

Ivor Beatty: Publisher with a red pen

PUBLISHERS have over time played enormous roles in the dissemination of written language and the communication of ideas through and between cultures. Too often they are dismissed as the rubber stamp on the title page or that part of the citations required in a bibliography. They are the least known yet most familiar names on a title page and for too many of us they are just an administrative necessity. The common image of the publisher is that of the business face and the practical production component of the publishing process. Compared to the author and the title of the book their names convey only broad categorical information to the readers. On joining the *Pacific Conservation Biology*, over ten years ago, I found that this stereotype was not true for Ivor Beatty. While he was all the things mentioned above he also entered into the publishing process with his red ink. His corrections to my manuscript were my first meeting with the man behind the name — he was the Beatty in *Surrey Beatty & Sons*. His corrections were a point of academic contention that I enjoyed with him; they were lesson well learnt. Many years before my first experience with Ivor's red ink, on a lower rung of my educational ladder, I had chatted with Joe Forshaw about the disappearance of Australian publishers from the publishing of Australian biota. We could both recite a long list of names of well-known publishers who no longer published in Australia. The small market and prohibitive economic costs had pushed publishing off-shore. Australian science and its communication to Australians and the world were consequently suffering. The story is too familiar to repeat here and it occurs in many areas beyond publishing. However, Ivor Beatty continued publishing biological science in Australia. He provided the forum to get the message across the same forum that provides the authors a place to promote their ideas. Many of us have much to thank him for.

It has been said that “It would be impossible to imagine any zoologist, botanist, ecologist or conservation biologist trained in Australia over the last 20 years who has not had their career influenced by contributions from Beatty's publications” (Saunders *et al.* 2012). I concur: I cannot believe that any student or conservation biologist would not be citing from the extensive literature that has emanated from his publishing house. A search of any good university library would find many entries from Surrey Beatty & Sons under conservation

headings and many with no comparable papers or chapters published elsewhere. As a student I benefited from this literature and as a professional academic my research continues to draw on publications that have moved through Ivor's hands. While the authors and editors of the papers and chapters are ultimately responsible for the original ideas that are rarely or not published elsewhere, they would not have seen the light of day without Ivor's hand. At the time of his passing I point to the litany of his publications from his lifetime of dedication to conservation biology and I celebrate his achievements and his life and I recall the publisher that corrected my manuscript with his red pen.

REFERENCE

- Saunders, D. A., Recher, H. F., and Brown, M. 2012. Quiet achiever did much for science. Sydney Morning Herald Online <http://www.smh.com.au/national/obituaries/quiet-achiever-did-much-for-science-20120726-22utt.html> Viewed August 10, 2012.

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