

# *The Literary Encyclopedia*

## Annual Report 2012

### A) Economics

#### 1. Subscriptions

To judge from the economic and trade press, 2012-13 may have constituted the tipping point in the “Digital Turn” as print publishers saw print revenues declining and the sale of e-books move from marginal to central position. John Fallon, the new CEO of Pearsons (inc. Penguin) has recently announced a re-orientation of the group from print to digital and also towards emerging markets. *The Literary Encyclopedia* should be well placed to benefit from this general transformation of the market and is increasing its efforts to achieve institutional subscriptions and to expand its editorial tiers.

We now have 100 institutional subscribers, which constitutes but a small proportion of what should be our due since we are doing such excellent work. However, we sail into strong headwinds, notably competition from EBSCO, Cengage, Oxford and Wiley-Blackwell, not to mention the increasing quality of Wikipedia. Believing in the quality and inherent value of the work we are publishing, we remain stubborn and buoyant and are constantly assessing the ways in which *The Literary Encyclopedia* can increase its value as a pedagogical resource.

2012 was also a year when the reality of the funding crisis which has haunted US higher education since 2008 began to be very apparent: Cengage revenues fell over 20% and Pearson has just reported 60% fall in pre-tax profits, largely consequent on lower text book sales in the USA. The modest gain of 13 institutions by *The Literary Encyclopedia* across the year (University of Vermont; Widener University; University of Notre Dame; Liberty University; New York University; Brigham Young University; Biola University; Umea University, Sweden; Aachen University; Leiden University; University of Fort Hare, South Africa; Luanda International School; Pembrokeshire College;) should therefore be seen in a more positive light than might otherwise be apparent. Similarly, although we added no UK institutions, when our UK agreements came up for triennial renewal in August, only two small universities failed to renew, and this for obvious financial reasons. Meanwhile we added 7 in the US.

#### 2. Financial Report

As will be seen from the tables below payments from institutions rose by nearly 13%. (The rise since 2010 is 26.5%). Payments from individuals declined by 16%, we assume because of Google’s move towards priority listing for those who pay its considerable fees, combined with the strains on personal finances. In the year our costs remained similar and extremely modest given our rate of development and publication. The cash reserves of the publication ensure its continued development and cover 75% of its borrowings. If our drive for more subscriptions is successful in 2013, there will be funds to distribute as royalties to editors and contributors in 2014. We therefore, as usual, urge all shareholders to make the publication known to their

students and colleagues, and lobby for an institutional subscription. Our fees are very much lower than those charged by the major corporations.

<b>Income</b>	2012	2011
Income		
Inst. Subscriptions	54,700	48,500
Ind. Subscriptions	6,500	7,800
Total	61,200	56,300
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Accountancy	2,600	2,500
Staff costs	36,000	40,000
Server	1,550	2,400
Interest on loans	3,800	4,500
Software development	11,000	9,300
Promotions	980	0
Misc	220	690
Total	56,150	59,390

Borrowings: £80,000

Cash reserves: £60,000

Note on accounts: the Literary Dictionary Company Limited reports annually to HM Revenue and Customs for the period 1 June to 31<sup>st</sup> May, its “account year”. Itemised accounts are audited by the Company accounts, Devine & Co of Slough. The figures given in the year-by-year accounts are derived from the same software package.

### **3. Remuneration Policies**

Consistent with our remuneration policy, and in common with other Editors, Robert Clark, as Editorial Director, received no remuneration for his work on the publication other than in shares accrued and he only drew (with his wife) a modest commercial interest charge on the loans they have made to the Company.

Dr Cristina Sandru remains the only full-time remunerated employee. Software engineers and our two editorial assistants work on a freelance basis.

#### **4. New Staff and activities**

##### **a) Faculty Liaison Officer**

Frith Taylor has joined us on a part-time basis to assist faculty with setting up Bookshelves and using the publication as a teaching resource. We hope this will extend the use made of the *Encyclopedia* and commend our publication to current and prospective subscribers.

##### **b) Institutional Sales**

Nicole Willson has been hired on a part-time basis to focus on introducing *The Literary Encyclopedia* to new institutions.

### **B) Software**

#### **1. New Horizontal Timeline Application**

About ten years ago we realised the possibility of using information technology to offer highly sophisticated, customizable, timeline displays. In 2005-6 we produced a pioneer application, but, whilst partially successful, our ideas were ahead of what was readily possible. We are therefore very pleased indeed to discover an application called SIMILE developed at MIT with a grant from the Mellon Foundation. This enabled us to attach elegant transverse timelines to our advanced search in December 2012. These will be further refined in 2013 and are now a signal example of how *The Literary Encyclopedia* seeks to enhance teaching and research.

#### **2. “Video” Demonstrations**

Demonstrating the publication to librarians in New York and Boston in October-November brought home to me that the richness and complexity of our achievement could easily be missed by any cursory examination of the publication and that features such as Bookshelves and Advanced Search might daunt or escape some or many of our users. By way of response, in December 2012 through January 2013 Cristina worked with an application called DemoBuilder and we can now invite you (and all our users) to look at our easy-to-comprehend guides at ([http://www.litencyc.com/videohelp/how\\_to.php](http://www.litencyc.com/videohelp/how_to.php)). In May 2013 Cristina will be developing Demos for the Contributors’ interface, and then she will develop them for our “Editorial Desks” (perhaps the most complex aspect of the publication).

#### **3. Mapping Writing**

Mapping Writing aims to achieve for the spatial dimension what SIMILE has achieved for the temporal. Our test site launched in 2011 proved the concept and taught us a great deal about what needed to be done, but had many inefficiencies, some of them generated by Google maps. In 2012 we began rewriting and redesigning the software and hope to be able to launch a thoroughly professional version by the middle of 2013. The initial intention is that the site should be freely available and draw public attention to *The Literary Encyclopedia*. Eventually parts of the site will only be available within the *Literary Encyclopedia* subscription package.

## C) Scholarship and Editorial

### 1. Policy Committee

In June 2012 we conducted elections for a Policy Committee whose remit is act as a conduit for the collection, formulation and expression of contributors' views and assist in helping to formulate proposals for the development of policy which can be approved by contributors.

The following editors and contributors were elected to serve for an initial mandate of 1 year:

Prof. Paul Baines, University of Liverpool  
Prof. Robert Boenig, Texas A&M University  
Prof. Jo Ann Cavallo, Columbia University  
Prof. Pam Perkins, University of Manitoba  
Prof. Daniel Robinson, Widener University  
Dr. Dianne Shober, University of Fort Hare  
Prof. Barry Spurr, University of Sydney  
Dr. Shannon Wooden, Missouri State University

### 2. Editorial Development

In the course of 2012 we have recruited 34 new editors for various sections of the Encyclopedia; 6 of our editors have retired.

### 3. Articles Published

In 2012 *The Literary Encyclopedia* published 163 People profiles, 289 Works profiles, and 117 articles and short notes on Topics & events (of which 18 were major essays). This amounts to nearly 40 essays each month, 470 major essays in all, well over one million words. We also published 4 new detailed author chronologies, and added 1960 recommendations for scholarly reading. Particular areas of growth were British Romantic poetry, the English Renaissance, classical cultures and Hispanic literatures, as well as increasing coverage of more marginal or 'minor' writers, as well as a range of comparative and intercultural essays. Warm thanks are due to all the contributors and editors who continued to support our venture with their scholarship and their time.

#### **D) Looking forward to 2013-14**

It has long been clear that as a global educational resource *The Literary Encyclopedia* needs to recruit global editorial talent. We hope in 2013 we will be able to strengthen existing teams and build new ones for such areas as Near Eastern and Asian literatures. We also hope to increase the number of “author-editors” – colleagues who will ensure that all works by a major author are properly described, and that the profiles and secondary reading lists remain up to date.

We have many ideas for how what we offer can be extended, and these will be maturing in the course of 2013, but after an innovative 2012 our focus in 2013-4 will largely be on consolidation of the current activities and consideration with the Policy Committee of how we can ensure that the *Encyclopedia* continues to serve the interests of its contributors and of the wider profession.

Robert Clark  
Managing Director  
14 March 2013.