

PROVERSE HONG KONG

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Website: <http://www.proversepublishing.com>

SEPTEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

You are receiving this Newsletter because you are a subscriber to our E-Newsletter; or because you have expressed interest in Proverse as a publisher of books and/or in entering for the annual international Proverse Prize for unpublished writing.

In 1947, The British Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux (“Aslib”) published “British Sources of Reference and Information.” Edited by Theodore Besterman, the book, of only fifty-six pages, provided useful lists of libraries and book organisations in Britain, including The National Central Library (and its work as a centre for the lending of books between British and Foreign libraries), The Library Association, Aslib itself, the National Book League and the British Association for International Bibliography. Listed separately were copyright libraries, university libraries, special libraries, the principal public libraries and government libraries.

Although the devastating “World War” with the “Axis” powers (German and Italy) and with Japan, ended officially in 1945, food rationing in Britain 1947 was still being maintained and the winter of that year was one of the harshest for very many years. In 1947, educational institutions (university libraries in particular) were unable to guarantee that all books recommended by tutors would be easily available. Partly, this situation arose because of the demands of an increased, post-war student population, undeterred by the harsh winter, and partly because so many books had been destroyed by enemy action.

The 1947 Aslib list is a guide to works of reference and to libraries as they existed in that year. It also lists a number of books and pamphlets that had been destroyed by air raids. The following summaries indicate a loss of 692,000 separate items.

- University College Library, London: 100,000 books and pamphlets destroyed.
- Birbeck College: Details not known, 20,000 volumes, largely destroyed.
- Coventry Public Library: 150,000 volumes destroyed.:
- Liverpool Central Library and some branches. 200,000 volumes destroyed.
- Plymouth Public Library; 70,000 volumes destroyed.
- Inner Temple London, 45,000 volumes destroyed.
- Exeter Public Library: 100,000 volumes destroyed.
- King’s College, London, 7,000 volumes destroyed.

A melancholy list. And these were not all the losses. Some of those who have worked in the British Library will be familiar with the notes that come back to ones desk, in response to a request for a certain title to be brought, “Destroyed by bombing during the War”.

One wonders what the losses were in Germany when Allied bombers began to counter-attack.

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## COMING SOON

On Thursday, 24 September, at an event to be held in Andorra La Vella, Principality of Andorra, in the Pyrenees, those who will progress to the second round in the competition for the seventh annual international Proverse Prize for unpublished writing will be announced.

As readers will know, the prize includes publication by Proverse Hong Kong and a cash prize which may be shared by at most two entries. Those books which have been winners / joint-winners of the Proverse Prize from 2009-2013 inclusive (novels, a poetry collection, biography, memoirs) and already published by Proverse Hong Kong, will be on display. They are:

*Instant Messages* by Laura Solomon  
*Mishpacha* by Rebecca Tomasis  
*The Misted Mirror* by Gillian Jones  
*Article 109* by Peter Gregoire  
*The Village in the Mountains* by David Diskin  
*A Shimmering Sea* by Sophronia Liu  
*Shadows in Deferment* by Birgit Linder  
*The Diplomat of Kashgar* by James McCarthy.

Some important announcements will be made about changes in the regulations of the Prize, opening it up to more types of entry.

We are very pleased that we will be joined on this occasion by Catalan writer, David Gàlvez

If any readers will be in Andorra on this date, please email [proverse@netvigator.com](mailto:proverse@netvigator.com) and we will send you location details.

## FOR YOUR DIARIES

Introducing Lt. Cmdr. Henry C.S. Collingwood-Selby, RN (1898-1992) and his Hong Kong life in the year before and during the Japanese Occupation.

Proverse author and publisher, Dr Gillian Bickley, will speak in London on Saturday 10 October, 2.30pm, introducing the book, *In Time of War*, which she co-edited with Richard Collingwood-Selby, OBE (who lives in Chile). The book is based on Richard's findings and transcripts of the personal papers of his father, Lieutenant Commander Henry Collingwood Selby.

Laid off from the Royal Navy after serving at the end of the First World War, Harry Selby joined the Chinese Maritime Customs Service but was recalled to active service in Hong Kong during preparations for an escalation of the Second World War. When the Japanese attack on Hong Kong came and their position on Hong Kong Island was established, he was ordered to scuttle his mine-layer, HMS *Redstart*, and afterwards fought on land. After being wounded and sent to hospital, he was confined until the end of the war in successive Prisoner of War camps in Hong Kong. The details he gives of camp life are fascinating and novel as is the Hong Kong life he describes in the year up to the Fall of Hong Kong.

"A tale of service, stamina, and survival, with lessons for us all." -- Jay Winter, Yale University.



Readers who are in London and would like to attend this talk, please email [proverse@netvigator.com](mailto:proverse@netvigator.com) for registration details. Please note there is an attendance fee payable to the organizers.

### **SCHEDULED FUTURE EVENTS**

We look forward to our next Hong Kong event, scheduled for Tuesday, 24 November 2015, when we will launch the works that won the Proverse Prize 2014: “The Layers Between”, a collection of essays and poems by Celia Claase, and “The Snow Bridge and Other Stories” by Philip Chatting.

### **DO JOIN US AT OUR COMING AND SCHEDULED FUTURE EVENTS IF YOU CAN!**

### **EMAIL ADDRESS**

We are continuing to send our E-Newsletter from our gmail address. Please do open and read it, just as you have been doing, when it is sent from [proverse@netvigator.com](mailto:proverse@netvigator.com).

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Proverse books are available from our Hong Kong-based distributor, The Chinese University Press, Shatin, NT, from their website, www.chineseupress.com.

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