

Tramp Printers: Adventures and forgotten paths once traced by wandering artisans of newspapering and typography

John Howells, Marion Dearman

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Beginning with the invention of movable type in the 15th century, itinerant artisans roamed the highways and byways of the world, working where and when they pleased. It all ended five centuries later, when computer typesetting replaced humans. Mark Twain, Bret Harte, Horace Greely (along with legions of much less famous printers) plied their trade and enjoyed adventures as tramp printers until it all suddenly vanished in the mid 1970s. A sociological study, as seen through the eyes of tramp printers themselves. Footloose and carefree, these adventurers enjoyed 500 years of freedom, working where and when they pleased. A vanished breed, today they live on through recollections, anecdotes, and memories of how it used to be, when printers worked with "real type."



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