



OSPREY GROUP

Osprey Group to acquire Old House Books and Maps

Osprey Group will acquire Old House Books and Maps on 28 April 2011. This follows its success with heritage imprint Shire Publications, which joined the group in 2007, and will allow Osprey both to strengthen and diversify its position in this thriving niche sector.

Founded in 1991, Old House specialises in facsimiles of period maps and reprints of long-neglected books, with highlights including *Dickens's Dictionary of London 1888*, *London Poverty Maps 1889*, and a Samuel Johnson compendium entitled *Fopdoodle and Salmagundi*. Osprey Group intends to expand further this already eclectic range and to market it alongside Shire. Though the imprint will continue to operate under the Old House name, its running will move to Osprey's offices in Oxford and its distribution to Grantham Book Services. Old House will retain the idiosyncratic qualities that make it what it currently is, with the takeover allowing it to benefit from the opportunities for expansion afforded by Osprey Group's editorial, design, sales and marketing capabilities.

Edward Allhusen, Old House's founder and publisher, is handing over the reins in the knowledge that the business is in safe hands:

'I've been running Old House for two decades now, and I'm thrilled with its numerous successes. It was always my aim to rescue obscure but fascinating artefacts and texts and to bring them to the audience they deserve, but at this point that audience has grown to the point where to reach it fully requires a publisher with significantly more resources than my own. To my mind Osprey is without any doubt that publisher.'

The Old House list will be a perfect fit, said Shire Publisher Nick Wright:

'Shire's success over the last few years shows how well we understand the heritage, collectables and social history markets. Our editorial and design teams are practised in developing books with those consumers in mind, and our marketing and sales departments know better than anyone how to court and sell to them. Old House is perfectly in tune with the Shire ethos and readership, and we're confident that the lists' synergy will be immediately apparent: Old House and Shire will form a perfect partnership.'





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All titles currently in the Old House catalogue will remain, and will be joined by new materials including more of the maps and books that are currently Old House's speciality. As the imprint becomes fully integrated into Osprey Group, the publication schedule will increase and encompass a range of other period items of interest to the heritage and gift markets.

Rebecca Smart, Osprey Group's Managing Director, said:

'Old House is my ideal addition to the Osprey family. We've worked incredibly hard with Shire over the last four years, and with real success, to establish ourselves as a major force in the British heritage market. The addition of Old House, especially bearing in mind our plans to grow and diversify its list, will really help to consolidate our position in that sector.'

About Osprey Group

After moving from strength to strength over a number of years in its traditional military history marketplace, in 2007 Osprey Publishing acquired Shire Publications, the respected publisher of books on history, heritage and nostalgia. With a redesign and rebranding of the entire list, and the inauguration of new series and formats, Osprey's success with Shire proved its ability to thrive and excel in niche markets. Having entered the fiction sector for the first time in 2010 with the acquisition of sci-fi/fantasy imprint Angry Robot, Osprey Publishing became Osprey Group, and is quickly establishing itself as a dominant force in niche publishing.

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