



# The Eighteenth Century Book Trade In The British Isles

An exhibition of Books, Bindings and Manuscripts

The University of Calgary Library - Special Collections Occasional Paper No.6, 1980

*This publication is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Judith Sloman (1940-1980), Associate Professor of English, The University of Calgary, and a member of the Samuel Johnson Society of the Northwest.*

**Introduction** This exhibition was mounted in honour of the visit of the Samuel Johnson Society of the Northwest to the University of Calgary on 24-25 October, 1980. It tries to show something of the enormous diversity of the British book-trade in the period 1700 to 1800. The great majority of the items displayed come from the Arts and Humanities Library of the University of Calgary, and particularly from the Special Collections Division. A few additional items are from the private collection of one of the compilers. The exhibition is arranged as follows:

**Section One** This is a highly select group of portraits and caricatures of prominent typesetters, printers, booksellers and illustrators, all of whom lent colour to the book-trade both by their special skills and their strong personalities. (Items 1-12)

**Section Two** This section shows some of the machines and techniques used in hand-press printing, paying particular attention to the scholar printers, such as Baskerville, Foulis and Smellie. (Items 13-24)

**Section Three** This section has a double purpose. It demonstrates the dominance of London publishing in the British book-trade, but also shows examples from Oxford, Edinburgh and Dublin, and from a number of provincial centres such as Cambridge, Bath, Glasgow and Perth. The growth of the provincial book-trade is essentially an eighteenth century phenomenon. (Items 25-49)

**Section Four** As well as showing examples of decorative bookbindings from London, Dublin, Edinburgh and St. Andrews, this section attempts to show the various states in which the eighteenth century bookseller offered books to his customers - in paper covers, in boards, bound in plain sheepskin or calf, as well as in the more elaborate custom-made decorated bookbindings of the period. (Items 50-62)

**Section Five** This section deals exclusively with periodical publication, and includes examples of weekly newspapers, monthly magazines, annuals, periodical essays of the *Spectator* type, and political journals. Both London and provincial periodicals are represented. (Items 63-72)

**Section Six** The hardest part of the eighteenth century book-trade to illustrate is the retail operation. Trade cards, customers' bills and letters, subscription lists and advertisements have been chosen to give a sense of the "over the counter" operation. (Items 73-81)



The compilers are grateful for the generous assistance and co-operation given to them by the Director of Libraries, University of Calgary, and by the staff of the Arts and Humanities Library and the Special Collections Division.

They would also like to put on record their appreciation of the support given to the Samuel Johnson Society meeting by the University of Calgary and the SSHRCC.

[R.H. Carnie](#)

[A. Steele](#)

[Library Home Page](#)

[Special Collections Home Page](#)



# The Eighteenth Century Book Trade In The British Isles

An exhibition of Books, Bindings and Manuscripts

The University of Calgary Library - Special Collections Occasional Paper No.6, 1980

## Section One - **PORTRAITS**

1. **Andrew Bell**, bookseller, printseller and engraver, Edinburgh, *fl.* 1754- 1800.

This is John Kay's caricature of one of the geniuses behind the second edition ( 1776) of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Andrew Bell was famous not only for his tiny body and enormous nose, but also for his engraving skills and publishing enterprise. The other figure is William Smellie, scholar printer and friend of Robert Burns (see: Item 11 ).

**Ref.** Kay, John, *Original portraits*, Edinburgh, 1877.

2. **John Baskerville**, typefounder and printer, Birmingham, London and Cambridge, 1705-1775.

England's greatest printer in the eighteenth century, Shenstone said of his work and that of Foulis: "Baskerville's impressions are more striking to the eye, either on account of his Ink, his Paper or his Type; yet at the time, it may be doubted whether the Scotch editions will not be deemed the best for use."

**Refs.** Gaskell, P., *John Baskerville, a bibliography*, Cambridge, 1959; Pardoe, F., *John Baskerville of Birmingham*. London, 1975. The engraving in this exhibit is from the latter .

3. **Robert Dodsley**, bookseller, publisher, poet and dramatist, London. 1703-1764.

Dodsley was a friend of both Alexander Pope and Samuel Johnson. His bookshop was at Tully's Head in Pall Mall. "A generous friend, an encourager of men of genius, who acquired the esteem and respect of all who knew him" (Isaac Reed). This is Ravenet's engraving of Reynolds' portrait used as frontispiece for the second edition of Dodsley's *Trifles* published by James Dodsley, Robert's brother, partner and successor.

**Ref.** Straus. R., *Robert Dodsley, poet, publisher and playwright*, London, 1910.



Andrew Bell and William Smellie; a Caricature by John Kay.  
Item No.1; see also No. 11

Andrew Bell and William Smellie;  
a Caricature by John Kay.  
*Item No.1; see also No.11*

**4. Alexander Donaldson**, printer and bookseller, Edinburgh and London. *fl.* 1749-1794.

Donaldson, who was publisher of the *Edinburgh Advertiser*, dominated the trade in Scottish reprintings of English classics, and was one of the key figures in breaking the London booksellers' monopoly on the reprint trade. The engraving is from the standard reference: Skinner, R.T., *A notable family of Scots printers*, Edinburgh, 1927.

---

**5. Francis Hayman**, artist, engraver, book illustrator. London. 1708-1776.

Hayman's Falstaffian personality and great talent dominated London book illustration. He did the designs for Richardson's *Pamela* (1742) and for Hanmer's Oxford *Shakespeare*. He was a friend of both Johnson and Garrick. **Ref.** Hammelman/Boase, *Book illustration in eighteenth century England*. New Haven, 1975. The photograph is from a self-portrait.

---

**6. Joseph Johnson**, bookseller and publisher in London, 1738-1809.

The most important of the dissenting publishers of the late eighteenth century, Joseph Johnson, a man of Baptist origins, was publisher and patron of radical writers. He was publisher of Cowper, E. Darwin, Priestley, Thomas Paine, etc. The photograph is from an engraving of Moses Haughton's portrait. **Ref.** Maxted, I., *The London book trades 1775-1800*, London, 1977.

---

**7. George Miller**, bookseller, publisher, Dunbar, *fl.* 1771-1789.

Miller is an excellent example of the kind of provincial tradesman who dominated the trade outside London in the last decade of the eighteenth century. He was a pioneer in the area of circulating and "itinerating" libraries. **Ref.** Couper, W.M., *The Millers of Haddington, Dunbar and Dunfermline*, London, 1914.

---

**8. John Murray I**, bookseller and publisher in London, 1745-1793.

John Murray I, the founder of the Murray dynasty, is a prime example of the wandering Scots who played such an important part in London publishing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Others include William Strahan, Andrew Miller and Thomas Durham. John MacMurray, who later renamed himself John Murray, bought the business of William Sandby, No.32 Fleet St. He was the father of John Murray II, "the Anax of Publishers" (Byron). **Ref.** Courthope, W.J., "Memoir of John Murray", *Quarterly Review*, 1891.

---

**9. James Pillans**, printer and publisher in Edinburgh, *fl.* 1780-1830.

Pillans was the founder of the still extant Edinburgh printing firm of Pillans and Wilson. The Pillans family were Presbyterian seceders and their early publishing catered to the needs of their co-religionists. They have now been general printers for 215 years.

**Ref.** (Anon.), *A printing house of old and new Edinburgh*, Edinburgh, 1925.

---

**10. Thomas Ruddiman**, printer, bookseller, librarian, scholar; 1674-1757.

Ruddiman was the outstanding Scottish scholar printer. Boswell seriously considered writing his life but, unfortunately, the biography was finally written by the verbose Chalmers (1794). The portrait is from Chalmers' *Life*.

**Ref.** Duncan, D., *Thomas Ruddiman, a study of Scottish scholarship of the early eighteenth century*, Edinburgh, 1965.

---

**11. William Smellie**, printer, scholar and *bon vivant* in Edinburgh, *fl.* 1740-1795.

William Smellie was a printer of immaculate editions of the classics, compiler of the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, translator of Buffon, and a close friend of Robert Burns. The portrait is from Kerr's tedious two-volume *Memoirs*, Edinburgh. 1911.

---

**12. James Tytler**, printer, poet, chemist, surgeon, political agitator, hack journalist and balloonist, Edinburgh and Salem, Mass. , 1745-1803.

Tytler's eventful career is summed up by Sir James Fergusson in his *Balloon Tytler*. London, 1972.

---

[Library Home Page](#)

[Section Two: Printing Presses and Printers](#)

[Special Collections Home Page](#)



# The Eighteenth Century Book Trade In The British Isles

An exhibition of Books, Bindings and Manuscripts

The University of Calgary Library - Special Collections Occasional Paper No.6, 1980

---

## Section Two- **PRINTING PRESSES AND PRINTERS**

13. A wooden and iron common press of Blaeu's design.

This is the kind of press described by Moxon, and was to be found in most British printing shops of the early eighteenth century.

It was replaced by the Stanhope Press, and then by the iron hand-presses of the early nineteenth century.

**Ref.** Moran, J., *Printing presses*, London, 1973.

---

14. The Ruthven press.

One of the improved presses available at the end of the eighteenth century. The key difference was that the type remained stationary, while the platen was moved over it on a wheeled carriage. Ruthven, an Edinburgh printer and ingenious inventor, also worked on portable presses and automatic inking devices.

**Ref.** Moran, J. pp. 71, 88, *Edinburgh monthly magazine*, 1810.

---

15. Title-page of James Watson's type specimen, 1706.

Watson (1664-1722), was one of the King's printers for Scotland and a historian of the printing trade. His types, of which he describes himself as the "owner" were mostly of Dutch origin.

**Ref.** Couper, W.J., *James Watson, King's Printer*, Glasgow, 1916.

---

16. Type specimen sheet. William Caslon, engraver and typefounder, London, 1693-1766.

Caslon's types dominated English printing in the eighteenth century.

**Refs.** Mosley, "The early career of William Caslon", *JPHS* 3, 1967; Ball, J., *William Caslon, 1693-1766*, Kington, 1973.

---

17. Terence, *Opera*, Edinburgh, 1758.

This elegant and correct printing won the Edinburgh Society's silver medal for a correctly printed edition of a Latin author; one of the few awards won by any other firm than that of Foulis of Glasgow. The house of Hamilton and Balfour published some of Hume's works, and was much concerned in the reprinting of English classics. This volume was actually printed by William Smellie (see: Item 11) who was an employee of the firm.

**Ref.** Kerr, *Memoirs*, Edinburgh, 1811.

---

18. Greek *New Testament*, Glasgow, 1759 .

This foolscap quarto edition was printed in a Greek Brevier type cast by Alexander Wilson of Glasgow. It is not so effective as Wilson's larger Greek types.

**Ref.** Gaskell, P., *A bibliography of the Foulis Press*, London, 1964, no. 363.

---

19. Joseph Addison, *The works of the late right honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.*, Birmingham, 1761. 4 vols., royal 4to.

A fine copy of one of Baskerville's most elegant productions. Open at the frontispiece and title-page of Volume I.

**Refs.** Straus & Dent's bibliography, no.48; Gaskell, P., *John Baskerville: a bibliography*, Cambridge, 1959, no. 17.

---

20. *The Death of Artho and the Death of Fraoch*, Glasgow, 1769.

Translations of Gaelic originals by John Smith of Campbeltown. The crown 8vo pamphlet is one of the rarer Foulis Press productions and an important document in the Ossianic controversy.

**Ref.** Gaskell, P. , *A bibliography of the Foulis Press*, no. 492.

---

21. *Holy Bible*, Birmingham, 1772.

This impressive Bible was printed after Baskerville's connection with Cambridge ceased. This copy is bound in a red morocco gilt binding.

**Ref.** Gaskell, P.; *John Baskerville: a bibliography*, Cambridge, 1959, no.35.

---

22. Horace, *Opera*, Birmingham, 1777.

This neat 12mo edition is one of a handful of books printed and published by John Baskerville's widow, Sarah, after his death in 1775.

**Ref.** Straus & Dent's bibliography, no. 116.

---

23. Smith, John, *The printers' grammar*, London, 1787.

Smith's *Printers' grammar*, first published in 1755, was the first manual written in English expressly for the use of the trade, and was succeeded by a string of manuals by Luckcombe, Stower, Johnson and Hansard. The later edition of 1787 shown here was revised and expanded. It is open at p. 192, showing the lay-out of a sheet of octavo.

**Ref.** Gaskell, Barber and Warrilow, "An annotated list of printers' manuals"; *JPHS* 4, 1968.

---

24. *The poetical works of Hector MacNeill*, London, 1801. 2 vols., 8 vo.

A turn of the century example of the fine printing of Thomas Bensley, Bolt Court, Fleet Street. The frontispiece engraving is by Naesmith. Bensley's best-known production is the seven-volume Macklin's *Folio Bible*, London, 1800.

---

[Library Home Page](#)

[Special Collections Home Page](#)

[Section Three: The Bookseller-Publishers, London and Elsewhere](#)



# The Eighteenth Century Book Trade In The British Isles

An exhibition of Books, Bindings and Manuscripts

The University of Calgary Library - Special Collections Occasional Paper No.6, 1980

---

## Section Three - *The Bookseller-Publishers, London and Elsewhere*

25. *An account of several late voyages and discoveries. . .*, London, printed for D. Browne, without Temple Bar, J. Read in Exchange-Alley, W. Innys in St. Paul's Churchyard and T. Ward in Temple-Lane, 1711.

This anonymous collection of voyages is one of hundreds of similar eighteenth century productions showing the great interest in travel literature. It also demonstrates the tendency of London booksellers to form groups or "congers" to share the risk of publication. The volume is open at an engraving showing whale, narwhal and fin-whale fishing.

---

26. *A vindication of the church and kingdom of Scotland from any accession to the murder of King Charles I*, Edinburgh, printed for James Forrest, Bookseller in the Parliament House, 1718.

This 8vo pamphlet reflects the strong emphasis on politico-theological themes in early eighteenth century Scottish publishing. The Parliament House on Edinburgh High Street was a centre of Scottish bookselling for over a hundred years.

---

27. *The works of Virgil. . .translated into English verse by Mr. Dryden*, London, 1721.

This is the three-volume 12mo fifth edition of Dryden's *Virgil*, characterized by Pope as "the most able and spirited translation I know in any language". It was published by Jacob Tonson, Dryden's chief publisher, often called "the Prince of Publishers".

**Ref.** Papali, F.G., *Jacob Tonson, publisher, his life and work*, Auckland, 1968.

---

28. John Dryden, *Fables ancient and modern; translated into verse, from Homer, Ovid, Boccace & Chaucer: with original poems*, London, printed for Jacob Tonson, at Shakespeare's Head, over-against Katherine Street in the Strand, 1721.

An early eighteenth century edition of Dryden's last book, first published in 1700.

---



29. *An act for encouraging the Greenland fishery*. . . , London, printed by John Baskett, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1732.

The printing, in small folio, of the Acts of Parliament was a profitable part of the monopoly of the King's Printer. The family of John Baskett lived off the profits of the printing patents for a substantial part of the century. Charles Eyre acquired Mark Baskett's rights in 1770. Mark was the grandson of John Baskett.

---

30. Thomas Sanderson, *Three odes: The royal hero; The royal nuptials; Religion and liberty triumphant*, Cambridge, printed, and sold by J. Wilford, behind the Chapter House in St. Paul's Churchyard, London, 1733.

This 4to pamphlet was printed by the University printer for Sanderson, a fellow of Emmanuel College. It was the first and only edition. **Ref.** Foxon, D., *English verse*, 1701-.50, Cambridge, 1975, S32.

---

31. *The Harleian miscellany*, London, 1744.

Tom Osborne was the bookseller whom Johnson knocked down with a folio. His success in buying Harley's books in 1742, and in preparing a catalogue of them for which Johnson wrote the *Proposals*, brought him the enmity of the London book-trade who thought he charged too much for Harley's books, when he re-sold them. The volume on display is open at the list of the country booksellers who sold the *Harleian miscellany*.

---

32. Mark Akenside, *The pleasures of imagination: a poem, in three books*, London, printed for R. Dodsley, 1744.

A classic example of Dodsley's support of the popular poets of the time. Dodsley's authors included Akenside, William Whitehead, Christopher Pitt, Joseph Warton, Thomas Percy and William Shenstone. This is one of the three issues of the first edition of *Pleasures of imagination* issued in 1744. (The printer was Samuel Richardson). The title page is enhanced by an attractive drawing in the neoclassical style engraved by Boitard.

**Ref.** Foxon, A139, *Book Collector*, 1956.

---

33. Mark Akenside, *Odes on several subjects*, London, printed for R. Dodsley at Tully's Head in Pall-Mall, and sold by M. Cooper in the Strand, 1745.

**Ref.** Foxon. p. 13, A132.

---

34. Arthur Dobbs, *An account of the countries adjoining to Hudson's Bay, in the northwest part of America*, London, printed for J. Robinson, at the Golden Lion in Ludgate St. , 1744.

This 4to item contains an important piece of Canadiana: "His Majesty's Royal Charter to the Governor and Company of Hudson's Bay" (p.171). Jacob Robinson was at Ludgate St. to 1758. He was succeeded in business by Kearsley.

---

35. Hans Egede, *A description of Greenland*. . . , London, 1745.

This 8vo travel book, translated from the Danish of the Bishop of Greenland was printed for C. Hitch who dealt largely in novels and travel books. He was one of the numerous tribe of bookseller-publishers who had their premises in Paternoster Row, and he was Master of the Stationers' Company in 1758.

36. (John Townley) Samuel Butler, *Hudibras*, London, 1757.

This handsome 8vo translation of *Hudibras*, generally credited to John Townley, was published in London. The plates are after the designs by Hogarth.

37. (James Grieve) *The history of Kamtschatka, and the Kunilski islands, with the countries adjacent* . . . , Gloucester, printed by R. Raikes for T. Jeffreys, Geographer to His Majesty. 1764.

This was the second printer in Gloucester by the name of Robert Raikes. His father, Robert Raikes the elder, founded the *Gloucester Journal* in 1722. Robert Raikes the younger was the philanthropist and founder of Sunday schools.

38. D. Crantz, *The history of Greenland including a description of the country and its inhabitants*. . . , London. printed for the Brethrens' Society for the furtherance of the Gospel among the heathen, 1767. 2 vols. , 8vo.

This missionary work was sold at "all the Brethrens' Chapels"; it was also sold, presumably as an act of Christian charity, by a wide group of prominent London booksellers.

39. (Frances Brooke) *The history of Emily Montague ...by the author of Lady Julia Mandeville*, London, 1769. 4 vols., 12vo.

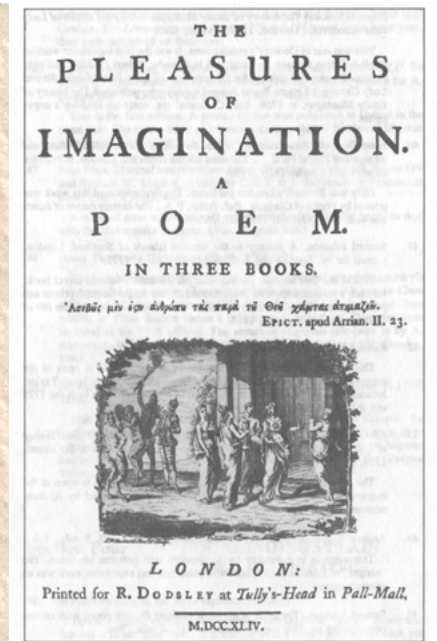
This was one of Dodsley's publications. It was the first significant work of English fiction to have its scene laid in Canada. Robert Dodsley had paid Frances Brooke 100 guineas for the copyright of *Lady Julia Mandeville* and *Lady Catesby's Letters*. It was James Dodsley who published *The history of Emily Montague*, in 1769.

**Ref**, Chalmers' ms. notes on Dodsley's copyrights.

40. James Boswell, *An account of Corsica, the journal of a tour of that island, and memoirs of Pascal Paoli* ...The third edition corrected, London, printed for Edward and Charles Dilly, 1769.

Dilly was Boswell's London publisher. The first edition of this work was printed by Foulis of Glasgow.

**Ref**. Pottle, F.A., *The literary career of James Boswell, Esq.*, Oxford, 1929, no.26.



Item 32. *The Pleasures of the imagination*, 1744.

Item 32.

*The pleasures of imagination*, 1744

41. Samuel Johnson, *A journey to the western islands of Scotland*. London, printed for W. Strahan and T. Cadell in the Strand. 1775.

This is the first edition, second issue, of Johnson's famous travel book. Johnson's relationships with William Strahan, the Anglo-Scottish printer and publisher, are detailed in J .A. Cochrane's *Dr. Johnson's printer, the life of William Strahan*, London, 1964.

---

42. Richard Savage, *The works*, London, 1777, 2 vols., 8vo.

This edition, printed for Thomas Evans in the Strand, is open at the engraved title-page, designed by Gravelot and engraved by Isaac Taylor. Johnson's *Life of Savage*, first published in 1744, appears in both the 1775 and the 1777 editions of *The works*.

---

43. Alexander Pope, *An essay on man. ..with the notes of William, Lord Bishop of Gloucester*, London, printed for W. Strahan and T. Cadell in the Strand, 1777.

This reprint of Warburton's edition of *An essay on man* is open at the engraved frontispiece drawn by Pope himself, and engraved by A. Bannerman.

---

44. Andrew Kippis (ed.) *Biographia Britannica*, London, 1778. 5 vols., folio.

This copy is in a binding by Kalthoeber, and contains his ticket. The "conger" of London booksellers who published this expensive work was an extensive one.

---

45. Samuel Johnson, *The lives of the most eminent English poets; with critical observations on their works*, London, 1781. 4 vols., 8vo.

This is the second edition of Johnson's biographical masterpiece. The 36 firms named in the imprint had got together to produce "an elegant and accurate edition of all the English poets of reputation from Chaucer to the present time" and asked Johnson to supply a concise account of the life of each author. The plan to start with Chaucer was dropped and the series began with Cowley. *The Lives* came out between 1779 and 1781, and in the latter year , they were published on their own.

---

46. Hesler Lynch Piozzi, *Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson, LLD. To which are added some poems never before printed*, London, printed for A. Strahan and T. Cadell in the Strand, 1788. 2 vols., 8vo.

This is the first edition. A pirated edition was published at Dublin in the same year. The next edition of Johnson's *Letters*, that of Birkbeck Hill , was not to appear until 1892.

---

47. John Fenn, *Original letters written during the reigns of Henry VI, Edward IV and Richard III*, London, printed by C.G.J. & J. Robinson, in Paternoster Row, 1787. 2 vols., 4to.

A work of great scholarship. It was one of the first English books to deal with the watermarks in paper. (Vol. II, plate VIII)

---

48. James Thomson, *The seasons*, Perth, 1793, 4to.

Thomson's *Seasons*, first collected in 1730, remained one of the century's most popular long poems. Morison of Perth issued three editions; a 12mo edition in 1790; the 4to edition of 1793 shown here; and a single volume 12mo edition in 1794. Robert Heron's critique and memoir of Thomson were included in the 1793 edition. The attractive engraved title-page is by A. Kirkwood.

**Ref.** Carnie, R.H., *Publishing in Perth before 1807*, Dundee, 1960.

---

49. Stewart & Meikle's edition of *The poems of Allan Ramsay*, Glasgow, 1797. 12mo.

This elegant little volume was printed by R. Chapman at Glasgow for Stewart & Meikle, booksellers in the Trongate. The volume is open at an engraving powerfully depicting Lucky Spence's last advice. Robert Chapman had been an apprentice of Robert Foulis,

**Ref.** Maclehorse, J., *The Glasgow University Press 1638-1931*, Glasgow, 1931.

---

[Library Home Page](#)

[Section Four:](#)

[Bookbindings Plain and](#)

[Decorative](#)

[Special Collections Home Page](#)



# The Eighteenth Century Book Trade In The British Isles

An exhibition of Books, Bindings and Manuscripts

The University of Calgary Library - Special Collections Occasional Paper No.6, 1980

## Section Four- *Bookbindings, Plain and Decorative*

### 50. Scottish binding of the curly eighteenth century.

This is a typical example of a Scottish "herring-bone" design, which also features a large "pear" tool. It is crafted in red turkey gilt, with Dutch gilt endpapers. Such bindings are often found on books which are themselves of considerable artistic merit. This binding covers John Sturt's wholly engraved *Book of Common Prayer*, London, 1717.

**Ref.** Sommerlad, M.J *Scottish "wheel" and "herringbone" bindings in the Bodleian Library*, Oxford, 1967.

### 51. English country-house library binding, eighteenth century

This bright red morocco binding, elegantly gilt, comes from the library at Ragley Hall, and carries a Ragley Hall shelf mark. It covers Bentley's 4to edition of Terence, published by Crownfield at London in 1722. The unidentified binder probably worked in the library at Ragley Hall over an extended period of time.

### 52. Blue paper flimsy covers, eighteenth century.

This book, a 1735 12mo edition of Vanburgh & Cibber's *The provoked husband*, is apparently in the flimsy blue covers used in the eighteenth century to cover unstitched, unbound books temporarily. This volume gives evidence, however, of being "disbound", and the flimsy blue covers are, almost certainly, modern.

### 53. Blue-grey boards, Scottish, eighteenth century.

Unlike the previous example, there is no doubt that this untrimmed volume, sewn, and in blue-grey boards, is exactly as it would appear in an eighteenth century bookseller's shop. A binding of this kind was a useful compromise, albeit temporary, between paper covers and a leather binding.

### 54. Prayer-book binding, English, mid-eighteenth century.

This typical binding, often found on Bibles and prayer books presented to young people, covers an *Oxford Book of Common Prayer* (1768). The black morocco is gilt panelled front and rear, and the spine is decorated. The end-papers are marbled. It was given as a gift to one Penelope Thomas, Dec. 13, 1768.

### 55. Scottish binding, mid-eighteenth century.

This red turkey gild binding is decorated on the spine only, with a single gilt fillet round the edges of the boards. It resembles the kind of work done by Scottish booksellers in their binding shops in smaller towns. One suspects it was done in Aberdeen. The book is a pretty little edition of Allan Ramsay's *The gentle shepherd*, printed in 1769 by David Willison for Alexander Angus, an Aberdeen bookseller.

**56.** Stained calf panel binding, late eighteenth century.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the largest booksellers were carrying more and more of their stock in ready-made leather bindings made both from sheepskin and calfskin, and decorated to some degree. This example, in stained calf, panelled in blind, with cream end-papers, and with a blue, gilt-tooled label on the spine, with the book edges sprinkled in red, is on an edition of Salmon's *A new and geographical and historical grammar*, Edinburgh, 1771. It could have been found anywhere in Scotland.

---

**57.** London morocco binding, c.1776. Probably by Sarah Messing.

This binding, on a copy of Rider's *British Merlin* for 1776, contains the binder's ticket of Sarah Messing, stationer in ordinary to His Majesty, Compton St., Soho. It has coloured end-papers and features a Greek key design executed in red morocco.

**Ref.** Maxted, I. , *The London book trades, 1775-1800*, London, 1977. Maxted lists Messing as a stationer only.

---

**58.** Temporary blue paper covers, eighteenth century.

This copy of Lord Hailes' English translation of Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* (Edinburgh, 1782) is sewn and bound in very temporary paper covers, lined with booksellers' advertisements. The book came from the library of the eighteenth century antiquary, John Loveday.

---

**59.** English almanack binding, after 1787.

This elaborately tooled red morocco binding in "cottage" style is on a copy of Rider's *British Merlin* for 1787. It has coloured end-papers. The binder is unknown.

---

**60.** Scottish binding, early eighteenth century.

This charming binding is on a Scottish 18mo *Bible* of 1729 printed at Edinburgh by Mr. Baskett & Co. It is a relation of Item 50 and has Dutch gilt end-papers. It is slightly atypical and the crowned "angel's head" tool is surely unusual on a Scottish binding of this type.

---

**61.** Irish almanack binding, post-1770.

This is a fine example of the kind of elaborate binding being created in Dublin in the mid-eighteenth century. It covers two almanacks, one Irish, and one English, and may have been made for an Anglo-Irish inhabitant of Dublin.

**Ref.** Carnie, R.H., "[Irish decorative bookbindings at Calgary](#)", *Amphora* 28, 1977.

---

**62.** Booksellers' binding, plain calf.

A calf or sheepskin binding of this kind, usually devoid of tooling, but with a red and gilt label stuck in a compartment of the spine, with plain white end-papers, is the commonest form of eighteenth century booksellers' binding. This one covers an Edinburgh printed book for a London publisher.

---

[Library Home Page](#)

[Special Collections Home Page](#)

[Section Five: Periodical Publishing](#)



# The Eighteenth Century Book Trade In The British Isles

An exhibition of Books, Bindings and Manuscripts

The University of Calgary Library - Special Collections Occasional Paper No.6, 1980

## Section Five - *Periodical Publishing*

63. *The Examiner for the year 1711*. London, printed for John Morphew near Stationers Hall, and A. Dodd at the Peacock without Temple Bar, 1712. 12mo.

This is an early reprint of a highly significant political periodical. Morphew, in the period 1706 to 1720, published many political pamphlets, news-sheets and novels, including Swift's *Conduct of the allies*, 1711.

---

64. *The Scots Magazine*, vol. 34, 1772.

This was the oldest of the Scottish monthly magazines. It began publication in 1739 and continued into the nineteenth century. The volume shown is that for 1772, and is open at the poetry section for September, 1772, which featured Robert Ferguson's *jeu d'esprit*: "On seeing a lady paint herself".

---

65. *The Gentleman's Magazine*. 1754.

Samuel Johnson was a regular contributor to this, the best known of all the London monthly magazines. The volume for 1754 is open at Samuel Johnson's "An account of the life of the late Mr. Edward Cave". pp. 55-58.  
**Ref.** Boswell, i, 256; Lennart, C., *The first magazine; a history of The Gentleman's Magazine*, Providence, 1938.

---

66. *The Idler*, 2 vols., 1761. 12mo.

This is the first collected edition of *The Idler*, the original numbers of which had appeared in *The Universal Chronicle*, 1758-1760. This edition was published in October, 1761, price 5s. sewed, 6s. bound. The third edition appeared in 1767.

---

67. Felix Farley's *Bristol Journal*, vol. 38, 1787.

Farley was an itinerant printer who printed in Bristol, Exeter and Bath. He started his *Bristol Journal* in 1749. When he died in 1753 the *Journal* was carried on by various members of his family. When the Farley printing business was in Bath, the *Journal* was printed by Cocking and Rudhall. From a copy in the Burney Library.

---

68. Henry Mackenzie's [The Mirror](#), 1779-1780.

The Library has a complete run of the first folio edition of this successful late eighteenth century Edinburgh periodical conceived in the style of *The Spectator*. It is an interesting editorial copy from the library of Hugh Rose Young of Kilravock, to whom Mackenzie was related by marriage. The periodical was conducted by William Creech, the most prominent bookseller in Edinburgh in the last quarter of the century. The volume is open at an MS insert in the shape of a set of verses praising Lady Dundas, the wife of Henry Mackenzie's friend and patron, Henry Dundas.

**Ref.** Carrick, J.C., *William Creech*, Dalkeith, 1903.

---

**69.** *The Monthly Review*, London, 1786.

Ralph Griffiths' *Monthly Review*, founded in 1749, was the best of the London critical journals, although Griffiths has unfortunately become famous as the persecutor of Oliver Goldsmith, who lived in Griffiths' house and wrote contributions for the *Monthly* on starvation wages. The 1786 volume is open at the number for December, 1786, carrying the earliest English review of Burns' Kilmarnock volume. Griffiths died in 1803.

**Ref.** Timperley, C.H., *A dictionary of printers and printing*, London, 1842.

---

**70.** *The New Annual Register for the year 1781*, London, 1793.

This is a reprint - "third-edition corrected" by Robinson of his *New Annual Register*. George Robinson was a very successful business man who had, in 1780, the largest wholesale business in the London book-trade. He acquired by purchase many of the copyrights of the old-established firms. Unlike Griffiths, he paid his authors well. He owned the *Monthly's* chief rival, *The Critical Review*. The volume is open at extracts from Johnson's [Lives of the Poets](#) (Item 45)

---

**71.** *The Edinburgh Magazine; or, Literary Miscellany*, n.s., Edinburgh, 1793.

This was the most successful of the rivals to the *Scots Magazine*. Founded by James Sibbald in 1785, it was sold to Laurie and Symington in 1793, who began a new series. It was highly praised for the quality of its articles and the excellence of its illustrations. The volume is open at the March, 1793, number showing the account of Lord Hailes, the friend of Johnson and Boswell. Hailes was a regular contributor to the *Edinburgh Magazine*.

---

**72.** *The Anti-Jacobin; or, Weekly Examiner*, London, 1797-1798.

This arch-conservative political weekly was opposed to "other papers devoted to the cause of Sedition and Irreligion". It was published by John Wright, bookseller, no.169 Piccadilly, who was literary agent for William Cobbett. *The Anti-Jacobin* was edited by William Gifford.

**Ref.** Maxted. pp. 354-355.

---

[Library Home Page](#)

[Special Collections Home Page](#)

[Section Six: The Retail Book-Trade](#)





# The Eighteenth Century Book Trade In The British Isles

An exhibition of Books, Bindings and Manuscripts  
The University of Calgary Library - Special Collections Occasional Paper No.6, 1980

## Section Six - *The Retail Book Trade*

73. (H. Pemberton) *A review of Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy*, London, 1728. 4to.

This is an early example of the many books sold in this century by subscription. The subscribers to this volume were a particularly academic group. The volume is open at a page which shows the names of Thomas Phillips, Alexander Pope, John Pine, the engraver, and other luminaries.

---

74. *A catalogue of books printed and sold by George Faulkner in Parliament St.* 2 pp.

This catalogue of books sold by Faulkner is inserted in the back of a 1759 edition of Swift's *A tale of a tub*. George Faulkner, who flourished 1724 to 1775, published *The Dublin Journal*, and was Swift's printer .

---

75. Trade card of James Brindley, bookbinder and bookseller in London, 1726- 1758.

As well as being a successful bookseller, Brindley was a talented bookbinder.

**Refs.** Smith & Benger, *The oldest London bookshop*, London, 1928; and, Nixon, H.M., *Book Collector* 11, 1967.

---

76. Bookbinding and bookselling account: Alexander Miller, Glasgow to Glasgow College, 1741.

Alexander Miller was Robert Foulis's predecessor as University bookseller and bookbinder. Photocopy of an original in the National Library of Scotland

---

77. Seal of Cause, 23 January, 1771, incorporating the Edinburgh Society of Running Stationers.

The running, or flying, stationers, who delivered newspapers and messages in Edinburgh had been in existence since the seventeenth century. They incorporated in 1771 to protect their monopoly, and to allow them to own property as a group. Photocopy of an original in the Edinburgh City Archives.

---

78. Advertisement leaf of books and pamphlets printed and sold by James Watson of Edinburgh, 1712.

Photocopy from the final leaf of his proposals for publishing *A treatise on the art of lying*, from the original in the John Johnson Collection, Oxford.

---

- 79.** *Proposals for publishing by subscription, William Shaw's A dictionary of the Galic and English, and English and Galic Languages.*

These proposals were published by Peter Elmsly, bookseller in the Strand, and were carried by scholarly booksellers in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paris, Dublin and Belfast. Elmsly flourished from 1776 to 1802. Photocopy of an original at Oxford.

---

- 80.** *The Edinburgh Evening Courant, April 15, 1767.*

This original number of Fleming's newspaper shows characteristic booksellers' advertisements of the period.

---

- 81.** *The Edinburgh Evening Courant, December 6, 1783.*

This number shows stationery and book auction advertisements.

---

[Library Home Page](#)

[Special Collections Home Page](#)