



The Book

Newsletter of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture
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The First Seminar . . . And the Second

Let it be said, first of all, that there were some light moments during AAS's first Seminar in the History of the Book in American Culture, which convened for nine days at the beginning of this past summer. For example, wine accompanied lunch at the Harvard Faculty Club when the twenty seminarists journeyed to Houghton Library for a special presentation of seventeenth-century English bibles and assorted other treasures, with Roger Stoddard as impresario-in-chief. One fine morning, in the Goddard-Daniels House, a spectacular banquet of a breakfast was produced for all. And there was Saturday afternoon at Old Sturbridge Village, under the auspices of Jack Larkin, where a couple of volunteers from the group went through some rather awkward motions operating the local printing press.

On the other hand, there was also a fairly intensive schedule of hard, serious work. The general topic of the seminar was the "expansion of culture based on printing, 1759-1850." (The significance of that curious first date remains a secret among the seminarists.) This was enough to keep everyone busy night and day, and Sunday too, as Antiquarian Hall opened its doors for business at previously unheard-of hours. One evening John Hench and Joyce Tracy organized a kind of coffeehouse browsing session by covering the tables of the reading room with issues of various late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century newspapers. Other times, with discreet assistance from Keith Arbour et al., people navigated pretty much on their own, digging up information for the individual "book biographies" that occupied a marathon day of oral reports near the end of the seminar proceedings.

Most of these reports, along with many sessions of the seminar, focused on the 1790s—more particularly, on that decade in the career of Isaiah Thomas, who not only founded AAS but left it with a rich collection of his correspondence and publications. Marcus McCorison displayed and discussed the latter one evening in Antiquarian Hall, and Barbara Trippel Simmons arranged easy access to the former by photocopying some eight boxes of material from the manuscript room. By examining Thomas's business as a "case study," it was hoped that the seminar would deal with documented instances where an innovative entrepreneur was able to stimulate new demand for printed matter—or to recognize and exploit demand that had long been "pent-up," for lack of aggressive entrepreneurial initiatives.



Stephen Botein

This interpretive strategy turned out to be mistaken, at least with regard to Thomas. The more that was learned of him, the clearer it became that he was essentially an eighteenth-century craftsman whose business methods were quite traditional. Elizabeth Eisenstein (Univ. of Michigan), the first of the seminar's "visiting faculty," demonstrated how deeply Thomas was conscious of and associated himself with the European image of the "learned printer." (Note, in this respect, the lengthy section on early English and continental practitioners in the original [1810] edition of his *History of Printing in America*.) By retiring early to devote himself to genteel literary projects and philanthropy, he followed the mid-eighteenth-century pattern exemplified by Franklin, whose network of business partnerships may be thought of as the model for Thomas's. Like Franklin, too, Thomas was at his most resourceful not in perceiving or creating demand but in obtaining supplies, such as type and paper. His most profitable titles were bibles and schoolbooks, which is to say he made a specialty of what David Hall (Boston University)—the second guest speaker at the seminar—characterized as the typically "intensive" reading matter of most New Englanders for the preceding century and a half. It was striking to come across a far more "modern" approach to marketing in the letters of an author like Jedidiah Morse, the clergyman-turned-geographer, than in those of his major publisher in the region.

There appeared to be grounds, then, for doubting that the decade of the 1790s was indeed a period of crucial

change in American culture based on printing. From the work of Richard D. Brown (University of Connecticut), yet another guest speaker, the seminarists were primed to appreciate the culturally transforming impact of the American Revolution, but prior to 1800 the results were perhaps more rhetorical than anything else. This is not to say that republican rhetoric stressing "diffusion" of knowledge among the citizenry, by means of printing, should be considered inconsequential. After a crash afternoon course in recent literary criticism, presided over by Jonathan Arac (University of Illinois, Chicago), awareness grew that such language might actually have defined a more significant reality than the mere statistics of the publishing business in early national America.

Yet, at the small public colloquium that brought the seminar to a close, there was a nagging sense that somehow something worth knowing about lay just over the horizon. What about the "extensive" *novel*, for instance? Surely by 1830 evidence of a different sensibility would figure almost everywhere in the American bibliographical record, not just in the inventories of a relatively few libraries assembled by cosmopolites. By way of answering questions that went largely unasked the first time around, the second Seminar in the History of the Book in American Culture, scheduled in the summer of 1986, will aim to extend the range of its inquiry further into the nineteenth century. In order to direct attention toward a somewhat later period, two new faces will join the Seminar's "visiting faculty"—Mary Kelley (Dartmouth College) and Jonathan Prude (Emory University). Once again, the syllabus will be arduous. But there will be a few more of those light moments as well.

Stephen Botein

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The Editors welcome all news relevant to the interests of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture.

AAS Announces 1986 Seminar Details

The second annual seminar in the History of the Book in American Culture will take place June 14-24, 1986, at the Society. The theme for the 1986 seminar will be "The American Common Reader: Printing, Entrepreneurship, and Cultural Change, 1759-1840."

Stephen Botein will again serve as seminar leader. Botein is professor of history at Michigan State University and this year is visiting editor of publications at the Institute for Early American History and Culture in Williamsburg. Assisting Botein in the seminar will be faculty members from various disciplines. They include Jonathan Arac, University of Illinois, Chicago; David D. Hall, Boston University and the chairman of the Society's Program; Mary Kelley, Dartmouth College; Jonathan D. Prude, Emory University; and Keith Arbour, Georgia B. Bumgardner, John B. Hench, Marcus A. McCorison, and other members of the staff of the Society.

Participants in the seminar will make extensive use of the collections of AAS. Field trips to the Houghton Library and Old Sturbridge Village are also planned.

Through the application of the case study method, the seminar will focus on the activities in the book trade of Isaiah Thomas, the leading printer, publisher, and bookseller of the post-Revolutionary generation, and of Mathew Carey, who built a large printing and publishing empire in Philadelphia early in the nineteenth century. The lives and careers of both men are exceptionally well documented in the collections of AAS.

The deadline for applications is March 21, 1986. For details, including information on fees and housing, and for application forms, applicants should contact John B. Hench at the Society.

Mathew Carey Studies

Mathew Carey's star is in the ascendancy. Carey's importance in the rise of modern American book publishing was underscored in two papers (by Michael Winship and James Green) delivered at the recent Chicago conference in the history of the book in nineteenth-century America. The AAS summer seminar, described above, plans to focus in part on the career of Carey. Meanwhile, the Library Company of Philadelphia is mounting an exhibition entitled "Mathew Carey: Publisher and Patriot," which will be on view at 1314 Locust Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19107 from November 15, 1985 to January 31, 1986. A catalogue essay is available. Finally, Garland Publishing Company within the last year or so has issued William Clarkin's *Mathew Carey: A Bibliography of His Publications, 1785-1824*, but, judging from early notices of the latter, this distinguished Philadelphia publisher still awaits a proper bibliography.

J.B.H.

Notes on Research Collections

HARPER ARCHIVES

The Harper & Row firm was founded in 1817, the year that J. & J. Harper printed Seneca's *Morals* for the bookseller Evert Duyckinck. Their imprint—changed from the original J. & J. Harper in October 1833 to Harper & Brothers and again in April 1962 to Harper & Row—is found on many thousands of American books. Included in the list are such monuments of American literature as Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851), Henry James's *Daisy Miller* (1879) and *Washington Square* (1881), Gen. Lew. Wallace's *Ben Hur* (1880), and the later writings of Samuel L. Clemens and William Dean Howells. These highlights mask, however, a business based solidly on reprints of English books, supplying an expanding educational market with readers and textbooks, and several very successful periodicals illustrated by such artists as Winslow Homer, Thomas Nast, Frederic Remington, and Howard Pyle.

A collection of early records of the Harper firm was uncovered in 1963 and served as the basis for two studies by Eugene Exman—*The Brothers Harper* (1965) and the anniversary volume *The House of Harper* (1967)—and an article by Edwin and Virginia Price Barber (“A Description of Old Harper and Brothers Publishing Records Recently Come to Light,” *Bulletin of Bibliography* 25[1967]:1-6, 29-34, 39-40) which gives, in addition to a useful description of the archives, a brief list of interesting information culled from the records. This collection, together with other Harper material, is now housed in Columbia University's Butler Library.

It is important to remember that these records are incomplete. The disastrous fire at the Harper establishment in 1853 destroyed most of the early records, although fortunately some correspondence and early contract books do survive. Later records are also fragmentary, a fact that reflects the typical attitude of indifference and carelessness that American firms had towards their own heritage and history. But considering the importance of the Harper firm, even a fragment of its archives is an important resource for scholars.

The most remarkable and useful record in the archives is a single leather-bound volume prepared by William H. Demarest that provides a catalog of all Harper publications from 1817 to 1878. Arranged alphabetically by author, each entry gives the date of publication. Three chronological indexes provide access to the list: 1) by date; 2) by author, editor, illustrator, and annotator; and 3) finally by subject or genre. Two typewritten lists extend the coverage of Harper publications through September 1908, although these give much less information and are not indexed.

Two files of unbound material document the firm's relationships with its authors, editors, and illustrators, and include correspondence and documents relating to contracts covering roughly the years from 1835 to 1915.

These files contain many original contracts but are usefully supplemented by a set of ten bound volumes (with a separate index) which contain copies of contracts and other memoranda relating to contract negotiations and agreements from 1832 to 1900. Another bound volume contains hand-written copies of correspondence regarding contracts for the years 1899 to 1916.

Evidence of authors' actual earnings from their Harper publications is contained in a number of bound volumes relating to royalties; unfortunately, this information is limited to the years from 1881 to 1926. A set of four volumes, covering from 1881 to 1897, gives for each book by an author a regular chronological record of the number of copies on hand, printed, and sold, thus documenting the basis for royalty payments. A single volume for the years 1897 to 1900 is an author's account book, recording the firm's financial transactions with each author, including royalty payments as well as charges for books and other merchandise delivered to the author. Ten volumes, covering the years from 1900 to 1915, are arranged by author; for each book listed, there is a regular chronological record of royalties earned from American sales and of royalty payments made. This series is supplemented by a single volume, covering only the period between 1900 and 1912, which compiles a chronological record of all Harper royalty payments. Three volumes, covering from 1901 to 1926, give royalty earnings for British sales. In these volumes, the chronological compilation of Harper's royalty payments is included at the end of each volume. Finally, a related volume, called the priority list, provides a record of Harper's payments to foreign authors, often voluntary before the first American international copyright legislation of 1891. This volume appears to have been first compiled in 1876, but it records payments from as early as 1846 and continues to 1898.

Financial misfortunes overtook the Harper firm in the 1890s, and in an agreement of October 11, 1906, the firm was forced to reorganize itself into a corporation issuing stock. This change called for a new financial accounting system, one that is reflected in a full run of general journals (1896-1914) and general ledgers (1896-1919), but missing several index volumes), and a partial run of general cashbooks (1899, 1907-14) and of ledgers and a cashbook for the London office (1899-1900). The data contained in these financial records will provide an interesting insight into the financial workings of a major publishing house at the turn of the century, once scholars begin to interpret and analyze them. Of particular interest is a detailed list in the first general journal that provides a full record of the firm's assets, accounts payable, and accounts receivable at the beginning of November 1896.

Financial records for the earlier period of the firm's activities are unfortunately much less fully represented. In addition to the priority list and three of the royalty volumes already described, only two further volumes contain information concerning the firm's financial dealings.

The first volume records costs and profits of each issue of the numerous periodicals published by the firm for the short period from June 1888 to December 1889. The second volume is a salary ledger for the years 1883 to 1889. This volume not only gives information on the names and wages of the firm's employees but also documents the administrative structure of the firm's different departments, reflecting its variety of manufacturing and publishing activities.

The most fascinating part of the archives, providing insight into many different aspects of the firm, is a set of eight memorandum books covering the years from 1856 to 1898. These appear to be working notes kept at hand in the department that directed the firm's editorial and publishing decisions. The content varies from volume to volume, but each typically includes a collection of clippings of announcements for forthcoming publications, a record of the production details for each book published, a record of copyright details, an accounting of the firm's advertising, a record of manuscripts and books under consideration, a list of serial publications, memoranda of financial dealings with other (especially British) book trade firms, and a collection of addresses and business and advertising cards. The miscellaneous information in these volumes is wonderful: extracts copied from letters from authors, publishers, and book manufacturers, records of conversations and agreements, estimates of production and royalty costs, and simple reminders to attend to any number of minor matters. These volumes provide an unusual glimpse into the day-to-day activities of the firm.

The early Harper records at Columbia University's library are available on microfilm published by Chadwyck-Healey of Cambridge, England, and Teaneck, N.J. The microfilm is provided with an index compiled by Christopher Feeney. The above description is based on a review of the microfilm edition which will appear in a forthcoming issue of the *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*.

Columbia also possesses Harper material not reproduced on microfilm, as do several other repositories. Columbia also contains the trade department files of the firm for the period from 1935 to 1965. The Pierpont Morgan Library possesses about 1,250 letters to the firm covering the years from 1845 to 1895. A description of these holdings will be found in the *Ninth Report to the Fellows . . . 1958 & 1959*, pp. 73-77. Papers relating to James Harper's term as reform mayor of New York City in 1844-45 are at the New-York Historical Society. The editorial files of *Harper's Magazine*, containing both correspondence and literary manuscripts for the years from 1869 to 1965, are located at the Library of Congress; all but five of the 400 containers in this collection cover the years 1942 to 1965. The Princeton University Library has thirty-four boxes of Harper material, consisting primarily of the editorial and business correspondence of selected

authors for the years between 1909 and 1960. The Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin has 144 boxes of Harper material, covering every aspect of the firm from 1924 to 1962. Four memorandum books, covering the years from 1900 to 1939, which are described by the Barbers in their article, are probably still in the possession of Harper & Row of New York City.

Michael Winship, Bibliography of
American Literature

Research Notes

BOOK CATALOGS IN 18th-CENTURY AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS
In the past, the study of the availability and distribution of books in eighteenth-century America, and the implications about reading tastes drawn from such study, has been skewed by a concentration on books printed in America. As important and interesting as these books are, the fact is that through the end of the century the majority of books bought and read in this country were imported. The best sources for studying this aspect of the book market are the catalogues of books produced by booksellers, auctioneers, social libraries, circulating libraries, college libraries, and the owners of private book collections, large and small.

I am in the middle of a long-term project to locate, list, and describe these catalogues, so that scholars may study their contents. The project has three stages, describing 1) separately printed catalogues, 2) catalogues, usually in the form of advertisements, printed as a section of a book, newspaper, or magazine, and 3) manuscript catalogues. The first stage has already been published by AAS (*A Descriptive Checklist of Book Catalogues Separately Printed in America 1693-1820*, available from the University Press of Virginia, \$35.00). My current task, very nearly completed, is to locate and describe catalogues or booklists that appeared as advertisements in eighteenth-century American newspapers. This newspaper research has been supported by a National Endowment for the Humanities Research Resources Program grant and fellowships from AAS (Albert Boni Fellowship) and the Bibliographical Society of America.

For the purposes of this project, I define a "catalogue" as any list containing five or more book titles. I have established this numerical criterion because I have found that lists with fewer than five titles are almost always publishers' lists, which include only a few of their own publications, rather than a selection from a bookseller's general stock (which would also list both imported and domestic books). The vast majority of the catalogues in newspapers derived from booksellers, and many of these specifically list the bookseller's latest importation or a selection thereof.

I have searched through over 300 English-language newspapers, most of them weekly publications, and, in the process of studying more than 150,000 issues, I have

located about 6,000 catalogues. I have entered descriptions of these catalogues into a database on my portable Osborne computer (using dBase II software), which I have been able to take into some of the libraries (including AAS) where I have worked. The descriptions include the bookseller's name and location, the number of books listed, the newspaper citation for each catalogue, and a brief notation on the nature of its contents (such as whether it is a general list or limited to specific categories of books).

In addition to catalogues of books, I have used the newspapers to collect other material relevant to the history of the book in America. I have gathered data on circulating libraries and social libraries, since we still have very incomplete information on these institutions. And in order to find out what stories were circulating about the authors whose books appear in the catalogues, I have been collecting anecdotes about those authors which were regularly reprinted in the newspapers.

The newspaper book ads come close to representing popular reading tastes because they present a selection of titles, imported as well as domestic, which the bookseller felt would most motivate the reading public to buy books in his shop. The descriptive checklist that will result from this research will be an important tool for studying the world of books in eighteenth-century America, for it will provide the means for detailed studies of the distribution of books and other aspects of the book trade.

Robert B. Winans, Wayne State University

CHILDREN'S BOOKS CATALOGUING PROJECT BEGUN AT AAS

In May 1985 the American Antiquarian Society began work on a new project, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, to catalogue its preeminent collection of American books for children published between 1820 and 1860. The project represents the Society's first attempt to extend imprints-level cataloguing to books published after 1830 (the period dominated by hand-press technology) into the modern period of machine-press printing.

"Imprints cataloguing," discussed in the last issue of this newsletter, refers to a cataloguing practice in which books are analyzed as publishing artifacts and not simply as disembodied texts. Through descriptive notes and systematic indexing, the machine-readable cataloguing records provide access to the traditional components of the imprint: place of publication, publisher, and date of publication. These records also include copyright information, names and addresses of printers, stereotypers, binders, prices, binding information, details about graphic processes, owners' names and inscriptions, and other aspects of the physical book.

The children's books are an appropriate collection with which to begin the extension of imprints cataloguing into the middle of the nineteenth-century. They are a rich source of information for many of the studies already

underway in the history of the book—on technological change, on literacy and reading styles, on book ownership and social class, and on the market for "steady-sellers" as opposed to new texts. Moreover, during the 1820s the content of children's books became a social and political issue in America to an unprecedented degree, as educators and reformers placed a new emphasis on the importance of children's literature in the education of young citizens. This change in the social significance of texts was concurrent with a broad revolution in the publishing world, a technological revolution that introduced lower prices, more extensive distribution networks through improved transportation, and greater diversity in manufacturing processes (e.g., color printing, decorated cloth bindings, and lithography). There was also a revolution in the economic organization of publishing; one of the changes in this area was the emergence of the professional author—and the professional female author—in America. The cataloguing of this collection provides a unique opportunity for historians of the book to examine the manifold effects of these developments on the cultural life of the nation.

Richard Fyffe, American Antiquarian Society

AAS Publishes Three Titles Relating to Book History

Among the three books that the American Antiquarian Society will publish this fall are two invaluable guides to research in the field of American bookbinding history, *Early American Bookbindings from the Collection of Michael Papantonio* (2d ed.) and *Bookbinding in Early America: Seven Essays on Masters and Methods*, by Hannah D. French. The Papantonio Collection, containing nearly 700 examples of early American bindings, forms one important basis of the Society's collection of American bookbindings. This second edition of the well-known exhibition catalogue (originally published in 1972) includes not only the full text and illustrations contained in the first edition but also provides a complete listing of the bindings that the late Mr. Papantonio gave or bequeathed to the Society.

Bookbinding in Early America brings together seven essays, two of which have not been previously published, by Hannah Dustin French, a pioneer in the field of American bookbinding history. This book considers the work of early Scottish-American binders, and the individual binders Andrew Barclay, Caleb Buglass, Henry Bilson Legge, John Roulstone, and Frederick A. Mayo. In addition to illustrations of approximately ninety bindings, illustrated and systematic catalogues of the tools used by four of these binders have been prepared by Willman Spawn, another prominent bookbinding historian.

Both books are being printed by Meriden-Stinehour, Inc., and will be available for purchase from the Society's distributor, the University Press of Virginia. List price of

the French volume is \$49.95; that of the Papantonio is \$22.50.

To mark the 250th anniversary of the seditious libel trial of the New York printer John Peter Zenger, the Society has published the book *'Mr. Zenger's Malice and Falshood': Six Issues of the New York Weekly Journal, 1733-34*. Edited with an introduction by Stephen Botein, this work also contains excerpts from the *New-York Gazette*, a rival paper. The list price of the Zenger book is \$8.95, which can also be had from the University Press of Virginia, Box 3608, Charlottesville, Va. 22903.

Fellowship Opportunities

The American Antiquarian Society will again offer several fellowship programs for 1986-87 that will be of interest to scholars and doctoral candidates working in the history of the book in American culture. Fellowships are for resident research in all fields of American history and culture through 1876. These awards are available in five categories, with tenures from one to twelve months; stipends are from \$600 monthly to \$25,000 annually (for awards funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities).

The Society's Albert Boni Fellowship is specifically

connected with the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture. Work in American book history may also be supported by any of the other AAS fellowships. In addition, AAS and the Newberry Library in Chicago accept joint short-term fellowship applications for scholars who need to use both libraries for research.

The Society's deadline for receipt of completed applications and three letters of reference is January 31, 1986. Persons interested should request materials from John B. Hench, Associate Director for Research and Publication, American Antiquarian Society, 185 Salisbury St., Worcester, Mass. 01609. Those wishing further details about the joint AAS-Newberry Library fellowship plan should contact either Hench or the Committee on Awards, Newberry Library, 60 West Walton St., Chicago, Ill. 60610.

The Bibliographical Society of America again invites applications for its annual short-term fellowship program, which supports bibliographical inquiry and research in the history of the book trades and in publishing history. BSA fellowships may be held for one or two months, with a stipend of up to \$700 per month. Applications, including three letters of reference, will be due on January 31, 1986. Prospective applicants should contact the BSA Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 397, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10163.

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