1. Publishers and publishing--Great Britain--Biography. 2. Publishers and publishing--United States--Biography. 3. Immigrants--Great Britain--History--20th century. 4. Immigrants--United States--History--20th century. 5. Publishers and publishing--Great Britain--History--20th century. 6. Publishers and publishing--United States--History--20th century. I. Abel, Richard, 1925- II. Graham, W. Gordon (William Gordon), 1920-

Z325.I29 2008

070.5092'241--dc22

2008031100

ISBN 13: 978-1-4128-0871-2 (hbk)

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Introduction: The Impact of European Expatriate Bookmen in the Book Trades of Britain and America

Richard Abel

Several years ago we, the editor and US editor of *LOGOS, The Journal of the World Book Community* and of this volume, were discussing/reminiscing about the recent history of the book trade in the Anglo-American book world roughly within our lifetimes or in the immediate prelude thereto. Some understanding of the history of the previous several decades was known to us from the accounts offered from time to time by predecessors. So at least the principal outlines of the period from about the end of World War I to the present was relatively well understood by us.

The conversation, in time, turned to the remarkable turn in publishing in both the United Kingdom and the United States at about the time shortly prior to the early stages of World War II. This period was marked by the wave of a secular upsurge in the indigenous publishing of serious books with world-wide impact in mathematics, the sciences, and technology as well as an increased number of substantial nonfiction and fiction writings having a more universal impact than the usual Anglo-American fare here-to-fore on offer. English-language book publishing slowly took on a more general quality of content in contrast to the somewhat provincial orientation which had come to mark the trade in the times following the more compelling days of the nurturing of the British Empire and the settling and turning to vastly more productive use an extensive North American continent.

Some portion of that change of tone is manifestly attributable to the evolution and increased attention to the cultural encouragement of the search for knowledge, particularly in the sciences. But a significant ele-

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ment in that change of tone and universality accompanied the massive migration of European scholars and scholarly publishers to the free world seeking to escape the increasingly dreadful regimes in Europe, most notably the German-language nations.

As our conversation rolled forward we noted that all of the publishers in these incoming contingents had been publishers of considerable standing in their native lands. They naturally brought with them the viewpoints and traditions which had informed them in their earlier ventures. In short, all had been publishers and booksellers of substantial standing in their former lives.

In no place in the literature were we aware of a sustained account of the principal publishing players among these immigrants or their collective contribution to the Anglo-American book and cultural scene. So, it seemed to us that that the seeking out and publishing of these biographies and the cultural consequences of their work was a proper editorial objective for *LOGOS: The Journal of the World Book Community*.

As we progressively developed this idea and worked through the structuring of the project it became clear that the series of profiles destined to appear in *LOGOS* deserved a more permanent and enduring physical embodiment than in a periodical, a format lacking the coherence of a book. So, from the outset of the project a crucial element of the plan was to gather all the profiles dealing with the group of publishers within this massive immigration and their impacts upon the Anglo-American book world previously published in *LOGOS* over a period of the next several years and work them into a book. To this book would be added brief accounts of other immigrant players who did not make a major impact but whose contribution deserved representation in this collective history.

The content of this volume is composed of a compilation of those journal articles with the supplements contemplated in the formation of plan.

As part of the planning exercise we settled on the following the editorial guidelines:

1. The profiles would in general range from seven to ten thousand words. This length was selected to give the authors ample room to set the historic stage, to delineate their subject's character, to describe the circumstances of their subject's early professional career, to outline the means, often quite harrowing, employed to escape, whatever provisions they may have been able to make to initiate a career in a new country under different circumstances, the progress of their endeavors, and some assessment of the particularities of their achievements.

2. With advice from other old hands in the trade we identified those for whom profiles should be included. All had made signal contributions to both the tone and cultural substance of their new ventures in a new language setting.
3. With the list of personages to be dealt with we sought to find either those who knew and worked with them or whose command of the history and the bibliographic resources incident to international publishing in the twentieth century was such as to give them virtually as close a sense of the person and achievements as friends and associates.
4. As usual, no timelines for completion of the profiles were established. *LOGOS* had long since learned that the level of editorial content that the journal sought to publish demanded good, reflective writing. Further, those sought out to compose such reflective writing were often not accustomed to such sustained dealing with the written language, so could not be hurried. Like good cheese or wine the writing *LOGOS* sought had been long in the curing and maturing.
5. Once these outlines of the project were in place the search for the most suitable authors, those most closely conforming to these guidelines, was undertaken.
6. As the profiles were received the only interventions by the editors was made in the interest of clarifying linguistic intention while leaving the informational and judgmental content exclusively in the hands of the authors.
7. The profiles were then duly run in the sequence in which they were received, not in the sequence in which they appear in this book.

Virtually every one of the editors' first-choices for prospective authors were willingly accepted and shouldered by those writers. Every author handsomely conformed to the guidelines that had been established. Every author was full of enthusiasm for undertaking the job. All sought out both bibliographic resources and others who they knew, worked with, or were closely familiar with the persons profiled. So, much of the history of the work of this dedicated band of amazing publishers was captured in the profiles while living memories were still available. Virtually every one of the authors commented on one or more occasions how fascinated they had become with the trials and careers of their subjects and therefore, how richly rewarded they had been by delving into at such depth the place of the persons they had known well but not fully hither-to.

For purposes of this publication the profiles have been arranged first by country—England followed by the United States. Within country the profiles have been arranged roughly chronologically by subject's date of arrival in that country.

In the meantime, the flow of ominous premonitions and forebodings of the malevolent ideas which were to devastate first Europe and the Far East,

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and subsequently much of the rest of the world for roughly the middle two-thirds of the century, intensified virtually daily. Unhappily only a handful, even in the centers of these vicious, Utopian schemes, more-or-less clearly understood either the nature or the likely consequences of the doctrines being advanced by these narrow, self-righteous special interest groups. The world was largely caught up in the ill-informed and unexamined but widely held smug and shallow belief that the huge price paid in “the war to end all wars” had purchased perpetual peace, a peace to be maintained by the numerous, post-war high-minded treaties ceremoniously signed thereafter, the international organizations as ceremoniously established and ensconced in palatial settings which would in time displace the short-sighted, aggrandizing nation-states that had fostered that war, and the here-to-fore improperly employed virtues of negotiation.

But these fond, ill-informed imaginings blinded most to the realities on the ground, most especially that of any substantial understanding of human nature. Neither the growing numbers of those massacred, both natives and those identified as enemies by the malign powers of the time, nor the threats of the wider butchery openly stipulated as being yet required to realize the several Utopian visions being bruited about seemed to shake most out of their complacent surety. But a tiny minority either began to understand the personal dangers to which they and their families were subject or were urged to flee by more knowledgeable or perspicacious friends/associates. While the regimes then ruling in Italy, and Japan were high on the list of twentieth century butchers, the undoubted front-runners in the 1930s were the masters of Russia, and more central to the account being rendered here the gang in Nazi Germany. Many of those in the ultimate danger were among the cultural leaders of the latter unhappy countries.

The history being presented here has as its principals a handful of those who fled to the Anglo-Saxon shores in the pre-World War II era. The remainder of our actors made their way to Britain and the United States following that war seeking freedom from overweening state power and/or from war-induced chaos with its limited opportunities for the free exercise of and benefits incident to personal initiative.

Why have the authors and editors focused on this relatively small and select group of book people? The most obvious reason is the profound impact they collectively had upon the nature and dynamics of the book trades in their new English-language settings. It may be said, without stretching the point beyond the reasonable, that they were to be numbered among the wheel-horses who catapulted the book trades of Britain and the

United States to that world-wide eminence which they still enjoy. They brought an entirely new vision of and energetic pursuit of the cultural role of the book and journal in a society, a vision which was quickly adopted and naturalized by an equally perspicacious band of post-war native-born book people. Some might well and truly argue that the latter would have developed just such a driving and comprehensive sense of the place of the book and journal left to their own intellectual and ethical means and enterprise. But however compelling such a “what-if” historical construction might be, the incontrovertible fact remains that this small band of emigre publishers furnished early, decisive and forceful examples.

What were the qualities which these fugitive book people brought across the seas with them? First, was an identification with and commitment to the notion of a limited intelligentsia. That is the observation that in any society only a small fraction of the populace was interested in and concerned with matters of the mind for any extended period of years, commonly those beyond filling the expected or mandatory schooling levels. Having come from a country where such an assessment was not simply as obvious, as it is in the English-language societies as well, but one in which the notion of radical egalitarianism had not yet muted the expression thereof, these immigrant book people simply pursued such a publishing/book-selling strategy as a matter of course. The consequence was that they created firms whose entire focus was one of serving limited audiences and serving them to the highest standards of intellectual and ethical probity. It can be said that they re-enforced or revitalized the model of the serious and culturally responsible niche publisher.

Secondly, they were inveterate students of the subject-matters in which they specialized their publishing lists. They were active participants at the front-lines of intellectual activity and knowledge creation. They routinely associated with the recognized intellectual front-runners in the subject fields in which they worked as well as with the promising new faces. They were intimately and thoroughly acquainted with the relevant intellectual climates in those subject fields in all their nuances. As publishers, they were seeking out, as a matter of continuing practice, potential authors and journal editors. They were routinely suggesting books and journal articles to potential authors as they saw or learned of “holes” or “newly opened opportunities” in the literature. In short, they were active intellectual partners in those on-going processes of falsifying unsustainable intellectual and ethical hypotheses and creating new, more encompassing alternative hypotheses which lay at the roots of knowledge creation of virtually all kinds.

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Thirdly, they were genuine entrepreneurs. Despite having enjoyed relatively secure and bookish backgrounds in their native lands, they were prepared to undertake all the risk and scut-work incident to founding and growing new enterprises, to create new, and often different, enterprises where nothing comparable had existed before. They were prepared to launch new kinds of publishing ventures. The stereotype of old-line, European book people, set in their ways was largely shattered in the new setting of an opener society. Now it must be appreciated that they undertook these large risks with but limited capital to hand and little in the way of networks of “good connections.” It was keen intelligences, an acute appreciation of often-limited opportunities, and sheer grit which led them to make the impact they did.

And lastly, they undertook their ventures with a genuine zeal. Most of them seemed to instinctively understand that they were charged with a high cultural function which obliged them to work not just intelligently and hard but with an enthusiasm and devotion appropriate thereto.

They joined a small band of domestic book-people who conducted their affairs with the same respect for the cultural role they were discharging and with a comparable zeal. Names that spring immediately to mind in the Anglo-American publishing trade include Basil Blackwell, Stanley Unwin, Allan Lane, the Routledge firm, Alfred Knopf, Bennett Cerf, and some of the Scribner, Wiley, and McGraw clans.

It must be noted that the plan to preserve this important and fascinating story of the world of English-language books in the decades of the mid-twentieth century looks to recounting this history in a series of articles each dealing with a single figure or a connected pair—i.e. Walter Johnson/Kurt Jacoby. The articles were written by some of those in the book-trade who knew the person/pair being profiled and who possessed access to a range of not only friends and associates of those subjects here recalled but access to whatever archival material still exists. The intention was to describe not simply the person(s) and his/her accomplishments but the warty-side, as well—in short, as honest a portrait as possible. These profiles were first published in various issues of *LOGOS*. Now that all the profiles have been completed and have been run in *LOGOS*, they have been gathered into the book in your hands.

The editors wish to thank all those who have devoted long hours to contacting others who knew these emigre book people to gather more information and to then writing such insightful delineations of their subjects and their assessments of the particular and enormous contributions of their subject(s) to Anglo-American publishing and to the broader range

of the culture of the world: Special thanks are due Henk Edelman for his particularly substantial contributions not just to the profiles he wrote but for the preceding précis of some other émigré publishers involved in serious publishing in the United States and the bibliographic help he provided some of the other authors.

Lastly, we thank Irving Louis Horowitz, chairman at the redoubtable Transaction Publishers, for undertaking the publishing of this book.



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Maurits Dekker and Eric Proskauer: A Synergy of Talent in Exile

Hendrik Edelman

A small number of Jewish European publishers and booksellers who emigrated to the United States and Britain during the Nazi regime had an extraordinary influence on international scientific publishing. They brought German commercial publishing models, techniques and practices to the founding of their new publishing companies. Among the most significant of these in the US were Interscience Publishers (founded by Maurits Dekker and Eric Proskauer in 1940), Grune & Stratton (founded by Henry Stratton in 1941) and Academic Press (founded by Walter Johnson in 1942). Fuelled by rapidly expanding American research, these intellectual entrepreneurs helped prepare the way for the worldwide scientific knowledge explosion in the years after the Second World War and beyond.

The German model of science publishing had emerged in the latter part of the 19th century. It replaced the decentralized system of university-based publications and privately owned journals. It followed the rise in scholarship and research in the re-organized universities and the newly founded industries. The innovations came first in medicine and later in biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics and other disciplines.

The new model consisted of several carefully layered and sometimes overlapping types of publications. On the frontier of the new knowledge were research articles in increasingly specialized journals. The format of such articles and the sequence in which the information was provided were, by this time, codified. The older journals, typically started and edited by individual scientists, were often taken over by scientific societies. Production and distribution were mostly done by commercial printers, publishers and booksellers, who in many cases gained a financial interest in the enterprises.

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Second were series of critical and evaluative reviews, published annually or periodically with titles such as *Advances*, *Progress* or *Reviews*. Edited by young and ambitious scientists, who often saw this task as a stepping-stone to an improved academic career, the reviews, in turn, led to the publication of specialized monographs or treatises, often followed by advanced textbooks.

In response to the centrifugal forces of specialization, there developed an increasing need for handbooks, compendia and encyclopedias, which summarized and integrated the new knowledge. Another component was newsletters devoted to announcing new and related research, domestic or foreign. Finally, specialized indexing and abstracting services provided access to the literature.

Commercial publishers, sometimes in cooperation with scientific societies, began to make investments in these publications and often took the initiative when the market appeared ready. Chief editors of publishing houses kept close contact with the up-and-coming researchers and had grasped the essence of new fields of knowledge as they emerged. Competition among publishers was considerable and new journals and series often battled for contributions and readership.

World War I and its aftermath was a watershed for German science, scientists and science publishing. During the war several publishers had been unable to continue and others experienced severe financial as well as succession problems. As a result, there were many mergers and acquisitions during the 1920s. Eventually, two commercial publishing giants emerged — Springer Verlag in Berlin and Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft in Leipzig. Springer, founded by Julius Springer (1817-1906) in 1842 and after 1906 under the inspired leadership of the cousins Ferdinand and Julius Springer took over Beilstein's famous *Handbuch der organischen Chemie* in 1916 and merged with the medical publisher Bergmann in 1917. The firm of C W Kreidel followed in 1918, August Hirschwald in 1920 and in 1929 Springer acquired the list of the bankrupt F C W Vogel. Springer also acquired a large international bookseller in Berlin and ran it under the name of Lange & Springer (Sarkowski, 1996). Springer Verlag became a specialist in the creation of the so-called *Gesamtblaetter*, comprehensive periodical publications, including all aspects of a particular field.

Springer's principal competitor, Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft, was founded in 1906, by Leo Jolowicz (1868-1941). Jolowicz was the owner of Gustav Fock, an international antiquarian book and periodical dealer. One of Fock's specialties was a reference and exchange program

in academic dissertations. Among the acquisitions of Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft was the list of periodical publisher Wilhelm Engelmann in 1920. (Schulze, 1929). Jolowicz was joined in 1921 by his son-in-law, Kurt Jacoby (1892-1968) as editor and the two developed the list. Jolowicz's son Walter (1908-1997) (later Johnson) took responsibility for the Gustav Fock operations.

The tremendous inflation following the war years eroded the financial resources of the scientific societies who were forced to turn to the private sector publishers to maintain their publication programs. This led to the further growth of the two giants.

While there were several smaller scientific publishers, such as Walter de Gruyter, Thieme, Urban und Schwarzenberg etc, Springer and Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft dominated German-language scientific publishing. Given the traditional prominence of German research, there was a substantial international market for German publications. Gustav Fock had sales branches in New York and Tokyo in the 1920s. German booksellers such as Otto Harrassowitz and Brockhaus supplied academic and industrial libraries in North and South America, Western and Eastern Europe and Asia.

Springer's list by 1933 consisted of hundreds of journals, review series, monographs, handbooks, textbooks and encyclopedias. The list of Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft was not as large but it was as comprehensive in certain subject areas, such as physics and chemistry. The entrepreneurial approach, now practiced to perfection, identified emerging research specialties and new scientists and encouraged them to edit and write. In sharp contrast with the Anglo-Saxon publishing world, where voluntary editorial service through professional and scientific societies was still the accepted norm, Springer paid its journal and book editors, often by the page.

As a result of all these practices, the volume of publication increased dramatically. Ironically, this growth took place while German science was suffering from the international boycott after World War I, from reduced domestic funding, and from research competition, especially from the US.

Nevertheless, the German share of the international library market grew disproportionately, especially after the financial crash of 1929. American and European librarians protested loudly about the burgeoning growth of scientific publishing and its impact on library budgets. After much consultation, the larger publishers agreed to reduce their output, while the German Nazi government instituted a 25% export subsidy

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(Edelman, 1994). Clearly, the production-driven publishing market had finally found its match. But not for long.

The entrepreneurial approach to scientific publishing was not the only difference between Germany and the rest of the world. In the US, research, much of it corporate rather than academic, was dominated by the applied sciences. Scientific journals, although often founded, as in Germany, by scholars, were mainly published by professional and scientific societies. No tradition of commercial publishing and distribution developed. The large commercial science publishers, such as McGraw-Hill, Wiley and Lippincott, concentrated on textbooks and handbooks for higher education and the professions. Former Wiley president Andrew H Neilly Jr, an astute student of publishing history, noted that “US and European professional publishers developed along distinctly different lines prior to WWI. Publishers are fond of the idea that Europeans published for authors, while Americans published for readers, which is to say that the European scientists talked to each other, and in the US the more practical engineers instructed their students” (Neilly, 1985).

* * *

When Adolf Hitler came to power in January 1933, the directives of Nazi policy were quickly felt by the German book trade. Public book burnings put several of the leading trade houses on clear notice that their publishing programs had to change. A list of banned authors was even more specific. Most immediately affected were the trade houses of Fischer, Ullstein and Kiepenheuer, whose lists included many authors whose books were burned. Moreover, most of the owners were Jewish (Bermann-Fischer, 1967, Ullstein, 1943, Landshoff, 1991). Several of the leading scientific publishing and bookselling companies were also owned by Jews. Ferdinand and Julius Springer, both partially Jewish, were eventually forced out, but the company, and its bookselling arm Lange & Springer, were allowed to continue under the leadership of long-time employee Tonjes Lange. Their talented roving editor Paul Rosbaud tried to maintain the stature of the firm’s editorial activities, but difficulties placed in the way by the government frustrated most of his efforts (Sarkowski, 1996).

The younger management generation at Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft in Leipzig, Walter Jolowicz (later Johnson) and his brother-in-law Kurt Jacoby, had already urged, in 1933, a move to establish an independent publishing house in London. But Leo Jolowicz, who had formally retired by that time, did not want to give up the Leipzig company at a

potential loss of 90% of its value in a forced sale. The only way to earn foreign currency for a Jewish-owned company was the sale of translation rights to foreign publishers, and he decided to pursue this policy. A young chemist, Eric Proskauer, who had previously served in a part-time editorial role, was assigned to this task.

Proskauer (1903-1991) was born in Frankfurt. He had joined the staff of Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft in 1925 after a stint in a Leipzig antiquarian bookshop while still a student. He earned his PhD from Leipzig University in 1931, where his thesis advisor was Carl Drucker, the editor of the famous *Zeitschrift für Physikalische Chemie*, published by Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft. With the possibility of an academic career effectively closed off in 1933, Proskauer continued his work for Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft. He traveled extensively in England to identify potential translators and to work with them to “anglicize” the German texts (Proskauer, 1974).

Meanwhile, Jewish exile presses had been set up in Russia, Turkey, France and Holland. Two Amsterdam companies, Allert de Lange and Querido, developed German-language lists on literature and politics. Sijthoff in Leiden published a number of scholarly books in German. In 1937, the Elsevier Company entered the scientific German exile market. Founded in 1880, it had assumed the famous name Elsevier, although there was no relationship with the renowned 17th-century Dutch firm, which had been a trade publisher.

A young lawyer and journalist, Johannes Pieter (Ted) Klautz arrived at Elsevier as secretary in 1928 and became president in 1933. Sometime in 1936, H J van Eijk, manager of the leading Amsterdam scholarly booksellers Scheltema & Holkema, asked Klautz if Elsevier would be interested in publishing the fourth edition of a standard pediatric text by H. Finkelstein, *Sauglingskrankheiten*, a massive book of 905 pages. The third edition had been published by Springer, but because of anti-Jewish regulations the company was unable to produce the new edition. Springer was willing to turn over the illustrations at no cost, and the author would forgo royalties. Despite the substantial investment, Elsevier published the book. Also added to its list were the works of three prominent German historians, Heinrich Cunow, Friedrich Gundolf and Veit Valentin, none of whom could be published any longer in Germany. Sales of these books were disappointing. Elsevier was a very small company and no one on the staff had international sales experience. Moreover, the list lacked a subject focus, and, without the German market, there was not much left to work with (Bergmans, 1978, Klautz, 1987).

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After completion of the four titles in 1937, Klautz concluded that with the decline of German scholarship after 1933, English would become the world's scientific language. He therefore proposed to his board that they should publish German textbooks in English. The list would concentrate on a small number of specialized subjects. Klautz was guided in this strategy by the owners of the Amsterdam science booksellers Dekker & Nordemann who possessed extensive international experience (Bergmans, 1978).

Dekker & Nordemann had its origin in Amsterdam in 1928. Johann Gerhard Nordemann was a man of broad interests and good organizational and management skills. He had inherited a small brewery and wanted to learn more about the chemical processes involved. In 1926 he found a young tutor, Maurits Dekker, and the two became good friends.

Maurits Dekker (1899-1995) was born to a Jewish family in Amsterdam. He graduated in chemistry, biochemistry and physics from the University of Amsterdam in 1923. During his university years he contributed to the leading Dutch weeklies for the chemical and pharmaceutical industry published by D B Centen in Amsterdam. After completion of his studies, unable to get a job in chemistry, Dekker joined Centen as vice-president. There he developed, among his other duties, a small scientific mail-order bookselling department. He was an energetic young man. A good scientist, an athlete, a linguist, a bridge and chess player, an entrepreneur, Dekker never lacked self-confidence and expressed his opinions without hesitation in typical Dutch fashion, but always with a good sense of humor. In 1928 Dekker and Nordemann decided to take over the bookselling business from Centen, and founded their new firm under the name "Wetenschap-pelijke Boekhandel". For the first few years, they shared the profits with the Centen family (Dekker, 1989). Both Dekker and Nordemann were enterprising and ambitious. In 1933 they offered Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft assistance in an abortive effort to establish a branch in London. In 1934 they acquired, with the help of Eric Proskauer, translation rights to several prominent German texts published by Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft, Springer and Thieme. One book, Zeerleder's *Technology of Aluminum* was actually published in 1936 under the Nordemann Publishing Company imprint. But they discovered that they could not run a publishing division in addition to their bookselling tasks. When Elsevier made its expansion plans known, Dekker and Nordemann turned over the rights to the other titles that Proskauer had helped them to obtain. Included in this list were books by Fritz Feigl, Paul Karrer (who would win the Nobel prize in

chemistry in 1938), Friedrich Ellinger and Wilhelm Prodinge, as well as the four-volume set *Chemistry of Carbon Compounds* by Victor von Richter and Richard Anschuetz.

Nordemann was not Jewish and could still travel freely in Germany. In 1937 he introduced Elsevier, on the initiative of Kurt Jacoby and Proskauer, to the editors of *Beilstein's Handbuch der organischen Chemie* published by Springer. Edith Josephy and Fritz Radt were interested in producing a new English-language *Encyclopedia of Organic Chemistry* based on an updated classification system. Moreover, they were anxious to leave Germany for Holland with their families. Elsevier agreed and plans were drawn up for an 18-volume set, which was planned to be the cornerstone of the new Elsevier scientific publishing program (Bergmans, 1978).

Frustrated by the indecisive management of Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft, Proskauer traveled to the US in 1936. After meeting with several scientists and publishers, he felt encouraged to establish an American company based on European practices. In February 1937, Proskauer, Nordemann and Jacoby decided to start Nordemann Publishing Company in New York. Financed by Dekker & Nordemann, it was supported by back volumes from the stock of the Gustav Fock branch in New York as well as by translation rights from the Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft German-language list. Jacoby was to be the company's president. But when Jacoby returned to Leipzig, Leo Jolowicz vetoed the proposal. He was still afraid of jeopardizing the Leipzig operation and continued to have hopes of saving his company.

Dekker, Nordemann and Proskauer realized that they probably could not succeed on their own, but, just in case, Nordemann Publishing Company was incorporated anyway on July 1, 1937 at 215 Fourth Avenue. Nordemann was president, Proskauer was manager and secretary-treasurer. The directors were Nordemann, Dekker, Proskauer and two lawyers. The capital was \$20,000.00.

Proskauer's first success was to sign up the German mathematician Richard Courant for an English-language edition of his *Differential and Integral Calculus*, originally published in German by Springer. Courant had left Germany for Cambridge, England in 1933. There he signed a contract with Blackie & Son for the English edition, for which Courant had retained the translation rights. The text was translated by a young American mathematician, J E McShane. Courant tried to find an American distributor and had actually made an agreement with a US company when he met Proskauer and decided to go with the new firm. While recognizing

Blackie's rights, Courant and Proskauer agreed that the two would share the profits equally. Author and publisher thus became business partners, a pattern that would be repeated several times later (Reid, 1976).

Proskauer also re-established contact with a former Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft author, the Austrian-born chemist Hermann Mark. A specialist in polymers, Mark had left Vienna in 1938 to join the Canadian International Paper Company. Meeting in Montreal, the two worked out plans to bring out a collected edition of the papers of the DuPont chemist Wallace H Carothers, the inventor of rayon. This was the beginning of what would be an ambitious and important series in polymer science (Mark, 1986). Other initial contacts of Proskauer's were colleagues and acquaintances from Leipzig, including the Austrian-born Columbia University professor of biophysics, Selig Hecht, and Proskauer's former co-author, Arnold Weissberger, who was now with Kodak in Rochester.

Despite these successes, Proskauer, Dekker and Nordemann were still not convinced that they could get the venture off the ground without additional finance. According to Proskauer, they went to Elsevier president Klautz in 1937 to try to "salvage the American venture" by starting Elsevier Scientific in New York. Elsevier had already considered opening a New York office to sell its English-language titles, but the board was uncertain about leadership and the financial consequences.

Elsevier's plans changed when Maurits Dekker made it known that he wanted to move to the US. He was held in high esteem by Klautz and his Elsevier board. With the strong backing of Nordemann, Elsevier signed a contract with Dekker. Under this arrangement, Proskauer would be the American editor for Elsevier, which would now publish either in the US or Holland. Nordemann Publishing in New York would be the sales agent for Elsevier publications.

In June 1939, Dekker and his family prepared for their departure to New York, but when war broke out in September, resulting in the mining of the English channel, he changed his mind and backed out of his contract. He then proposed that he should go alone, with his family to follow later. After further consultation, Klautz agreed to send Dekker and his family to New York to promote sales of the newly published English-language Elsevier list for a period of three years. The new plan called for the incorporation of Elsevier Publishing Company in New York with a capital of \$100,000. Elsevier would contribute \$50,000, Nordemann Publishing \$5,000, which constituted half of its New York assets, and \$20,000 was to be raised from third parties. Dekker's wife Rozetta insisted that the family travel together and they and their three children left for New