Book History Timeline

c. 2400 BC  Earliest surviving papyrus scrolls.
c. 650     Papyrus scroll introduced into Greece from Egypt.
c. 400-300 Silk writing materials employed in China.
295        Alexandria Library founded.
c. 100     Vegetable-fiber paper developed in China.
1st Cent. AD MS. book format shifts from scroll to codex.
c. 370     Rome estimated to have 28 libraries.
610        Papermaking introduced into Japan from China.
c. 700     Paper sizing developed in Asia.
c. 750-800 Papermaking reaches Central Asia and Middle East.
868        *Diamond Sutra* published in China, earliest extant example of woodblock printing.
875        Arab travelers mentioning having seen toilet paper in China.
896        Oldest extant manuscript featuring colophon.
c. 1041-48 Pi Shêng develops movable type in China, amalgam of clay and glue.
11th Cent. Papermaking reaches Moorish Spain.
1255 Paper mill established in Genoa.
1276 Watermarked paper introduced in Tuscany at Fabriano Mills.
1337       Earliest known use of paper sizing in Europe.
1373       Bibliotheque Nationale founded in Lyons.
c. 1400    Printing with movable copper types in Korea.
1403       Company of Stationers founded in London.
1418       Earliest extant example of woodblock printing in Europe.
1430       Earliest extant examples of xylographic of block books.
1454       Gutenberg prints indulgences on lead-based movable type with a textura face in Mainz.
1456       Gutenberg prints Bible.
1457       Psalmorum Codex published by Fust and Schoffer in Mainz; first extant printed book with colophon; also Mainz Psalter, earliest example of color printing.
c. 1460    Mentelin established press in Strasbourg.
1465       First printed book in Italy.
1466       Ulrich Zell establishes press in Cologne.
1467       First use of roman type face in printed book.
1472       Wendelin de Spira of Venice begins using type with a rotunda face.
1476       Caxton establishes press in Westminster.
1477       *Monte sancto di Dio* published in Florence, the first printed book to include engraved illustrations.
c. 1485    Schwabacher branch of bastarda face emerges.
1493  Earliest extant books containing etchings.
1495  John Tate establishes first English paper mill in Hertfordshire.
1498  Ottaviano Petrucci of Venice develops types for printing music.
1500  Printing established in more than 250 European cities.
c. 1500  First italic font cut for Aldus Manutius by Francesco Griffo.
c. 1512  Fraktur branch of bastardada face emerges.
1513  Richard Faques publishes *The Trewe Encountre* in London, the earliest extant English news-book.
1539  First North American Press established in Mexico City.
1557  Robert Granjon of Lyons publishes first book printed with types featuring Civilité face.
1557  London Stationers’ Company granted royal charter.
1559  *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* ordered by Paul IV.
1575-80  First North American paper mill, southeast of Mexico City.
1586  Star Chamber decree confirming Oxford University’s right to print books.
1588  John Spilman establishes first successful mill producing white paper in England.
1593  Earliest known European printing in Philippine Islands.
1621  First English newspaper, *The Corante*.
1639  First press in North American British colonies, Cambridge, MA.
1642  Mezzotint process invented by Ludwig von Siegen.
1653  First North American public library founded in Boston.
1663  Licensing Act establishes legal copyright and codifies practice of deposit library in England.
1673  Hollander pulp-making machine invented.
1690  Paper mill established near Germantown, PA.
1695  Expiration of the Licensing Act of 1663.
1699  150 working paper mills in England.
c. 1700  First substantial books printed from stereotyped plates.
1702  First daily English newspaper, *Daily Courant*. Survives 30 years.
1705  First successful North American newspaper, the *Boston News Letter*. 
1709  Copyright Act limits terms of copyright protection in England.
1734  Aquatint process invented by Jean-Baptiste Le Prince.
1739  William Ged experiments with stereotype plates made from plaster-of-Paris molds.
1752  First Canadian newspaper, *Halifax Gazette*.
1753  British Museum founded.
1755  James Whatman builds wove hand-made paper moulds for Baskerville.
1758  First known forgeries of English banknotes.
1774  House of Lords invalidates Copyright Act of 1709.
1788  First press imported to Australia.
1790  William Nicholson registers first patents for his cylinder printing press.
1793  France sets copyright protection for two years after author’s death.
1798-9  Louis-Nicolas Robert invents first paper-making machine.
1798  William Stanhope builds first iron press.
1798  Alois Senefelder invents lithography.
1800  Library of Congress founded.
1804  Henry and Sealy Fourdrinier buy patent for Robert paper-making machine, the basis for the Fourdrinier machine.
1809  John Dickinson registers first patents for his cylinder paper-making machine.
1810  185 working paper mills in the US.
1812  Friedrich Koenig perfects first steam-powered, flat-bed-and-cylinder press.
1814  *The Times* (London) prints first issue using Koenig press, 29 November, 1,000 impressions per hour.
1816  Koenig adds perfector to his press.
1822  Dr. William Church patents first cold-metal composing machine.
1825  First dandy rolls used in paper making, built by John Marshall.
1827  Cowper & Applegate develop four-cylinder steam press capable of 4,000-5,000 impressions per hour.
1829  William Austin Burt invents early typewriter.
1829  First stereotype plates made from flong molds used in Lyons.
c. 1830  Isaac and Seth Adams manufacture bed-and-platen machine press.
c. 1830  Hopkinson and Cope manufacture double-platen machine press.
1833  Daguerreotype process invented.
1835 Robert Baxter registers patent for letterpress color printing process.
c. 1840 Electrotype process developed.
1841 Tauchnitz introduces line of paperback editions.
1843 Mechanically-processed wood pulp used for paper making in Germany.
1846 Richard Hoe patents horizontal rotary press.
1848 The Times (London) installs Walter press that prints on continuous roll of paper.
1853 Mechanically-processed wood pulp used for paper making in England.
1863 William Bullock patents reel-fed rotary printing machine.
1868 The Times (London) installs Walter press that prints on continuous roll of paper.
1870s Chemically-produced wood pulp introduced to paper making.
1875 JGA Eickhoff builds four-cylinder perfecting press.
1878 Remington introduces typewriter featuring shift key for upper-case letters.
1886 Ottmar Mergenthaler invents Linotype hot metal composing machine.
1886 Berne Convention establishes international reciprocity of copyright protection.
1889 Tolbert Lanston produces first Monotype composing machine.
1892 The Bibliographical Society founded in London.
1904 Ira Rubel develops first commercial lithographic system for printing on paper.
1904 The Bibliographical Society of America founded in New York.
1935 IBM markets Electromatic, first successful electric typewriter.
1938 Chester F. Carlson invents xerography.
1945 Monotype Corp. introduces Intertype Fotosetter, the first phototypesetter.
1955 Universal Copyright Convention establishes copyright protection for 50 years after author’s death.
1959 Xerox markets first xerographic photocopier.
1967 OCLC founded.
1975 IBM introduces first laser printer.
1983 RBS founded.
1995 Instabook applies for print-on-demand technology patent.
1997 International copyright protection extended to 70 years after author’s death.
2004 Google announces Google Print project.