

## WHAT WAS DONE?

- 1 Read the story *How The Book Was Born* and answer the question: Who was the first man to print books in England? in Russia?

### How The Book Was Born

Johann Gutenberg [dʒou'hæn 'gu:tənbə:ɡ],  
William Caxton ['wɪljəm 'kæksən]

What is a book? It is part thing and part thought. When we open the book, we find ourselves in a silent wonderful world. We visit foreign shores, we discover hidden treasures, we travel among stars. Man's thoughts and dreams are stored in books.

From the first books which were made by hand the book has come a long way. At first man learned to draw pictures, later alphabetic writing appeared. Then a new problem raised its head — what to write on? Papyrus [pə'paɪərəs], sheep and goat skins were used for a long time. Centuries passed. Then the Chinese gave us paper. For six centuries it remained a secret of the East until some Chinese paper makers were captured<sup>1</sup> by the Arabs. To Rome we owe<sup>2</sup> the format of the book; to Germany, the art of printing<sup>3</sup>. Indeed, the book was born thanks to the genius<sup>4</sup> and hard work of many people and nations.

<sup>1</sup> **be captured** ['kæptʃəd] — попасть в плен

<sup>2</sup> **to owe** [ou] — быть обязанным

<sup>3</sup> **to print** — печатать

<sup>4</sup> **genius** ['dʒi:niəs] — гений



Long, long ago there were not so many books as there are now. In fact there were very few. Men did not know how to print, so all books were written by hand with pen and ink. Most of this writing was done by monks<sup>1</sup>.

Some of the books were very beautiful. Pictures were painted on each page. But it took a very long time to write books. Often many years were spent to make one copy of a book. This made books very expensive<sup>2</sup>. Most people had no books at all, and a man who had twenty books was thought to be very rich<sup>3</sup>.

At last men learned how to print. In the middle of the 15th century a German named Johann Gutenberg (1399 — 1468) cut pieces of wood into the shape of letters. These letters were made into words, ink was put on them and then the words were pressed on a sheet of paper. In this way words were printed on paper and a book was made. It took a long time to make the wooden letters; but when they were made, they were used again and again. So books were made very much more quickly.

The first man to print books in England was named William Caxton (1422 — 1491). When William was a boy, he was sent by his parents to work for a merchant<sup>4</sup> in London. In time he became a great merchant himself. He left England, and went to live in Germany where he saw the new way to make books. When he had found out all about it, he returned to London and began to print books himself.

<sup>1</sup> **monk** [mʌŋk] — монах

<sup>2</sup> **expensive** [ɪks'pensɪv] — дорогой

<sup>3</sup> **was thought to be very rich** — считался очень богатым

<sup>4</sup> **merchant** ['mɜ:tʃənt] — купец

In those days a man who kept a shop always hung a sign which showed what he made or sold over his door. Outside his house Caxton hung a white shield with a red stripe<sup>1</sup>. The people nearby were very puzzled<sup>2</sup> when they saw this new sign and the strange machines which were taken into Caxton's house. Soon everybody in London heard that William Caxton was a printer, and great lords and ladies came to see him at work.

Before long, other men also began to print books. The new books were cheap<sup>3</sup>, so that many people could buy them.

The man who invented the art of printing in Russia is Ivan Fedorov (1510 — 1583). Ivan Fedorov had his press in Moscow from 1563 to 1565. Then he had to move to other cities and work there. But his masters were against printing books. They made him stop his work.

Now we remember the name of Ivan Fedorov and the year 1574 when his *Azbuka* was printed. Ivan Fedorov's *Azbuka* helped the people to learn the alphabet and taught them to read books.

The year of 1574 is the most important event in the cultural life of Russia of the 16th century.

Today we find it hard to imagine the bookless world of the past, hard to imagine the long way the book has come. Now even boys and girls at school have as many books as rich people used to have in the days before men learned to print.

<sup>1</sup> **a white shield** [ʃi:lɪd] **with a red stripe** — белый щит с красной полосой

<sup>2</sup> **be puzzled** [pʌzld] — быть озадаченным (очень удивленным)

<sup>3</sup> **cheap** [tʃi:p] — дешевый