having to look after some electronically published materials (the status quo in many public libraries even today). However, it is far more likely that because of the essentially network-based culture of electronic publishing, libraries will take on new roles and work more closely with both authors and publishers to provide for user needs. Authors may be encouraged to create materials to standards that help libraries exploit their work and provide adequate copyright protection and remuneration. Publishers will be needed to interpret the increasing amounts of management and market information that can be derived from digital libraries, and to commission, format, distribute and promote new work in the most appropriate ways. Libraries will need to address the need for the universal access to materials that is currently more or less met through existing buildings, stock, staff and services.

Will electronic publishing have a bigger impact on libraries than on other institutions or individuals? If one looks at the start-up companies such as cybercafés, multimedia companies, and educational institutions, probably not. Much library work continues as before, at least for now. Yet vast change is under way, and we can expect libraries of the future to be contracting with publishers and authors, communicating with them regularly via world-wide networks such as the Internet. We can expect libraries to play a greater role in defining communities of users for whom works will be created and published, and we can expect librarians to monitor the cultural changes of the so-called Information Society and play a major role in defining them.

Library users will not merely read electronic publishing products passively, but will interact with many of them, manipulating them, personalising them, combining parts of them with other products and facilities. Just as libraries provide access through purchasing, organising, cataloguing, housing and promoting books, they will need to provide assistance, services and appropriate tools for users to cope with digital products. They will assist users ever more directly in the organisation of information for themselves. Libraries will help in the selection of an appropriate thesaurus for searching a database or by providing software to summarise text, translate it, categorise it, file it for later use and/or archive it for the long-term. Libraries will help users combine material with other information to create something new, to make available a new publication or simply to organise their own information and thoughts more clearly. Beyond text, images will be increasingly available from digital libraries, requiring even more specialised software tools and services. It is likely that many libraries will play a major role in negotiation with rights owners, copyright clearance and record-keeping, access control and authentication and shared purchasing of materials too expensive for occasional users or those of a certain economic status. To carry out all these functions, libraries will often collaborate with each other and with publishers, serials agents and other intermediaries such as network infrastructure providers, using the networks as a means to overcome many of the traditional difficulties and costs of day-to-day co-operation.

Do we have the inter-personal contact in place necessary to bring about such inter-disciplinary collaboration? Maybe not on a large scale and at all levels of seniority. This needs to be the first priority of librarians, authors, publishers and agents alike.

Robin Yeates is Senior Researcher at the Library Information Technology Centre, South Bank University, London.

WATCH MAKERS

David C. Sutton

Seeking out copyright holders.

WATCH (Writers and their Copyright Holders) is an automated list of copyright holders, which is now freely available on the World Wide Web (*http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/HRC/WATCH*), and is jointly maintained by the Universities of Texas and Reading. The need for such a list has long been discussed, and it could be regarded as the one piece of unfinished business which follows from Britain's ratification of the Berne Convention.

As from 1886, the Berne Convention established the principle of automatic copyright, with no need to register. The WATCH project provides the first accessible list of copyright holders in any country which has signed the Convention, and should prove a boon not only to anthologists and editors of miscellanies, but also to any author who wishes to quote from or republish another author. The usefulness of the file has been increased by the UK's adoption in 1995 of the standard European Union copyright period of 70 years after an author's death.

The principle of automatic and non-registered copyright undoubtedly constituted a great advance for authors' rights, but it has had the inherent drawback of making it far more difficult to trace copyright holders for the legitimate purposes of quoting, anthologising or republishing.

Various institutions and individuals have tried to maintain their own files of copyright information in the past, including libraries, authors' agents, legal firms, and, of course, the Society of Authors. On one or two occasions, abortive attempts were made to start up voluntary co-operative schemes. It was not until the 1990s, however, that serious attempts were made to tackle the problem, and, curiously, in 1993 two separate schemes began to emerge at almost exactly the same time, one in the UK and one in the USA. In the UK the lead was taken by the Strachey Trust, a charity established in 1972 to further the pursuit of scholarship especially in areas to do with literary manuscripts; in the USA the lead was taken by the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas in Austin. The two projects became aware of each other towards the end of 1993.

By that time the Ransom Center had decided to make its own copyright information file available on the Internet, free of charge. The Strachey Trust decided early in 1994 to fund a small copyright research project based at the University of Reading Library, drawing on the expertise of the team which had been working on the *Location Register of English Literary Manuscripts and Letters.* By March 1994 the two projects had agreed in principle to merge, and to form probably the first Anglo-American co-operative research project using the Internet. At some stage in the negotiations it was realised that the name Writers and their Copyright Holders would give us a pleasing acronym, and we started to call ourselves WATCHmakers.

The WATCH file on the World Wide Web now contains copyright information on over two thousand authors, and is being regularly updated. It is organised by authors' surnames, and the entries are very simple, giving a contact name and address for copyright enquiries, the date when the information was collected and a code indicating whether the information was collected by Reading or Texas. Some entries include explanatory notes, and some refer the researcher to the Reading or Texas office — for information which is complex, incomplete, or unsuitable for inclusion in a database.

The starting points for research at Reading came from the informal files held by other institutions. Organisations including the British Library, the Bodleian Library, King's College Cambridge, Trinity College Cambridge and the Huntington Library in California supplied copies of their files, which were checked and updated. Other organisations, ranging from the National Library of Scotland to the Houghton Library at Harvard University, freely shared information which was kept not in files but (often) in people's heads. The largest source of information was the file kept at the Ransom Center itself. From the end of 1993 they sent out hundreds of letters to copyright holders whose names appeared in their records and received over seven hundred replies, to provide the WATCH file with an excellent base.

WATCH's research includes, for example, reading through wills at Somerset House, checking telephone directories for unusual surnames, scanning obituary columns, and establishing family trees, especially of aristocratic families. The Reading team is also systematically sending letters of enquiry to archivists who are identified in the *Location Register of Twentieth-Century English Literary Manuscripts and Letters* as custodians of major collections of papers or correspondence for any particular author. In addition, letters are being sent to principal publishers; to biographers and critics; to authors' agents; and to living authors identified in standard reference works. Some copyright holders are also starting to volunteer information, which is very welcome.

The UK half of the WATCH project is funded entirely by charitable and cultural organisations. These now include the Strachey Trust, the British Academy, the Arts Council, the Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Trust, the Chase Charity, the Pilgrim Trust, the Marc Fitch Fund, the Newby Trust and the Norman Franklin Trust. Provided that funding is maintained over the next three or four years, it will be possible for the project to work through at least the first three of the five stages which have been identified for coverage:

• Literary authors in the English language
• Other English language authors in the Humanities
• Politicians and public figures whose papers are likely to be found in archive collections
• Literary authors in other European languages
• English language authors in subjects outside the Humanities

With Texas taking responsibility for the Americas and Reading taking responsibility for Europe and the rest of the English speaking world, a very large amount of research remains to be completed. What has been started, however, appears to us to be an unusual new reference work, and one of great value to authors, editors, librarians and anthologists.

David C. Sutton was Editor of the Location Register of English Literary Manuscripts and Letters: 18th and 19th centuries, 2 vols. British Library, 1995. Copyright information about literary authors and other writers sent to him at the WATCH Project, University of Reading Library, Whiteknights, P O Box 223, Reading RG6 6AE (e-mail: D.C.Sutton@reading.ac.uk) will be gratefully received.

Writers Remembered:
GAVIN EWART

Alan Ross

When I first met Gavin in the mid-1940s he had recently come out of the army with the rank of captain, and was working for the firm of Nicholson and Watson, publisher of *Poetry London.* Tambimuttu, a personable, entertaining scallywag from Ceylon, was nominally editor; he had a genuine feeling for contemporary poetry, occasionally wrote it, and frequently recited it with remarkable accuracy. He had an equal facility for drinking large quantities of beer, acquiring susceptible girls and losing manuscripts. He was taken up by T. S. Eliot, befriended by several distinguished poets, sometimes as much for his romantic looks as for anything else, and managed to acquire a poetry list containing Keith Douglas, W. S. Graham, George Barker and Kathleen Raine amongst others. Few other firms enjoyed a similar paper quota – but even so, owing to Tambimuttu's dilatoriness, long periods of time elapsed when nothing appeared to happen and publication dates grew ever further away.

Tambi lived in extreme squalor, but curiously his office had an adjoining bathroom, and on his arrival about mid-day he would decide to take a bath, entreating the various nubile secretaries and girl editorial assistants to scrub him. He would sometimes lure them into sharing the rare hot water, after which there would be squeaks and giggles and cries of feigned rape. Gavin, generally sitting studiously at his desk and appraising such manuscripts as Tambi had not managed to mislay, would often be called on for rescue.

Gavin at that time was 30, known for his precocity as a poet when a schoolboy at Wellington, where, in company with the Romilly brothers, Giles and Esmond, he was taught by T. C. Worsley. He had contributed to New Verse, written a later much anthologised four-line poem called 'Miss Twye', and come to the attention of Auden and Spender. The war appeared to have put a temporary end to literary activity, and many years passed before Gavin could be coaxed into resuming it.

In those days, though light-boned, Gavin had the appearance of the more stolid kind of American film star — Chester Morris for example — black hair neatly slanted across his brow. Slow and unemphatic of speech, unhurried of movement and at the table, there could not have been a greater contrast between the deliberateness of his personality and the speedy irreverence, often on sexual subjects, of his writing. He left publishing for the British Council and then for advertising, but once launched on his new career as a poet there was no stopping him. When commercial employments dried up there was no longer anything to interfere with the sometimes rather indiscriminate production of poems. By then he had married Margo and had acquired a son and a daughter. It did not make for a lavish life-style, but at first in Earls Court and then in Putney he lived out the kind of dependable routine that suited him.

When I started my publishing firm London Magazine Editions in 1965, two of the earliest books were Gavin's first post-war volumes of poems *Pleasures of the Flesh* and *The Deceptive Grin of the Gravel Porters,* books that established the nature and stature of