

Dear Reader,

On August 23 1966 d'Alté Welch wrote to the British Museum. "I am intending to write a bibliography of English children's books printed in England prior to 1821." He had begun assembling information, much of which is still available in the Rare Book Collection of the University of California at UCLA. His life was tragically cut short when he was attacked and killed by an armed robber a few years later.

The provisional bibliography of early British books for children and adolescents provided here is the result of many years of collecting. The information that seemed relevant when I began was limited. The simple act of looking at hundreds of books resulted in a recognition that certain kinds of information, such as printers' and publishers' addresses were significant, and so I began to include them. The electronic retrieval of book information and the electronic availability of library catalogs has opened a vast perspective to readers and scholars, augmenting their access to historical publications. Digital reproduction is capable of bringing individual books before everyone's eyes. Despite these dramatic advances in obtaining data about books, a bibliography remains a fundamental tool for scholars of early books for children and adolescents, because it gathers information that lies widely scattered into one place.¹

Types of material in the bibliography comprise instructional, morally improving, religiously devotional, and entertaining books that were addressed to children; books that we may safely assume were read to family gatherings that included children; ballads that children and adolescents can be assumed to have heard or to have bought. Hence the listings include familiar publications such as John Newbery's children's books as well as Cardinal Wolsey's curriculum for the Ipswich grammar school (1528), Francis Clement's *Petie Schole* (1578), William Kempe's *Education of Children in Learning* (1588), Roger Ascham's *Scholemaster*, Thomas Elyot's *Book Named The Governor* (1531), *The Education or Bringing up of Children* (1533), and Colet's 1527 *Aeditio*, as well as arithmetic and penmanship textbooks.

This bibliography, which began as a working tool for my own work with pre-1770 children's books, retains here and there personal comments and queries. I've left them in, because of my sense that the comments might save others some effort in their own work and that the queries are ones that other researchers might eventually have.

"Children" and "adolescents" includes readers from families in the growing merchant and urban classes. It also includes the young of the governing and laboring populations on either side of that group. Wealthy and powerful families might produce a one-off (such as James I's 1603 *Basilikon* for his son) or books of manners for young courtiers. For servants and apprentices there were, on the other hand, sober instructions for their daily behavior along with bawdy ballads for leisure merriment. Title and textual words identify these many readerships: "little masters," "little misses," "youth," "youth of both sexes," "the young of both sexes," "young ladies," "young gentlemen," "servants" (in those cases where the context makes a young age clear) and "apprentices" (but not older readers, such as the "gentlemen" in Henry Peacham's 1661 *The compleat gentleman* or the "ladies" in Mme d'Aulnoy's *Ladies' Travels to Spain*. This expansion of the the bibliography to include a broader range of

¹ I've written at greater length in "The Book on the Bookseller's Shelf and the Book in the English Child's Hand," in *Culturing the Child 1690-1914: Essays in Memory of Mitzi Myers*, ed. Donelle Ruwe (Lanham MD/Toronto/Oxford: Children's Literature Association and Scarecrow Press, 2005) 3-28.

printed material answers concerns of contemporary historians of childhood and childhood reading who are interested in a wide range of young readers (and listeners).

Succeeding editions of the same titles Patterns of continuity and change are themselves worthy of study, and this bibliography aims at providing a measure for the commercial demand for individual books. *Pilgrim's Progress* and Watts' *Hymns* are well known long-sellers. But adding Fenelon's *Telemachus* as the most frequently published (and read) school fiction for boys alters the outlines of eighteenth-century readings of middle-class British boys.

"Succeeding editions" is a problematic category, however. It is well-known that many "third editions" in fact mark the first published appearance of a book. Less well-known is the fact that when a printing didn't sell, the owner of the printed sheets often sold them to another publisher who pasted on a new title page with altered dating and who then tried to sell it as a new product. This is where a book's "fingerprint" comes into play.

Fingerprint Early printed books had markings designed to help apprentices fold printed sheets in the right order, and the positioning of these markings are unique to each printrun. It is therefore possible to know with certainty when a book was newly typeset for a new printrun, which is itself solid evidence for successful sales, that is, meeting market demand. A book's fingerprint also reveals when a book did not sell, but gave the appearance of selling, because of a new title page that falsely asserted it to be a "new" edition. (See 1764 *Histories*, 1746 and 1765 *Lilliputian Library*).

A fingerprint consists of the letters on the line directly above a particular signature. A2, sometimes Aij or Aii, is the standard fingerprint signature. Since children's books frequently lack their opening pages, I use both A2 and A3. "Directly above" means drawing an imaginary vertical line touching the near left side of the "A" and touching the far right side of the "2" (or "ij" or "ii") and noting the letters, spaces, and punctuation and parts of letters, spaces, and punctuation that fall within that space.

A typical fingerprint (here for a 1743 *Hymns*) follows. A2=*gre(a)* A3=(e)gul(a). If the line directly above the A2 signature marking had been in italics, the fingerprint would be given as A2=*gre(a)* A3=(e)gul(a).

A2= identifies the signature and the fingerprint to follow.

_ indicates a space.

() around a letter, space, or punctuation indicates that only part of the letter, space, or punctuation falls within the fingerprint range

<s> indicates an 18th-century "s," which resembles an "f" without a central horizontal

Edition number This information is given as a superscript preceding the title, i.e. ³*Verbum sempiternum*. Superscript imprint information appears as it is given on each book's own title page. It may not be the actual imprint in cases where the title page claims that the book in question is a second or third edition, but is in fact a first impression.

Printrun is a less problematic concept. Printruns could vary greatly in size, with an edition of only twenty or twenty-five for a privately published book for non-commercial distribution, or a printrun of thousands for occasional Bible editions. However, a standard printrun was about 1,000, and that has become a fairly standard assumption for this early period.

Dating Dates can be straightforward, given on the titlepage or within a colophon, and they are listed similarly straightforwardly, i.e. 1700. In some cases, a date has been inferred from circumstantial information, and is given as [1700]. If dating is not given and cannot be directly inferred, but results from general information it is given as c1700. If, for example, the dates of a printer's or publisher's professional activity are known, but the date of the book in question cannot be inferred any more closely than having taken place during the printer or publisher's active lifetime, then it is given, for example, as [1700-1725].

Title Titles are given in as full a manner as possible. Spelling reflects the title-page original, and that is generally evident from an unfamiliar use of capitals and punctuation. Where the title source is a library catalogue, the title, whether brief or extended, often is given in lower case.

Author Author information is taken from title page information and is presented straightforwardly. Some textbook publishers claimed authorship by a known author, when in fact the textbook had been edited so much that it no longer resembled the original. In such cases, additional author and editor information is given, whenever it is available..

Printer Printers' names always appeared on title pages in the early years of print. Over succeeding centuries, their names were reduced to initials and then disappeared altogether. Printing information is underlined in the bibliography.

Publishers Sometimes printers sold the books they published, but the two functions—printing and publishing--separated very early, and thereafter “publishers” were those who sold the books that printers produced for them. In this early period, “publishers” and “booksellers” performed the same function, that is, bringing books to the public (hence “publishing” them). Publishing information is underlined in the bibliography.

Place of publication For English children's books, London is by far the most frequent place of publication, and it is therefore self-understood. However, as this bibliography amply displays, significant numbers of books for children were pirated and published outside of London in the eighteenth century, in large print centers, such as Belfast, Dublin, Edinburgh, and York, as well as in small local print centers. Whenever the title page records a place of publication different from London, the town or city is clearly specified.

As you use this bibliography, you may be able to add to it, and I most heartily invite you to do so. It is cumbersome to gather book-specific information, and policies that limit access (as for instance, ten books per day in some institutions) make it more so.

Genre Despite the presence of notations such as “fable” or “instructions for apprentices,” this category is largely undone.

Illustrations Illustration information is varied. Some illustrations were printed on text-bearing pages, and hence were integral to the print run. Others could be purchased separately and were tipped in when sheets were bound, cut, and (sometimes) gilt.

Measurements I apologize for disparities. I measured some books in inches (when there was no cm ruler to hand); I measured the majority in cm, and all library-based information is also in cm.

Library book information sometimes uses, or has used, book folding notations (12°, 16°, 32°) to indicate book size. Technically, “32°” means that a sheet has been folded four times, so that, when trimmed, each signature has 32 pages (and is a very small book). Sometimes, a book described as “32°” does not consist of one or signatures of 32 pages each. The notations given here are sometimes mine, sometimes those assigned by a library, and at this point it is impossible to say which is which. Before using this information for anything but approximate size, therefore, researchers should check this information for themselves.

Readership The readership for whom a book was intended often appears on a book’s title page, sometimes in the author or publisher’s address to the reader or purchaser. These are noted in quotation marks (e.g. “the youth of our nation,” “good boys and girls”).

Format The number of times and the way a sheet is folded differs. However, in a kind of shortcut librarians have sometimes identified a book as a 4°/quarto, 8°/octavo, 12°/duodecimo, a 24mo or 32mo (or even 64mo) by its size rather than by the way the sheets have been folded. Therefore, if I haven’t myself examined a book’s format, I’ve simply used the available library information. It sometimes happens, that different libraries identify a book differently. I’ve included these differences along with library locations.

Source of information The most frequent library listings are abbreviated and given in square brackets: BL (British Library), NAL (National Arts Library in the Victoria and Albert Museum), Cotsen (at Princeton University), Pollard Collection (at Trinity College Dublin), or NYP (New York Public Library). If a listing was taken from a published bibliography, the source is given in square brackets.

Remarks Some remarks apply to the printrun as a whole, and these follow book information. Other remarks are specific to a particular book, such as its ownership or its measurements (because in this period buyers routinely had the sheets bound, and binders might cut sheets to a size specified by the customer). The number of pages properly belongs with book information. However, children’s books in particular are subject to heavy wear and frequently end up with different amounts of surviving text. Therefore I routinely tied page information to particular books or library listings.

This document is not complete nor is it perfect. There are technical errors, which bibliographers will be quick to recognize. The bibliography is, and was meant to be, a starting point for a large number of possible research efforts in the area of early books for children and adolescents: genre, style, and content; publishing and marketing history; the overall reading public; patterns of children’s book acquisition as revealed in marginalia and ownership notations.; and a host of yet-to-be-attempted avenues of inquiry. I offer this bibliography to present and future colleagues as a gift from the heart.

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