

**Women Booksellers in Eighteenth-Century London and Religious Dissent:
Faith, Community and Trade**

by

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Women Booksellers in Eighteenth-Century London and Religious Dissent: Faith, Community and Trade

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to establish the extent of the influence of Protestant dissent on the careers of women booksellers in eighteenth-century London. It offers case studies that reconstruct the lives and careers of five women booksellers at work in the London book trades from 1691 until 1813. This thesis establishes that these women were amongst the most prolific publishers of nonconformist, evangelical and abolitionist texts during the period. They were not merely caretaker widows operating businesses until their sons were old enough to take over. On the contrary, these women demonstrate agency, autonomy, commitment, economic independence and the professional skills needed for the operation of successful publishing businesses. This investigation reveals the culture and robust framework for textual production that nonconformists provided and the commitment, skills and loyalty of their women booksellers who adapted their sales and working practices to the requirements of their nonconformist denominations. It reveals how they worked alongside close communities that included their families, religious denominations and book trade colleagues. These were literate, middle-class women, skilled in their profession who operated succession businesses located in the centre of the book trade in the City of London. Each case study examines the relationship between a woman bookseller and her nonconformist denomination, assessing the extent of her commitment to her faith through her work. Nonconformist women booksellers, though few, were amongst the leading women publishers throughout the eighteenth century. The thesis also uncovers the conditions and circumstances that enabled their exceptional participation and contribution to the literary, public and, in some instances, political spheres.

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List of Abbreviations

NA	National Archives
CUL	Cambridge University Library Archive
MA	Moravian Archive
LRSF	Library Religious of the Society of Friends
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
LFOL	Leeds Friends Old Library
QMRCLE	Queen Mary Centre for Religion and Literature in English
BBTI	British Book Trade Index
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> < https://oxforddnb.com >
ESTC	English Short Title Catalogue < https://estc.bl.uk/ >

Introduction:

Quantitative Research and Thesis Outline

This study is the result of two converging interests in women's history. My first interest is in the history of women who worked in the London print and book trades: my second relates to the activities and status of women who were connected to Protestant dissent and the Evangelical Revival during the eighteenth century. This research centres on women who were involved in both communities, focusing on women printers and booksellers who printed and sold Protestant nonconformist and evangelical texts during the eighteenth century.

This study proposes that women booksellers involved in both groups were able to build long and successful careers by strengthening and depending upon their individual communities, be that the Protestant nonconformist communities to which they were affiliated, their own families, or other men and women in the London book trade. Individuals within these communities were often interconnected, and more importantly, they created a background culture and the logistical conditions in which these women booksellers could flourish. Their forte was the publication of religious Protestant nonconformist, evangelical and abolitionist texts, which were often controversial and sometimes pioneering. Their role to date has not received much recognition, obscured by the patriarchal practices of the Stationers' Company and a general acceptance amongst previous commentators of gendered public and private spheres. As a result, the contribution of women active in the London book trades after 1730 has been overlooked. In *The Women of Grub Street*, Paula McDowell highlights the changing status of women in the print trades and their contribution to 'the eighteenth-century "liberal model of the public sphere" - with its link to changing models of family and state, of political subjecthood and subjectivity, and of literary and

cultural value - worked to shut down new opportunities for some even as it opened up opportunities for others'.¹ Her work, however, examines the activities of women printers and booksellers between 1678 and 1730. It thus seems appropriate that any further investigation into women who remained in the London book trade should focus on their contribution after 1730. This thesis argues that, in fact following 1730, a small but significant number of women booksellers connected to Protestant dissent were able to participate in, and contribute to, the public and political spheres through their extensive publishing activities. This study addresses this gap in knowledge about the women who remained as publishers in the London book trade throughout the eighteenth century.

These women operated on equal terms to their male counterparts. I argue that their occupations flourished primarily through their connection with nonconformist denominations, their families, and their colleagues in the print trade. Furthermore, this study examines how far this support was mutual, revealing the manner in which these women used their professional skills in support of the nonconformist denominations to which they were affiliated. There were, of course, wider economic, socio-political, geographical, and legislative factors that benefitted nonconformists in addition to all men and women active in the London book trade. This study explores these influences on eighteenth-century nonconformist publishing and their significance for women at work in the book trades in London.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the contribution of these women booksellers to the sales and dissemination of the religious texts produced by those Protestants who had forged their own religious doctrines outside the Church of England.

¹ Paula McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace 1678–1730* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 10.

I use the terms ‘dissenting’ and ‘nonconformist’ interchangeably to refer to those religious Protestant groups who ‘worshipped outside the established Church of England’.² For the purposes of this research, my investigation concentrated on the disseminators of texts that were produced for, or significant to, the Protestant denominations known as ‘Old Dissent’: Presbyterians, Independents or Congregationalists, Baptists, and Quakers.³ In addition, I consider women producers and sellers affiliated to the English Moravians. My research is confined to those women booksellers who were active in London. Using quantitative research and biographical investigation, I reveal the extent of the contribution made by nonconformist women booksellers to the book trade in London between 1691 and 1830, concentrating primarily on the period 1730–1800.

Despite the proliferation of religious publishing during this period, as discussed below, there is a recognition amongst scholars that the contribution of nonconformist booksellers has not generally received sufficient attention. Recently, however, this neglect has been addressed by Isabel Rivers, who has provided a detailed summary of the leading male and female publishers in the first chapter of *Vanity Fair and the Celestial City*, a work which has been an invaluable resource for this study.⁴ Timothy Whelan has also recognised and written about individual nonconformist women involved in publishing, particularly Mary Lewis and Martha Gurney, whose contributions are considered in this thesis.⁵ My research, however, offers a more

² Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters from the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), p. 1.

³ John H. Y. Briggs, ‘The Changing Shape of Nonconformity, 1662–2000’, in *T & T Clark Companion to Nonconformity*, ed. by Robert Pope (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 3–26 (p. 7).

⁴ Isabel Rivers, *Vanity Fair and the Celestial City: Dissenting, Methodist, and Evangelical Literary Culture in England 1720–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 9–41.

⁵ See Timothy Whelan, ‘Martha Gurney and the Anti-Slave Trade Movement, 1788–1794’, in *Women, Dissent and Anti-Slavery in Britain and America, 1790–1865*, ed. by Elizabeth J. Clapp and Julie Roy Jeffrey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 44–65;

detailed focus on the lives and publishing output of these and other leading women producers of nonconformist texts, whose collective contribution to date has not been assessed in terms of the support they received from their nonconformist communities. My study characterises these women booksellers as literate and professional women who operated in the same way as their male counterparts in managing similar printing and bookselling operations during the period 1691–1806. Other than in Whelan’s work, their contribution during the period after 1730 has attracted little previous attention.

My empirical survey of women booksellers in the eighteenth century establishes the quantity of women who were involved in the trade during the period overall (see Appendix, Table 2). While McDowell’s work on women prominent in the London book trades has examined their contribution to the literary marketplace and contemporary politics during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, it does not expand on their logistical activities after 1730 and, although McDowell observes that for the most part ‘women’s relationship to public politics through print changed by the mid-eighteenth century’, my study reveals that there remained a small but significant minority of women booksellers whose careers and contribution flourished after 1730.⁶

My argument is predicated on the quantity of religious publishing produced during the period 1695–1830, which included many nonconformist and evangelical

‘William Fox, Martha Gurney, and Radical Discourse of the 1790s’, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 42 (2009), 397–411;

‘Martha Gurney and William Fox: London Baptists and Radical Politics, 1791–1794’, in *Pulpit and People: Studies in 18th Century Baptist Life and Thought*, ed. by John Briggs (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2009), pp. 165–201;

‘Martha Gurney’, in *British Abolitionists*, ed. by Brycchan Carey <http://www.brycchancarey.com/abolition/gurney.htm> [accessed 20 December 2021];

‘Mary Lewis (1703–1791), from the “Bible and Dove”, 1 Paternoster Row, London, 1755–1776’ and ‘Martha Lewis Trapp Priestley (1745–1828), from No 1 Paternoster Row’, in *Nonconformist Women Writers, 1650–1850*

<https://sites.google.com/a/georgiasouthern.edu/nonconformist-women-writers-1650-1850/dissenting-women-printers-booksellers-1650-1825/trapp-priestley-martha-lewis-1745-1828> [accessed 27 October 2021].

⁶ McDowell, p. 9.

texts, and the contribution made to these by nonconformist women. In bringing these two strands of publishing history together, this study challenges Jürgen Habermas' presumption of a primarily masculine and secular public sphere from which he posited that women and religion were excluded.⁷ This thesis has also drawn on theories surrounding the concept of 'Communitarianism' and its central concern with the bonds of community, with regards to 'conceptions of the good' and 'the relationship between the self and the community', in understanding the influence of communities on some nonconformist women booksellers.⁸ In this study, I argue that communities provided these women with a consistent and productive structure to support their business operations and long-term careers.

In calling attention to the scholarly neglect of nonconformist culture and nonconformist women writers in the eighteenth century, Timothy Whelan points out that the 'same neglect has also taken place in the area of nonconformist women's history generally'.⁹ This study addresses one aspect of this neglect. The subjects of the case studies presented here were not the literary elite, who feature in Whelan's volumes of nonconformist women poets. Rather, their support of nonconformist literary culture was logistical; they were responsible for the material production and dissemination of considerable amounts of dissenting and evangelical literature together with examples of political discourse that supported social reform and the abolitionist cause. This thesis

⁷ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Bourgeois Society*, trans. by Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989).

⁸ Amitai Etzioni, 'Communitarianism', in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, ed. by Jens Beckert and Milan Zafirovski (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 80. See also, Ruth Abbey and Charles Taylor, 'Communitarianism, Taylor-Made: An Interview with Charles Taylor', *The Australian Quarterly*, 68 (1996), 1–10 (p. 1). Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989); Amital Etzioni, 'Communitarianism Revisited', *Journal of Political Identities*, 19 (2014), 241–260

⁸ Timothy Whelan, 'General Introduction', in *Nonconformist Women Writers 1720–1840*, ed. by Timothy Whelan, 8 vols (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011), I, pp. xviii–lxi (p. xvii).

⁹ Ibid.

identifies the contribution that these women made to the logistical distribution and sales of this literature.

Methodology.

My approach to this topic was both quantitative, in the collection and analysis of primary data, and biographical, in the research of archival and secondary material that details the working practices of the booksellers discussed. This process required scrutiny of, and selections from, limited resources, such as historical memoirs and dictionaries of printers, histories of the Stationers' Company, and the Stationers' Company registers. This study has utilised book trade databases, including the ESTC, British Book Trade Index, along with JISC Historical Texts (ECCO, EEBO), encyclopaedic sources such as the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, and contemporary periodicals. Research of primary material in archival collections has enabled this thesis to shed light on the spiritual experiences and day-to-day lives of the women involved in nonconformist publishing during this historical period. Archival sources for the research included the National Archives Public Record Office (some official records have been accessed through Ancestry.co.uk.), Cambridge University Library Archives, The Moravian Archives, The Library of the Religious Society of Friends, Leeds Friends Old Library, databases from the Queen Mary Centre for Religion and Literature in English, and the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Burney Collection Newspapers Online.

This research also involved consulting dictionaries of historical printers and booksellers and works regarding publishing and the book trade, particularly those by James Raven. It has built on the research of scholars who have previously written about women involved in the book trade in the seventeenth century and early eighteenth

centuries, including Paula McDowell, Hannah Barker, and Maureen Bell; writers who have recognised the prominence of religious literature in the eighteenth century, such as Isabel Rivers, John Spurr, Tessa Whitehouse, and Alan Sell; and commentators on the status of nonconformist women in particular, including Timothy Whelan, Phyllis Mack and Anne Stott. In addition, I have referred to secondary sources relating to eighteenth-century London, the location central for the operations of these women; literature on interpreting wills and probate documents; and guides that explain palaeography. Since two of my subjects' publishing careers are identifiable mainly through their status as widows, scholarship on the lives and roles of early modern widows was also important in this research, especially that of Amy Erickson and Margaret Hodge.

Using quantitative research and statistical analysis, this introduction presents research that establishes the significance of religious publishing throughout the eighteenth century and, specifically, empirical evidence to show the number of women who were at work in the London book trade both before and after 1730 (see Appendix A, Table 2). In addition, statistical analysis is used to identify how changes in legislation may have affected nonconformist publishing in the late seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth centuries and how this may have helped support the activities of women publishers during this period.

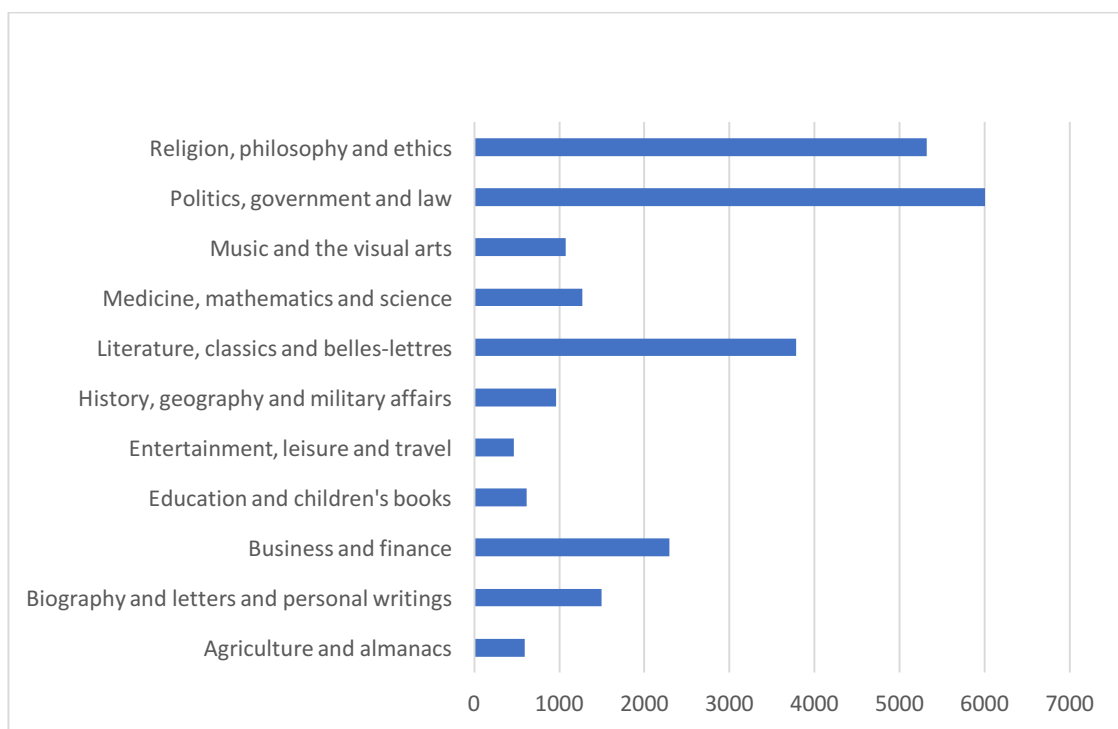
Status of religious publishing.

Quantitative analysis has been used in this research not only to show how religious publishing was a major contributor to the overall literary output of the eighteenth century but also to identify those women who were amongst the primary producers and disseminators of the genre. This has enabled this research to present a collective summary and brief analysis of all the women who were at work as printers, copyright

holders, trade publishers, and book retailers during the eighteenth century (see Appendix A, Table 2).

Figure 1 shows the volume of religious texts that were produced between 1701 and 1800.

Figure 1: Genres of books sold during the eighteenth century.



Figures taken from Michael F. Suarez, 'Towards a Biometric Analysis of the surviving record, 1701–1800', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, 1695–1830*, ed. by Michael F. Suarez and Michael L. Turner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), V, pp. 39–65 (p. 44).

It is clear that the category, 'Religion, Philosophy and Ethics', was second only to that of 'Politics, Government and Law'. While the genre 'Politics, Government and Law' produced a larger quantity of texts than any other, it overtook religious publishing only during the second half of the century; religious publishing was the leading type in the period as a whole. The statistics shown in Figure 1 can only act as a comparative guide to the volume of religious, philosophical, and ethical texts that was produced, not least

because this was calculated using titles that are still extant. Furthermore, the data does not differentiate Anglican from evangelical or nonconformist texts. As a result, these figures are only an approximation.

This numerical analysis which shows that the genre of ‘Religion, Philosophy, and Ethics’ was a major contributor to publishing overall during the period 1695–1830, is further supported by Isabel Rivers, who tells us that ‘religious books and publishing indisputably constituted the largest part of the publishing market in the period 1695 to 1830’.¹⁰ Religious literature served a number of purposes for its readers, which were not necessarily limited to particular groups. Rivers notes that Christian authors of all denominations ‘placed religious literature within three main categories: doctrinal or speculative (concerned with establishing the truth of specific doctrines and the evidences, natural and revealed, for Christianity), controversial (concerned with demolishing on rational or historical grounds the beliefs and practices of rival denominations), and practical (concerned with helping the individual to practise the Christian life)’.¹¹ Many of the texts recorded shared common generic codes and points of reference with all forms of Christian religion. Ian Green states that, at least ‘on doctrinal matters’, conformists and nonconformists ‘shared a readiness to consult the best commentaries and editions available, whether these were patristic or scholastic, Protestant or Catholic’.¹² Christians shared many beliefs in common and some practical literature was ‘interdenominational’: ‘Catholic and Anglican books of devotion were

¹⁰ Isabel Rivers, ‘Religious Publishing’, in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. by Suarez and Turner, 7 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), v, pp. 579–600 (p. 579).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ian Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 106.

widely used by Methodists, and to a lesser extent by Dissenters'.¹³ A constant flow of new publications was important to the literary marketplace, including reprints of popular editions, and some of this demand for publications was met by women booksellers.

The multiplicity of religious texts reflected a flourishing literary marketplace and a steady demand. Green has outlined, however, the difficulty encountered by previous researchers in producing definitive sampling of Protestant titles published during the early modern period. His Appendix 1, 'Sample of Bestsellers and Steady Sellers First Published in England c. 1536–1700', in his text *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England*, addresses these shortcomings and offers a detailed summary that provides a useful and comprehensive guide to the most influential titles published during the seventeenth century. However, this list does not extend into the eighteenth century.¹⁴

Having calculated the extent of religious publishing, I considered the possibility that the production of texts by Protestant dissenters may have been affected by late seventeenth and early eighteenth century legislative changes. Three major legislative issues, amongst others, had the potential to influence Protestant nonconformist publishing activity during this period: the Act of Toleration in 1689; the lapse of the Licensing Act in 1695; and the passing of the Statute of Anne (the Copyright Act) in 1710. Further quantitative research was used in parallel to that of Suarez to interpret my findings, to demonstrate trends, and to aid interpretation.¹⁵ There were other legislative

¹³ Isabel Rivers, 'Dissenting and Methodist Books of Practical Divinity', in *Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. by Isabel Rivers (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), pp. 127–164 (p. 128).

¹⁴ Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England*, pp. 591–672.

¹⁵ Michael F. Suarez, 'Towards a Biometric Analysis of the surviving record, 1701–1800', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. by Suarez and Turner, pp. 39–65 (p. 44).

changes introduced during the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century which affected the lives of Protestant dissenters, but none that specifically suggest any influence on the quantity of nonconformist texts that were published.¹⁶

Legislative issues with capacity to influence nonconformist publishing.

To calculate the possible impact of these legislative changes, it was necessary to establish the total number of titles produced either side of the years when the legislation was introduced and to record the percentage of religious texts produced during the same period. To achieve this, I used the ESTC as a source. This database and method of research, however, can only give an indication of the numbers of texts produced and can therefore act only as a guide. Suarez, too, recognises the ‘deeply flawed’ nature of counting imprints because this takes no account of sheet counts or number of editions.¹⁷ This is further complicated by the dynamic nature of the ESTC database itself, which records only titles that have been discovered. Defining exact genres or subject matter in this way is problematic since texts are often categorised in the ESTC as religious when in fact they reflect the integration of church and state. For example, poems or ballads in praise of the Protestant monarch, ecclesiastical law, or histories are often classified as religious. Another flaw in this empirical method is that there may be any number of pamphlets or other religious texts that have not been recorded, since they no longer exist

¹⁶ Other legislation included: the Corporation Acts of 1661 and the Test Acts passed in 1672, previously ‘Declarations of Indulgence of 1687 and 1688’ were Royal prerogatives and hence did not offer the stability of parliamentary legislation. See Richard C. Allen, ‘Restoration Quakerism, 1660–1691’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), ed. by Stephen W. Angell and Pink Dandelion (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 29–45 (p. 43). See also, The Occasional Conformity Act of 1711, the Schism Act of 1714, and the Act for the Repeal of the Occasional Conformity Act of 1719. During the nineteenth century, the Places of Religious Worship Act of 1812, the Unitarian Relief Act of 1813, the Founding of the University of London in 1828, the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, and the 1832 Reform Act all affected the lives of nonconformists.

¹⁷ Suarez, p. 44.

as a result of their frailty, destruction, or lack of relevance for later generations. This means of investigation is thus a statistical device that can offer only a broad indication for trend comparisons and to highlight unusual activity.

The Toleration Act, or the ‘Act for exempting Their Majesties’ Protestant Subjects from the Church of England, from the Penalties of Certain Laws’, allowed Protestants who refused to comply with the demands of the Act of Uniformity of 1662 to worship according to their beliefs, free from official persecution, albeit still remaining restricted from holding public office and ‘certain other social privileges’.¹⁸ These significant legal changes, particularly the freedom to worship without fear of prosecution, could have facilitated an increased demand for nonconformist printed texts.

However, the Act of Toleration itself was not a panacea for nonconformists. Their exclusion from holding public office, establishing their own institutions for education, or registering baptisms, deaths, and marriages, proved to be a serious bone of contention from 1662. While dissenters were now free to associate and worship, they nevertheless remained second-class citizens, officially barred from civil and political employment; their ‘struggle for equality’ would endure ‘throughout the next century’.¹⁹ Ralph Stevens argues that, although the recent historiographical trend has generally been to accentuate the Act’s contingency and limitations, it was still ‘a defining moment in English constitutional development that had immense significance for Dissenters’.²⁰ While he does not directly consider the effects of the Act on the production of nonconformist publishing, he points out that it effectively ‘caused a paradigm shift in

¹⁸ Robert Pope, ‘Preface’, in *T & T Clark Companion to Nonconformity*, ed. by Pope, pp. vii–x (p. vii).

¹⁹ David J. Appleby, ‘From Ejectment to Toleration in England, 1662–1689’, in *The Great Ejectment of 1662: Its Antecedents, Aftermath and Ecumenical Significance*, ed. by A. P. F. Sell (USA: Pickwick Publications, 2012), pp. 67–124 (p. 119).

²⁰ Ralph Stevens, *Protestant Pluralism: The Reception of the Toleration Act, 1689–1720* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018), p. 5.

the relationship between England's Protestant communities'.²¹ Stevens maintains that a type of 'pastoral rivalry' resulted between dissenting denominations and the mainstream Anglican Church.²² It is reasonable to assume that this new status for dissenters and the debates generated by the resultant rivalry between the established church and Protestant dissenters would result in an increase in the production of religious discourse on subjects with which they were preoccupied. Such topics were as diverse as the reformation of manners, occasional conformity, the paying of tithes, baptism, education, and the possession of chapels. This is not to claim that such a trend is clearly reflected in the publishing statistics shown in Figure 2. Nevertheless, the case studies presented in this study show that women booksellers published texts relating to all these debates.

A second legislative issue that may also have been expected to impact on the quantity of religious texts, including dissenting texts, produced during the period, was the lapse of the 1662 Licensing Act. This effectively eliminated the statute that 'No person shall print any books against the doctrine and government of the Church of England nor import or sell such'. The lapse of this Act in 1695 'redressed statutory repressive powers granted at the Restoration' and essentially eradicated press censorship.²³ In the case of texts on religion, philosophy, art, and natural science, these licensers had been the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, or their appointees. Since one appointee, Chief Licensor Roger L'Estrange, judged religious dissenters to be 'enemies of the state', it would have been extremely difficult to have had a dissenting text approved during L'Estrange's tenure (1662–1679).²⁴ Following the lapse of the Licensing Act in 1695, and the subsequent freedom to publish without

²¹ Ibid., p. 1.

²² Ibid., p. 164.

²³ Geoff Kemp, 'The End of Censorship and the Politics of Toleration from Locke to Sacheverell', *Parliamentary History*, 31 (2012), 47–68 (p. 51).

²⁴ Ibid., p. 50.

license, it would be reasonable to expect a surge in the number of nonconformist texts produced. While this seems to have been briefly the case, Figure 2 shows that these effects were not long lasting.

Figure 2: Religious vs non-religious publications by year.

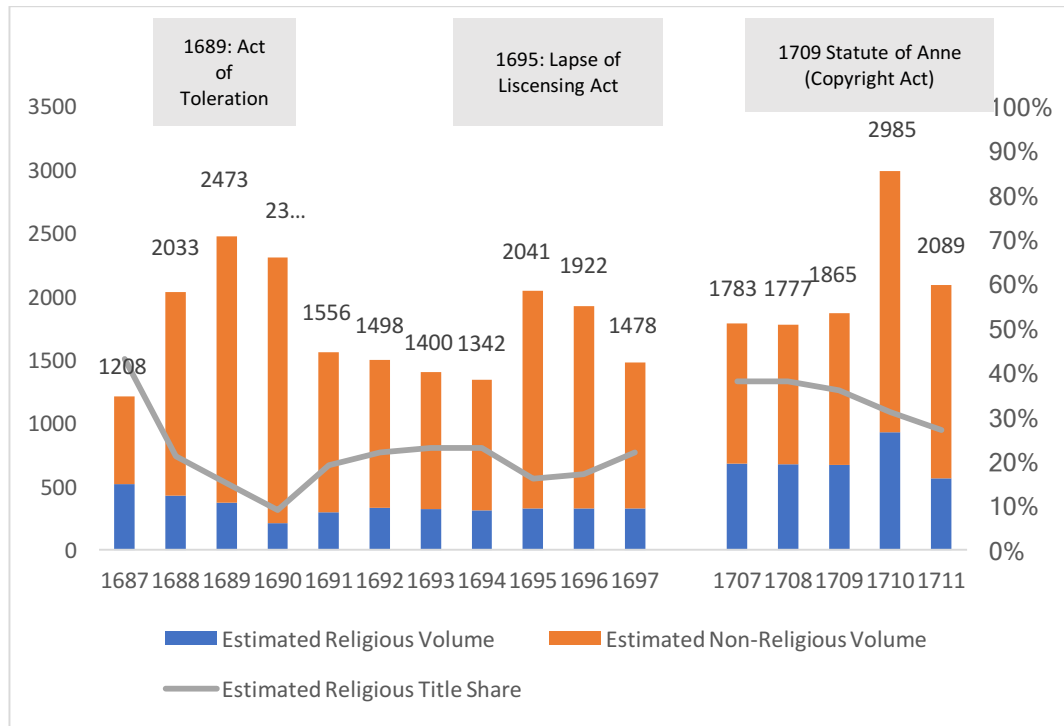


Figure 2 presents a quantitative analysis of the production of religious and non-religious texts over the timespans 1687–1697 and 1707–1711. It shows the actual total of all texts published in London in each year, the percentage volume that were identified as religious by subject-matter. The grey line shows what percentage of the actual number of publications were religious.

One positive effect for women booksellers, however, was that they were no longer at risk of being detained or imprisoned for publishing nonconformist literature, as long as the text they produced did not contain ‘direct written or printed criticism of a monarch or his or her ministers [which may have] threatened the security of the state’.²⁵ This may have emboldened or reassured women booksellers to publish material that may have previously threatened their security.

²⁵ McDowell, p. 64.

The third piece of legislation with the potential to have affected the production of nonconformist literature in the early eighteenth century was the first modern copyright law, The Statute of Anne of 1710. This ‘Act for the encouragement of learning by vesting the copies of printed books in the authors or purchasers of such copies, during the times therein mentioned’ required authors, or the owners of the rights, to register their works in the Stationers’ Company register as a condition of protection.²⁶ Under this statute, ‘if the author were living at the end of the initial fourteen-year term, he or she would receive exclusive copyright protection for another fourteen-year term’.²⁷ It would be reasonable to suppose that this piece of legislation may have encouraged an expansion in the publication of dissenting texts, since the ideas contained within them would have been protected from unlawful copying. However, this type of lawful protection may not have been a significant consideration or priority for dissenting authors, whose concerns were with the ‘sustained production of texts’ essential to ‘religious educational environments in which dissent thrived’ rather than with protection of their creative output.²⁸ Indeed, for religious titles this appears to be the case, since analysis of the figures in Figure 2 shows that the output of religious texts only increased in line with publishing overall.

For the purposes of this study, research data was calculated within one ten-year block, from 1687 to 1697, a period covering two years before the Act of Toleration until two years after the lapse of the Licensing Act. A further five-year block period, 1707–1711, encompassing the period two years either side of Statute of Ann or Copyright Act was also covered. Recording figures two years either side of each of these dates allowed

²⁶ The Statute of Anne 1710, Lilian Goldman Law Library
<http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/anne_1710.asp> [accessed 20 November 2021].

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Tessa Whitehouse, *The Textual Culture of English Protestant Dissent 1720–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 8.

for any significant trends to be identified. I scrutinised the titles that were published for each year to establish each title's subject matter and genre. The outcome may have been compromised by the limitations of the ESTC database, which offers an overall total for the complete number of titles but only 1001 titles in detail for any given year. These limitations meant that the number of religious titles could only be recorded from the 1001 titles displayed for each year in percentage terms. Those percentages were then converted to volumes, as were the actual numbers of titles published overall. For example, in 1687, the total number of actual titles published in London was 1208. Of the 1001 available for scrutiny, 43% were religious in subject matter. Therefore, I calculated the actual probable number of these to have been 519. Similarly, in 1711, the total actual number of titles published was 2089, with just 27% of the 1001 titles available for scrutiny being religious texts. I therefore calculated the number of religious texts overall for that year as 564.

The graph in Figure 2 shows a mixed bag of trends. The years 1687 and 1688 produced a greater percentage of religious texts than 1689, the actual year of the Act of Toleration, where just 9% of titles were religious in subject matter. However, the volume of religious texts, while greater in 1687 than in 1689, remained relatively constant throughout. From 1690, the percentage dropped to 9%, but recovered to previous levels of 19%, 22%, and 23% in 1690, 1691, and 1692 respectively. The direct result of the Act of Toleration on religious publishing was temporarily negative but it soon recovered to previous levels. This may be explained by John Coffey's observation that, 'in the two decades after 1689, they (dissenters) registered thousands of meeting houses, suggesting that this programme of expansion was where Dissenters' energies

were focussed'.²⁹ Following the lapse of the Licensing Act of 1695, there was a significant rise in the number of titles produced overall, although the volume of religious titles remained constant, with a slight rise in the percentage of religious titles produced. The volume of religious texts compared to the overall number of texts remained at a constant level from 1691 to 1697. The Copyright Act of 1710 made a significant difference to the total number of texts produced, with almost 3000 titles produced in London in the year following its introduction. Numbers of religious texts increased too. However, the percentage of religious titles dropped slightly from 38% to 36% compared to the two years before the Act. By 1711, production overall had dropped to pre-Act levels.

It would appear from these statistics that these three major pieces of legislation, which had the potential to influence nonconformist publishing, had little long-lasting impact on the percentage of religious texts produced overall during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. It is noteworthy, however, that religious publishing increased in line with publishing trends, suggesting that marketplace conditions influenced all genres. While it may be surprising that the legislation appears to have made little difference to the production of religious literature, this empirical investigation has been valuable to this study in establishing that legislative changes were not a major reason for the continued production of Protestant nonconformist literature.

While further investigation would be required to determine the denominational character of each religious text in addition to its genre, this research recognises a number of genres that fall loosely under the same three categories that Rivers identified.

²⁹ John Coffey, 'Church and State, 1550–1750: The Emergence of Dissent', in *T&T Clark Companion to Nonconformity*, ed. by Pope, pp. 47–74 (p. 64).

For example, within the ‘doctrinal or speculative’ category, theological discussions of transubstantiation and infant baptism were common; within the ‘controversial’ category, anti-Catholicism, pro-Protestantism and Religious tolerance were recorded; and under ‘practical’, Bibles and Bible commentaries, especially on the New Testament, collections of prayers or private devotions, and narratives or histories of eminent Christians which describe exemplary conduct and spiritual life were frequent. Also, catechisms and commentaries thereon, psalms, and sermons were regular contributions. In the year 1687, many titles were produced regarding the Test Act.³⁰ Between 1710 and 1711, 500 titles were printed on aspects of the Henry Sacheverell (1674–1724) controversy.³¹ Not unexpectedly, this evidence shows that the literary marketplace was used to publicly air religious doctrinal differences, and to inform and influence readers with regard to theological arguments. Indeed, religious debate was a precursor to social and political debates offered within the literary sphere, a key element in Habermas’s theory of the formation of a political public sphere, which will be discussed further in the following chapter.

It could be presumed that women’s book selling operations benefitted from liberal changes to the law, which allowed Protestant dissenters to worship without fear of prosecution and meant that texts no longer had to pass a censor before going to press. Liberation from the danger of prosecution, imprisonment, or being fined for printing nonconformist literature was something women booksellers in the seventeenth century

³⁰ The Test Act was annulled by the Declarations of Indulgence, issued by James II in 1687 and 1688, but its provisions were partially restored after the revolution of 1688–1689 by the Act of Toleration of 1689.

³¹ Henry Sacheverell (1674–1724) was an anti-dissenter Anglican clergyman tried for sedition but supported by Londoners. He was convicted and suspended from preaching for three years in 1710. See W. A. Speck, ‘Sacheverell, Henry (bap.1674, d.1724), Church of England clergyman and religious controversialist’ (2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed July 2021].

had grown adept at handling or avoiding.³² Tace Sowle, who serves as the first case study in this thesis, was a lifelong publisher of Quaker writing and was responsible for producing nearly seven hundred and fifty titles from 1691 to 1749. She was amongst the earliest beneficiaries of both the 1689 Act of Toleration and the lapse of the Licensing Act. Her father's business had been raided several times and his presses demolished by the licenser's men, an action that she may have witnessed before she took over his business in 1691.³³ Before and during her time of occupancy, the laws had been relaxed and the danger of her being arrested or raided for producing unlicensed literature had gone, which may have accounted for her early confidence and success.

The status and number of women at work in the London book trades 1701–1800.

Many commentators have claimed that, through the course of the eighteenth century, women all but disappeared from the print and book trades. Isobel Grundy notes that, despite women's considerable contribution to the book trade in the early part of the century, by the end of that period, their participation 'in the actual production part of books shows no signs of growth'. She argues, however, that 'the opposite is the case in every [other] activity surrounding the book trade'.³⁴ New copyright laws that protected the investments of major publishers and contributed to a consolidation of capital for male printers of substance, together with societal pressures for women to remain within the domestic sphere, resulted in a subsequent loss of roles for women in the trade.

³² On women booksellers' oppositional publishing activities during the seventeenth century, see McDowell, pp. 63–118, and Maureen Bell, 'Women Publishers of Puritan Literature in the Mid-Seventeenth Century: Three Case Studies' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Loughborough University of Technology, 1987) <<http://www.ethos.bl.uk/>> [accessed 7 July 2021].

³³ An account of the persecution suffered by Andrew Sowle as a direct result of him printing Quaker texts is recorded in his obituary. See [Anon.], *Piety Promoted: A Selection of Dying Sayings of Many of the People Called Quakers*, 1, ed. by William Evans and Thomas Evans [Philadelphia: Friends Book Store, 1834], pp. 115–117. Google ebook.

³⁴ Isobel Grundy, 'Women and Print: Readers, Writers and the Market', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. by Suarez and Turner, pp. 146–159 (p. 147).

Hannah Barker has refuted this, claiming that ‘female involvement in skilled and responsible positions in the printing trades appears to be increasing at the very point where some historians argue that they should have been either forced out of the business or marginalised within it’.³⁵ Similarly, there has also been a recognition that women’s contribution as authors ‘took off around the 1760s, and thereafter virtually doubled every decade, including the early decades of the nineteenth century’.³⁶ There appears, therefore, to be no consensus on the number and status of women in the print trades after 1730, the date at which McDowell’s study of women involved in the publishing trades concludes. This study, using quantitative analysis, endeavours to establish exactly how many women did remain involved in the material production of texts in the London book trade after this date and in what capacity they were involved.

Quantitative analysis to establish the number and occupations of women in the book trade after 1730.

Little quantitative research has been undertaken to date to establish specifically how many women were active in the London print trades after 1730 or indeed throughout the eighteenth century. A careful attempt is made here to fill this gap in knowledge by offering a quantitative summary of women who contributed to the London book trade between 1680 and 1800, also identifying the leading women booksellers at work after 1730. Appendix, Table 2 shows how many women participated as professionals in the trade, who they were, and where they were located.

³⁵ Hannah Barker, ‘Women, Work and the Industrial Revolution: Female Involvement in the English Printing Trades c. 1700–1840’, in *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, 2nd edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), pp. 81–100 (p. 89).

³⁶ Grundy, p. 146.

This gap in the literature probably results from the longstanding assumption that women in the book trade is a minor topic. For example, D. F. McKenzie, who published a list of *Stationers' Company Apprentices 1701–1800* in 1978, recorded 120 girls apprenticed to the Stationers' Company and 150 women 'Masters' who bound, turned over, or freed over 300 apprentices. Yet, he does not refer to women at all in the introduction to his work, specifying that his register includes 'men bound or made free by members of the Company between January 1701 and December 1800 inclusive, as well as men made free within that period but bound before it' as well as 'the date of freedom for men bound within the period but made free after 1821'.³⁷

Likewise, H. R. Plomer's *Dictionaries of Printers and Booksellers* itemises women's active participation in the print and book trades without comment or analysis of it.³⁸ Until Maureen Bell's 1987 account of 'Women Publishers of Puritan Literature', McDowell's 1998 study *The Women of Grub Street*, and Hannah Barker's 1997 work on 'Women, Work and the Industrial Revolution', little research had been undertaken specifically regarding women's contribution to the literary marketplace. Ian Maxted's *Exeter Working Papers in British Book Trade History* and the subsequent British Book Trade Index offered a comprehensive database of all individuals involved in the British print and book trades, but without any analysis of the specific contribution of women. The digital resource *Women's Print History Project* offers a database listing women contributors to the book trades nationwide from 1750–1830.³⁹ Women in the print trade were not as numerous as men and accounted for approximately 10% of the overall

³⁷ D. F. McKenzie, *Stationers' Company Apprentices 1701–1800* (Oxford: The Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1978), p. vii. [my italics].

³⁸ H. R. Plomer, *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers Who Were at Work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1557 to 1775* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932).

³⁹ Women's Print History Project <<https://womensprinhistoryproject.com>>

number of publishers during the period.⁴⁰ On occasion, where a woman's contribution has been acknowledged, it has been reported dismissively. Michael Black in a reference to the contribution of Mary Fenner, the second case study considered in this thesis, a recently widowed printer for the University of Cambridge in the 1730s, compared her to a lady in Oxford who 'knew no more Latin than a cat', and claimed that 'Mary Fenner knew only a little more English than a parrot, and wrote illiterate letters to the vice-chancellor'.⁴¹ Black was surprised to discover, however, that 'quite astonishingly, she printed for Bentley an edition of his Boyle Lectures in 1735'.⁴² In fact, Mary Fenner was from a well-established family of printers and booksellers and was attempting to operate a business as a widow against huge opposition from one of her late husband's business partners. She possessed sufficient literary and business skills to continue a lifelong career in printing and bookselling on her return to London.

I used three criteria to establish the extent or significance of women's contribution to the trade in Table 2: 1) their period of activity, 2) the number of imprints, or title pages, in which their names appear, and 3) the number of apprentices that they supervised. To determine the extent of their contribution, it was also necessary to research a number of different sources.⁴³

Cyprian Blagden tells us that the first girl, Joanna Nye, was apprenticed to the Stationers' Company in 1666, followed two years later by the admission by patrimony

⁴⁰ Isobel Grundy 'Women and Print', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. by Suarez and Turner, pp.146–159 (p. 150).

⁴¹ Michael H. Black, *A Short History of the Cambridge University Press 1584–1984* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 108

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁴³ In addition to above cited works by McDowell, Bell and Barker, I drew on McKenzie, *Stationers' Company Apprentices 1701–1800* (Oxford: The Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1978) ; Plomer, *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers who were at Work in England Scotland and Ireland 1557-1775*, (Ilkley: The Bibliographical Society, 1977); the *British Book Trade Index* (BBTI) <<http://bbti.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>>; and the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (ODNB<<https://www.oxforddnb.com>> [last accessed 20 December 2020].

of Elizabeth Latham, daughter of George Latham, a bookseller who died in 1658. ‘It was an ancient custom of the City that the widow of a freeman became a freewoman’, which meant she had a right to take apprentices, to hold a share in the English stock, and to take out loans.⁴⁴ I have established that there were over 300 women active in the London book trade from 1701–1800. Of the 120 girls officially apprenticed to the print trades during this period, fifteen were freed by patrimony and thereafter leave no further trace in publishing records. These women may have married and continued in the trade under a husband’s name. Only nine of the 120 went on to become ‘masters’ in their own right. The 150 women whom Plomer has identified as ‘masters’ accounted for the supervision of over 300 apprentices, almost all of them boys that they bound, took over, or freed. At least seven women ‘masters’ worked in seemingly unrelated trades as milliners, linen drapers, tallow chandlers, and mathematical instrument makers. These women may have become affiliated to the Stationers’ Company through male relatives. Their status, however, is not explained in Stationers’ Company records. They may also have operated retail shops and sold books as part of this retail business, which would account for their presence in Stationers’ Company registers. Although their work for the most part appears unconnected to the book trade, I have included them in Table 2, since they were affiliated with the Stationers’ Company.

Following completion of their own apprenticeships, some women were fully equipped with the requisite skills as masters to train others. Most of those masters who had previously been apprenticed, however, were active before 1730. Elizabeth Cater, active 1705, bound one apprentice; Katharine Heathcote, active 1723, bound three apprentices; Sarah Holt, active 1704–1727, bound seven apprentices; Mary Lapley,

⁴⁴ Cyprian Blagden, *The Stationers’ Company: A History, 1403–1959*, 2nd edn (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1960), p. 162.

dates unknown, bound one apprentice; Ann Morris, active 1705, bound one apprentice; Jane Steele, active 1707–1717, bound three; and Lorrain Whitledge, active 1716, bound one apprentice. After 1730, only two of the nine masters remained active: Sarah Barnard, between 1791 and 1793, bound three apprentices but shows no evidence of imprint pages; and Mary Harrison, active 1770–1778, bound eight apprentices and is recorded in only eighteen instances on imprints. It is clear that the number of imprints these women's names appear within do not necessarily correlate with the number of apprentices that they bound, most likely because the texts that they produced simply do not survive to the present day or have not yet been discovered.⁴⁵ Despite these few exceptions of women apprentices who became masters, most of the women sellers whose names are recorded on imprint pages during the period were never apprenticed, although they may have served unofficial apprenticeships in printing families, as with the women in the case studies presented in this study. Most likely they are recorded as sellers on imprints because they inherited businesses from male relatives who were members of the Stationers' Company.

Further analysis of Appendix A (Table 2) reveals that, between 1690 and 1730, thirty-eight women were at work in the print trades. Between 1730–1760, there were forty-nine and, between 1760–1813, over one hundred women's names appear as sellers or printers of books or pamphlets. Grundy has speculated that women survived mainly as retailers in the book trade after 1730, and my research supports that view, since,

⁴⁵ Establishing the number of titles produced by any bookseller is problematic since contemporary databases list only what is extant today. Figures can only offer an indication of the total number of titles produced. It is likely that many did not survive. Quality publications are more likely to have survived because of their value rather than pamphlets or poorly produced, but popular, titles which would have been more prone to deterioration or disposal. The fact that many women are known to have been masters of apprentices and yet there is no trace of titles attributed to them underscores the difficulty in establishing absolute numbers of either titles or booksellers. I have assumed that the number of titles listed on ESTC indicate comparative outputs.

despite the increase in women's presence overall, some of these women appear to have sold just one or two books, probably as owners of a relative's copyright. One example of this is William Hogarth's widow, Jane. The ESTC lists just two titles which show her imprint, a complete edition of Hogarth's works in 1768 and *Analysis of Beauty* in 1772.⁴⁶ Mrs Swain of Walworth sold just one title, her husband's poem *Redemption*, in 1797. Jane Scott published one essay, *The Great Medical Efficacy and Safety of Dr John Scott's Pills*, which she claims was 'published at the desire of his patients' sometime between 1785 and 1791.⁴⁷ Elizabeth Steele published *Spring: A Descriptive Poem* and *From the French of Monsieur St. Lambert* but identified herself as a printer and the seller of at least one other, *Mrs. Baddeley's Memoirs*.⁴⁸ Whilst it is likely that some such texts would have been published because of their literary or artistic significance, we may only know of others today because a woman considered a relative's text, or her own work, worth preserving.

After 1730, there were some women who remained active as printers as well as retailers. Table 1 lists the thirty-five most productive women booksellers after 1730,

⁴⁶ Barker tells us, 'Jane Hogarth employed the engraver, Richard Livesay, in order to publish more of her husband's works and profited from a Hogarth revival in the 1780s'. Although entries on ESTC do not substantiate this, the ESTC records only book sales, not sales of prints or engravings. See Barker, 'Women, Work and the Industrial Revolution' in *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England* ed. by Barker and Chalus, pp. 81–100 (p. 98).

⁴⁷ J. Scot, *A Concise Essay on the Great Medical Efficacy and Safety of Dr John Scott's Pills, in Curing Gouty, Bilious, and Nervous Disorders, To Which are Added, Authentic Copies of Sundry Letters, and Cases of Cure, as Furnished by the Patients Themselves; and Published at Their Desire* (London: Mary-le-bone Printing Office, 1785) <<http://estc.bl.uk/N9219>>.

⁴⁸ The title page of *Spring: A Descriptive Poem* states that the title is 'entered at Stationers' Hall', suggesting that it was at risk of being pirated. Amy Culley has highlighted the complex measures that were sometimes undertaken to 'preclude the possibility of piracy', including personal signatures on each copy to substantiate ownership of material. See Amy Culley, 'The Sentimental Satire of Sophia Baddeley', *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*, 48 (2008), 677–92. *The Memoirs of Sophia Baddeley* were published 'for the Author' by John Trusler's Literary Press, June 1787. Steele claimed, however, that Trusler had not paid her the money she was due and advertised a self-published edition on 5 July. This led to an acrimonious dispute with Trusler over publication rights. See Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson, 'Baddeley [née Snow], Sophia (bap. 1744, d. 1786)' *ODNB* 2004 <<https://oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 9 July 2021].

including who they were, the dates they were active, and the number of imprints and apprentices for which they were responsible.

Some women worked in the print trades as supporters of family businesses and, when widowed, continued in the trade for a period until their sons were of age to take over. Such was the case for Catherine Ware, who appears in Table 1. On 16 August 1756, she alerted customers and readers of the *Daily Advertiser*: ‘Richard Ware, bookseller and stationer on Ludgate-hill, being deceased, his widow takes this method to inform his friends that she is advised to carry on the trade in all its branches, in the wholesale way, till her sons are of age’.⁴⁹ Catherine went on to publish 243 titles with the imprints ‘C. Ware’ and later with her son as ‘C. and R. Ware’. This is an example of a woman who kept the family business operational and profitable until her son was freed from his apprenticeship. She continued to be active, however, after he was ‘freed’, and both of their initials appear on imprints until 1785. Table 1 reveals that, between 1730 and 1800, the thirty-five leading women booksellers were responsible for producing or selling approximately 5536 titles. In addition, there were eighteen who bound, freed, or took over seventy-five apprentices. Of these, those women who produced the most titles are highlighted in red. The most prolific ‘booksellers’ were wholesale distributors of newspapers and pamphlets to the trade.

In the eighteenth century, the word bookseller was a generic term which covered a range of functions, including copyright owners, printers, publishers, wholesalers or trade distributors, retail booksellers, or mercuries. Anne Dodd and Elizabeth Nutt are examples of wholesalers. The older Anne Dodd’s name appears on 700 titles and distributed newspapers and pamphlets to the public and other booksellers. Her daughter-

⁴⁹ Notice in *Gazetteer and London Advertiser* (London England), 16 August 1756, *Burney Newspapers Collection* <<https://www.gale.com/intl/c/17th-and-18th-century-burney-newspapers-collection>> [accessed September 2020].

in-law, also Ann Dodd, distributed a further 200. Neither of them were printers. There are over 500 titles attributed to Elizabeth Nutt who worked with Anne Dodd in the distribution of newspapers, broadsides, and pamphlets. She had also inherited the patent for printing law books from her husband, John Nutt, in 1705.⁵⁰ A printer herself, she was ‘master’ of seven apprentices. Mary Cooper was probably the most prolific trade bookseller with over 2700 titles.⁵¹ She was a printer as well as a wholesaler, although there is no record of her taking on an apprentice. Tace Sowle was the most prolific publisher of religious texts. She produced almost 750 titles throughout her career, 65 titles after 1730. As a wholesaler, Catherine Ware bound no apprentices and sold texts mainly in conjunction with congers of other booksellers. Her imprints always appear as ‘printed for’, suggesting that she was only a seller and not the printer. Her own son’s record of apprenticeship to the Stationer, C. Hitch — a member of one of the congers she worked with — suggests that she did not have the requisite skills in printing to train an apprentice.

Table 1: Most Productive Women Booksellers after 1730.

Surname	Christian Name	Dates of Activity	No. of Titles	No. of Apprentices
Bates	Sarah	1719–1735	34	
Booker	E	1794–1800	36	
Cook(e)	Mrs. E	1731–1766	43	
Cooke	Mrs. S	1752–1776	25	
Cooper	Mary	1736–1761	1700	
Davenhill	Mary	1779–1783	20	
Dodd	Anne	1712–1739	700	
Dodd II	Ann	1739–1756	200	

⁵⁰ Laura Fuderer, Commentary to *A Checklist of Sources for 18th Century Women in Print*, Spring 1995 (<http://www3.nd.edu/2lfuderer>).

⁵¹ Beverley Schneller ‘John Hill and Mary Cooper: A Case Study in Eighteenth-Century Publishing’ in *Fame and Fortune: Sir John Hill and London Life in the 1750s*, ed by C. Brant and G Rousseau (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017) p. 111

Downing	Martha	1734–1753	155	
*Fenner/ Waugh	Mary	1734–1772	73 (+400 during second marriage to J. Waugh)	1
Fielder	Elizabeth	1768–1821	0	5
*Gurney	Martha	1772–1805	135	
Hands	Elizabeth	1763–1767	0	5
Harlow	Elizabeth	1787–1796	31	
Harrison	Mary	1769–1781	18	8
Hinde	Mary	1760–1764	65	
Hinxman	Jane	1761–1764	82	
Jenour	Sarah	1732	1	6
*Lewis	Mary	1755–1777	337	7
Longman	Mary	1755–1757	28	
Mayo	Hannah	1742	1	2
Newbery	Elizabeth	1780–1821	28	
Nunneley	Elizabeth	1752–1755	4	3
Nutt	Elizabeth	1716–1740	539	7
Parker	Anne	1733–1740	27	4
Read	Mary	1740–1755	15	3
Rockall	Agnes	1747	0	4
Rumball	Elizabeth	1701–1740	29	2
Say/Vint	Mary	1775–1809	20	6
*Sowle	Tace	1691–1749	744 (65 after 1730)	5
*Trapp/ Priestley	Martha	1791–1796	117	
Vokes	Jane	1754	0	3
Walker	Mary	1738–1785	0	3
Ware	Catharine	1761–1763	243	
Withers	Margaret	1735–1770	50	1
			5536	75

Measuring success or output by these quantitative methods, indicates the significance of women booksellers' contribution. Their longevity in terms of activity, the numbers of imprint pages, and the number of apprentices that they supervised does not offer conclusive proof of their entire contribution or the number of titles that they produced or sold. What these analyses do reveal, however, is that there were *more*, not

fewer, women in the trade after 1730, although the majority of those who remained, as Isobel Grundy claims, were mostly retail booksellers.

Table 1 records the thirty-five most prolific women booksellers after 1730, together with the number of titles and/or editions that they produced and the number of apprentices that they supervised during the period 1730–1800. Notably, for the purposes of this research, out of the top eleven women booksellers who are highlighted in red, five — Tace Sowle; Martha Gurney, Mary Lewis, Mary Fenner/Waugh, and Martha Trapp/Priestley — sold almost exclusively Protestant religious texts. These five women are marked in red with an asterisk. Of these five, three were also ‘masters’ of apprentices. Mary Fenner/Waugh bound one apprentice, Tace Sowle bound five apprentices, and Mary Lewis took over or bound seven apprentices during her working life.⁵² The predominance of publishers of Protestant nonconformist texts amongst the leading women publishers is particularly noteworthy. This suggests, as explored in the case studies of this thesis, that there were reasons other than purely commercial factors behind these women’s success and longevity in the trade, including their connection to nonconformist communities.

The statistical analysis presented here shows both the hegemony of religious publishing throughout the century and the constancy with which it was produced. This consistency remained despite legislative changes which had the potential to disrupt the status quo and impact the production of religious texts. Furthermore, it establishes and highlights that there were a few exceptional women who continued to take part fully in the London book trade as printers and sellers of religious titles for many decades during the eighteenth century, even after 1730, when the activities of women in the book trade

⁵² James Waugh, Mary’s second husband, bound a further four apprentices including William Fenner, Mary’s son. Since James Waugh was not trained as a printer but a glassmaker, it would have been Mary who supervised his apprentices.

generally became limited to roles as retail booksellers. This begs the question: How did these particular women survive and thrive when others like them were confined mainly to the retail trade? This thesis considers not only the commercial and circumstantial reasons behind their success, but also the influence of communities — familial, trade and nonconformist — upon their careers.

As noted above, the theory of ‘Communitarianism’ offers a useful framework for contextualising the work and lives of these women in terms of explaining their agency, autonomy, and prolonged activity in publishing at a time when other middle-class women were, seemingly, increasingly confined to low-skilled work or the private or domestic realms. Here, communities can be seen to have provided the structural support from which these women were able to operate successfully in a predominantly androcentric commercial environment. This research responds to Robert Shoemaker’s work which questions and compares theoretical ideas about the lives and status of women with the reality of ‘women’s lives as actually lived in order to assess how close the correspondence was between gender roles in theory and in practice’.⁵³ Such work enables significant qualifications to Jürgen Habermas’ theory of the separation of private and public spheres, as set out in the *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*.⁵⁴ In particular, it is important to question both Habermas’s assertion that women could not, because of their inferior status, contribute to the public sphere and his assessment that eighteenth-century society was fundamentally secular. These ideas will be examined in more detail throughout this study.

⁵³ Robert B. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society 1650–1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres?* (Harlow: Addison, Wesley Longman, 1998), p. 58.

⁵⁴ Habermas, p. 11.

Thesis outline.

The following chapter, on historical context, examines other factors that would not necessarily be categorised under the influence of communities but were nevertheless beneficial for women in the London book trade. These include their location and property in London, the expansion of a literate middle class, and the impact of the Evangelical Revival on publishing and religion. It highlights the significance of the Stationers' Company for women, particularly widows, and explores the professional relationships of these women with men in both nonconformist denominations and the London book trade. It also reflects on the attributes that women within nonconformist communities and women active in the book trades shared, such as the extent of their apparent equal status with men in both communities.

The case studies which constitute the subsequent four chapters are arranged chronologically according to the periods of activity that these women were at work, although many of their careers overlapped. The first woman nonconformist bookseller in this study is Tace Sowle, a Quaker whose career began in the late seventeenth century and who produced approximately 744 titles, publishing 124 titles in the final two decades of her life. She died in 1749. With nearly fifty years in the trade, she enjoyed the longest period of publishing activity of the women in this study. The second case study examines the life and work of Mary Fenner/Waugh, who produced 73 titles under her own imprint and a further 400 titles under that of her second husband, James Waugh. Her work was much involved with leading dissenters, particularly Philip Doddridge, a Congregationalist minister, theologian, writer and academy tutor. Mary Lewis was closely involved with the Moravians and other evangelicals published 337 religious titles during her twenty-five-year period of solo activity. Martha Trapp/Priestley, Mary Lewis's daughter, published 117 titles in only five years, but was

active considerably longer in her mother's, then her husband's, business from the same address in Paternoster Row. Their work and relationship with the Moravians are presented in case study three. Finally, the career of Martha Gurney is discussed in case study four. Gurney published 135 titles over thirty-five years, many of them abolitionist texts and controversial political pamphlets by William Fox, who was sympathetic to Protestant dissent. It seems likely that her Christian beliefs as a Particular Baptist bookseller motivated her support of late eighteenth-century nonconformist ideologies regarding universal liberty, including the abolition of the slave trade and social reform.

From the evidence presented in the historical context chapter and the subsequent case studies, I demonstrate how nonconformist women booksellers in eighteenth-century London were dependent on their familial, trade and religious communities for their agency and autonomy in the production, sales and dissemination of Protestant nonconformist, evangelical and abolitionist literature during the period 1730–1800. In turn, nonconformist denominations and individuals benefitted from their professional skills, hospitality, and loyalty. In addition, I compare the influence of social, economic, geographic, and political factors on these women's careers that help explain their survival at a time when women were increasingly confined to the domestic sphere. Finally, I attempt to distinguish between the extent to which these women contributed to the literary sphere from the degree to which they were able to participate in the broader public and political spheres.

Historical Context

This chapter considers the historical contextual factors relevant to the lives and careers of the five women considered in the following case studies who specialised in printing, selling and disseminating religious texts for nonconformist denominations. These women booksellers capitalised on nonconformist intellectual, religious and textual culture that helped support their work. There were, however, other factors of contemporary eighteenth-century society which supported their careers. These included a free press; the expansion of a literate middle class; the emergence of the Evangelical Revival; theological differences and religious debates related to Protestant dissent and the Anglican church; and inheritance of an established historical precedent from previous women active in the book trade from its inception. As booksellers, these women were not breaking new ground in maintaining their occupations but were following in the footsteps of their seventeenth-century, and earlier, female predecessors. The cottage-style model of family print businesses lent itself to the merging of work and family and hence enabled participation in the literary marketplace from within the domestic environment. Nonconformist women booksellers, through their position within the nonconformist community, were sufficiently well placed to resist social and commercial forces and remained firmly in control of their book trade operations throughout the eighteenth century.

This thesis posits that the nonconformist community was the primary influence, either directly or indirectly, that supported the agency, autonomy and careers of these five women booksellers. This community provided a structure within which these women were able to operate commercial businesses successfully for many decades. Furthermore, this support was reciprocal, enabling both women booksellers and Protestant dissenters to participate in the literary, public and political spheres.

This study questions the ideas of Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, who maintain that pressure to confine women within the domestic sphere was ‘one of the fixed points of middle-class status’.⁵⁵ The women booksellers examined here, despite being positioned in the middle class, did not conform to this societal pressure. They were literate and professional, operated similarly to men, and managed similar printing and bookselling operations during the period. Their experiences and activities appear to defy categorisation in terms of ‘separate spheres’ theory. The ‘systematic use of separate spheres as the organizing concept of the history of middle-class women’ has also been challenged by Amanda Vickery, who has called for ‘case studies of the economic roles, social lives, institutional opportunities and personal preoccupations of women from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries’ to establish whether the ‘rhetoric of domesticity and private spheres contributed to female containment or instead was simply a defensive and impotent reaction to public freedoms already won’.⁵⁶ This study responds to Vickery’s call in providing case studies of women whose economic roles and preoccupations outside the private sphere are clear. These case studies highlight the shortcomings of theories concerned with gender in public and private spheres, which have also been pointed out by Betty Schellenberg in her study on the professionalisation of eighteenth-century women writers. Her dissatisfaction with the state of women’s literary history for the eighteenth century builds on the work of feminist historians ‘who have for some time been raising concerns about the value of this broad-brush model as an analytical tool’.⁵⁷ This study responds to Schellenberg and

⁵⁵ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780–1850*, revised edn (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 275.

⁵⁶ Amanda Vickery, ‘Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women’s History’, *Historical Journal*, 36 (1993), 383–414 (p. 414).

⁵⁷ Betty Schellenberg, ‘Introduction’, in *Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 1–22 (p. 4).

Vickery's questioning of ideas surrounding separate spheres by providing four case studies which demonstrate that these women, whose careers remained fully engaged in printing and selling within the literary marketplace for many decades, participated in the literary and public spheres throughout the eighteenth century, seemingly unaware that they were marginalised or considered less than their male counterparts.

The contextual issues that supported these women challenge the idea that the public and political spheres were the exclusive domain of bourgeois men.

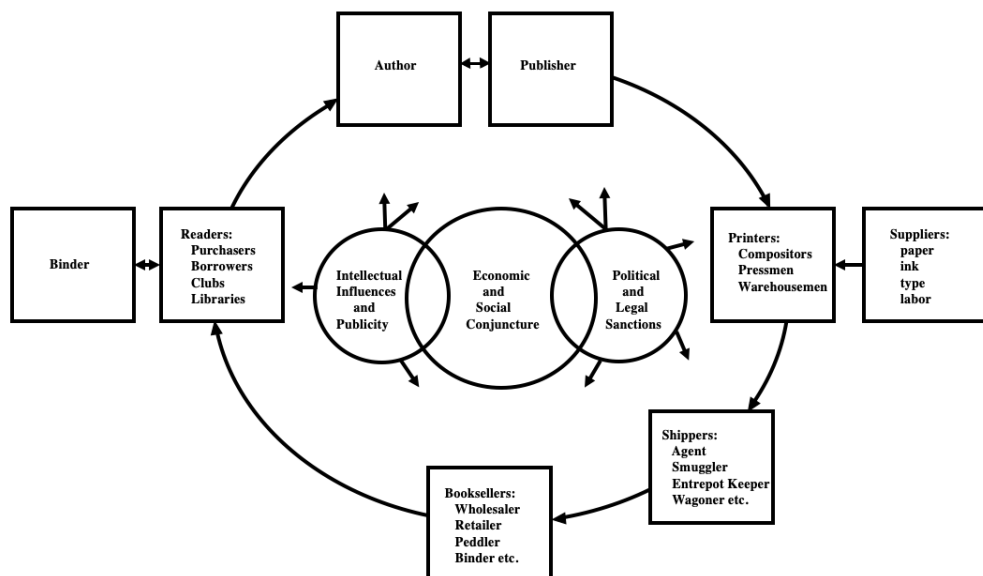
Nonconformist women booksellers depended upon the intellectual and textual background that Protestant dissenters provided. Their work could be viewed not as a separate entity to their religion but more a beneficial, although unremarkable, day-to-day expression of their faith. This study has highlighted the restrictions that the Act of Toleration placed on nonconformists who, while enjoying religious freedoms, were not admitted to public office. Tessa Whitehouse tells us that, in their response to these restrictions, 'dissenters were highly motivated to construct print as an alternative institution which could grant them a public voice'.⁵⁸ Nonconformists developed their own educational establishments and places of worship, traditions, friendships and significantly a textual culture to which these women contributed. Their female booksellers were literate, skilled and autonomous professionals and their contribution belies long-held assumptions regarding the status of women as being confined to the domestic sphere during the eighteenth century. Although difficult to maintain in all cases, there is also some evidence which suggests that these women's careers were boosted by some enlightened nonconformist attitudes regarding the education of women, universal equality, social and political reform, and the validity of women's spiritual experience. This element supporting gender equality is difficult to establish,

⁵⁸ Whitehouse, p. 19.

however, and does not appear to be as significant as friendship and loyalty between authors and their publishers.

Nonconformist influence pervaded three areas of these women bookseller’s lives and careers: their family, their trade community, and their denominational affiliations. Worldly or secular elements to their careers, which may at first appear to have been unconnected to nonconformity, were, in fact, as reliant on nonconformist influence as the authors whose texts they published. Nonconformist individuals were present in almost all elements of Robert Darnton’s model of the communications circuit (Figure 3), which represents the inclusive feedback circuit in the production and consumption of texts which influenced the prevailing social, economic, legal and intellectual culture.⁵⁹

Figure 3: Darnton’s communications circuit.



Notwithstanding that the designations of printer, bookseller and publisher should possibly appear in the box marked ‘publisher’ in this model, to reflect a more realistic

⁵⁹ Robert Darnton, ‘What is the History of Books?’, *Daedulus*, 111 (1982), 65–83. <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/20024803>> [accessed 16 August 2021] (p. 68).

model of eighteenth-century nonconformist print production, this representation of overall feedback is relevant when applied to their book production, since nonconformists were present in almost all categories that Darnton denotes: authors, publishers (printers, compositors, retail and trade wholesalers, and distributors), readers, purchasers, and borrowers. Furthermore, they responded to, and influenced, political and legal sanctions, economics and social contexts, and contributed to contemporary intellectual debate. These factors are denoted in the oval boxes at the centre of Figure 3. Darnton's model offers a template for understanding how individuals from each category could form one overarching nonconformist community, contributing to the production of their texts and subsequent feedback from their readership. What this model fails to indicate, however, is the very close social and hospitable links that could also exist within this circuit, as addressed in each individual case study within this thesis.

Other aspects to women's work that were related to their bookselling operations, such as their literacy and skill set, their location and property within London, and their affiliation to the Stationers' Company, were mainly the result of their family connections. Family members were also book trade colleagues and members of the same denominations. Families supported female members in the skills and connections they needed for their occupations. In addition, they provided access to family property and equipment. Most aspects of their professional and personal lives were interconnected with their faith. This interconnectedness provided the structure on which these women sustained their lives and careers.

The contribution of nonconformists to the cross-denominational Evangelical Revival and the status of the Anglican church are also considered within this chapter. The significance of the Stationers' Company for women in the book trades, particularly

widows, is also highlighted. The status of women booksellers is compared to other women at work during the period. Brief synopses of their relationships with the male booksellers with whom they worked most frequently are also presented. In addition, by revisiting Habermas's concept of the structural transformation of the public sphere, this chapter questions theories regarding the relevance of separate spheres with regard to nonconformist women working in the London book trade.

Aspects of nonconformists' attitudes towards women.

Just as women's roles in the London book trade during the latter part of the eighteenth century has been overlooked, Timothy Whelan claims that 'neglect has also taken place in the area of nonconformist women's history generally'.⁶⁰ Whelan has previously highlighted that, within the area of nonconformist literature, educated women played a crucial role as correspondents, transcribers, manuscript authors and circulators of texts, as well as authors and poets in their own right. Nonconformist women writers were exceptional, elite women, however, who were active within their religious denominations as authors of theology, hymns, and religious autobiographies. The coterie of West Country women poets, whose work Whelan examined, were from an educated, upper-middle class background. They did not operate businesses like women booksellers in London. More recent research undertaken by Whelan regarding the roles of nonconformist women in the book trade has addressed three of the women booksellers who are also the subject of this research: Mary Lewis, Martha Trapp and Martha Gurney.

⁶⁰ Whelan, 'General Introduction', p. xvii; and *Other British Voices: Women, Poetry and Religion 1766–1840* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015).

The influence of women in their religious communities was, nevertheless, limited in most cases. Commonly, women held no positions of authority or governance in their religious groups and, except for those women whose involvement should be regarded as singular or exceptional rather than ordinary, their histories have been given little scholarly attention. Richard Greaves notes, however, that, during the seventeenth century, nonconformist women contributed in terms of not only ‘the spiritual life of the congregation but by providing religious instruction as well as patronage and hospitality to ministers’.⁶¹ The relative scarcity of formal research into women’s roles within dissenting groups should not be taken as a sign that they were not involved in them. Research undertaken by Anne Dunan-Page has revealed that, for dissenters, ‘women could make up to 80% of the members of a congregation’.⁶² It is certain that women contributed to their denominations, although their contribution remains undiscovered. Some women affiliated to nonconformist denominations, particularly Quaker women, published their own writings. Others became involved ‘in a range of philanthropic and missionary projects’.⁶³ Women may have contributed to the congregations of nonconformist denominations which shared certain beliefs in common, but, doctrinally, no particular denomination accepted women in any formal leadership or governing role, with the possible exception of the Quakers (the Religious Society of Friends), whose founder George Fox had believed that all people were equal in the eyes of God. The Friends’ egalitarian belief in this ‘inner light’ validated women’s spiritual experience and led to some women becoming preachers, writers of theology, or biographers of their

⁶¹ Richard L. Greaves, ‘The Role of Women in Early English Nonconformity’, *American Society of Church History*, 52 (1983), 299–311 (p. 311).

⁶² Ann Dunan-Page, *L’Expérience Puritaine: Vies et récits de dissidents (xvii–xviii siècle)* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2017), p. 10.

⁶³ Anne Stott, ‘Women and Religion’, in *Women’s History, Britain, 1700–1850: An Introduction*, ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 100–23 (p.110).

own spiritual experiences, such as Margaret Fell (1614–1702), a Quaker leader who published theological doctrine. Yet, women preachers were subject to constraints and criticism, as their presence ‘produced a corresponding defence of the patriarchal order, perhaps in response to gender anxiety’ amongst Quakers who ‘attempted to distance themselves from people who they perceived as a threat to the movement’s survival’.⁶⁴ From 1784, Quaker women enjoyed a properly constituted Women’s Yearly Meeting. It is possible that the acceptance of an equal testimony of personal spiritual experience may have influenced an acceptance by some men of women’s equality in other areas of Quaker lives and may help explain why Tace Sowle’s role as their long-term printer and publisher was never challenged.

As the Bible ‘gave women a language to validate their callings’, women took an active role in the Evangelical Revival by supporting their congregations and organising prayer groups and Bible readings.⁶⁵ Some Methodist women defied public censorship and became female preachers in early Wesleyan Methodism. They obeyed what John Wesley described as their ‘exceptional call’ from God, which motivated them to preach to large congregations or gatherings of both men and women, despite public censorship. After 1791, following the death of Wesley and the separation of Methodism from the Church of England, women were no longer sanctioned to preach. Amy Culley reveals that, while ‘religious identification provided a powerful sense of social belonging and enable[d] public participation’ for Methodist women, it could also lead to ‘a loss of self in the demand for religious conformity and self-abnegation’. She argues that while writing about spiritual transformation may have enabled ‘self-definition, social agency and communal belonging’, the pressure to conform to certain behaviour and tropes

⁶⁴ Catie Gill, ‘“Ministering Confusion”: Rebellious Quaker Women (1650–1660)’, *Quaker Studies*, 9 (2004), 17–30 (pp. 21, 24).

⁶⁵ Stott, (p. 102).

risked ‘self-fragmentation’.⁶⁶ Culley’s work examines autobiographies of women’s spiritual experiences of conversion and responses to their subsequent religious conformity. Their contributions to the literary sphere were autobiographical and literary. Women bookseller’s contribution to the literary sphere took an entirely different form in the material production and distribution of religious texts. In this occupational approach, they avoided any ‘loss of self’, while they benefitted from similar social agency and communal belonging.

Karen E. Smith argues that, although nonconformists differed in their approach to church polity and doctrine in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, ‘there was widespread agreement that home and family life were at the heart of genuine piety and true holiness of life’.⁶⁷ For the most part, the role of women was to provide an example and environment in their homes for spiritual devotion. In general, women’s domestic lives involved providing an environment where spiritual devotion for themselves, and for their husband, children, servants and visitors, could take place. Mothers were crucial in influencing their children and were often the major religious influence in the home and family life: ‘Good Nonconformist parents were expected to assert a strong influence upon the children. Women in particular were expected to take the lead in this domestic religious sphere’.⁶⁸ There were a significant number of texts produced to aid the practice of religious worship within the home and family. The women booksellers whose careers are studied here published some of these texts. For example, *The Family*

⁶⁶ Amy Culley, ‘Women’s Life Writing 1760–1830: Spiritual Selves, Sexual Characters, and Revolutionary Subjects’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Queen Mary University of London, 2007), p. 3.

⁶⁷ Karen E. Smith, ‘Nonconformists, the Home and Family Life’, in *T&T Clark Companion to Nonconformity*, ed. by Pope, pp. 285–304, (p. 285).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

Prayer Book was published by Mary Fenner in 1743 for Philip Doddridge, the leading dissenting minister, writer and academy tutor.⁶⁹

Women fulfilled many roles outside the home, prompted by their Christian beliefs. They visited the sick, taught in Sunday schools, and engaged in fundraising. As wives and helpmeets to their husbands, as maternal influencers of their children, and as hostesses to visiting ministers and preachers, women's influence was active and substantial within their domestic environments and some nonconformist denominations. Women, therefore, were prominent within their religious denominations, even if they were not leaders of them and women printers and booksellers enjoyed a special status within their denominations because of their professional skills.

Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall argue that women's religious motivation regularly released them from the private sphere and, 'in their role as household managers women could use social recognition through hospitality or by "selective trading" where they might boycott tradesmen for political or religious purposes. If anything, such ventures increased in scale and frequency throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries'.⁷⁰

Women were not entirely without influence even in the domestic sphere. Women contributors to Protestant nonconformity, as members of congregations, family educators of children, suppliers of hospitality, and providers of domestic arrangements conducive to religious worship, were later able to participate beyond the purely domestic sphere as they became contributors to philanthropic and missionary projects. Indeed, Martha Gurney published William Fox's pamphlet, *An Address to the People of*

⁶⁹ Full title: Philip Doddridge, *The Family Prayer Book: or prayers to be used in families every morning and evening. To which are added some distinct forms for more special and extraordinary occasions* (London: printed and sold by M. Fenner at the Turk's Head in Gracechurch Street, 1743)

⁷⁰ Davidoff and Hall, 'Introduction' pp. xiii – 1 (p. xxxvii).

Great Britain, On the Propriety of Refraining from the Use of West India Sugar and Rum, in 1791, a text which encouraged selective trading by calling for a public boycott of buying produce derived from the slave trade. She is an example of a Baptist woman bookseller who directly contributed to a wider social cause. Stott argues that, from the beginning of the eighteenth century, ‘religion played a pivotal role in the development of proto-feminism’.⁷¹ While this may have been the case there is nothing to suggest that nonconformist women printers viewed themselves as feminist pioneers in the sense of Wollstonecraft.⁷²

Women booksellers furthered the nonconformist and evangelical cause by utilising their skills, agency and position in making a logistical contribution to literary culture through deploying those professional skills consistently in ways different to other women, whose activities were centred on domestic duties and direct service to their denominations. Their contribution to the literary sphere also took a different route to that of their wealthier, literary, women poets, whose work has been examined by Whelan. While three of these women booksellers were also mothers, their maternal role did not confine them solely to a domestic realm, since their domestic realm was also their workplace. None of these women booksellers was a Wesleyan Methodist. The demands of their religious affiliation did not place excessive self-reflection or psychological demands on them. Although they suffered economic hardship and personal turmoil at times, these experiences did not result self-fragmentation. Nonconformist women booksellers, therefore, were practical contributors to both the print trade and their nonconformist denominations.

⁷¹ Stott, (p. 103).

⁷² The term ‘feminist’ was not coined until the nineteenth century. Mary Wollstonecraft has been described as the first major feminist. Her work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, was published by the nonconformist publisher, Joseph Johnson, in 1792.

The significance of London as a location for nonconformist publishing.

Location in London was a primary factor that influenced the careers of women booksellers. Their location was the result of their connection to the book trade. London also offered a commercial advantage by putting them in close contact with leading representatives of the nonconformist community and the Evangelical Revival. The licensing of chapels for nonconformist worship and the concentration of dissenters in towns and cities allowed for greater freedom of religious expression than in rural areas, where there was usually just one building, the parish church, in which to worship. Several ‘thousand licenses were taken out for meeting-places in the first twenty years’ following the Toleration Act of 1689.⁷³ Moreover, London, as the largest city in Britain, became a significant centre for nonconformists and many dissenting ministers.

Publishing activity was also concentrated in London because the original Licensing Act of 1662 had ‘entrenched the monopoly of the London booksellers by restricting the number of presses, master printers, journeymen and apprentices, and made it unlawful to print any book or pamphlet not authorised by the press licenser and entered in the register of the Stationers’ Company’.⁷⁴ The Stationers’ Company, based at Stationers’ Hall in the centre of the City of London, had received its Royal Charter in 1557.⁷⁵ Hence, as the city in which these women traded, London was a central location for both the book trade and for Protestant dissent. The Stationers Company was instrumental in the occupations of women in the print trades.

⁷³ John Spurr, *The Post Reformation: Religion, Politics and Society in Britain, 1603–1714* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 209.

⁷⁴ N. M. Dawson, ‘The Death Throes of the Licensing Act and the “Funeral Pomp” of Queen Mary II, 1695’, *Journal of Legal History*, 26 (2005), 119–142 (p.119).

⁷⁵ Blagden, *The Stationers’ Company*, p. 19.

All these women booksellers of nonconformist texts were based in areas near St Paul's Churchyard, whether to the west or east, and close to Ave Maria Lane, where Stationers' Hall was located; this was the heart of the print and book trades. The location of a business influenced the practical operations of printing and bookselling. One of the bookseller's purposes was to attract customers. London provided commercial shopping areas, meeting houses and routes to the rest of the country, which attracted customers and enabled efficient country-wide distribution of books. Proximity to others in the print and book trades, expertise, and an established culture for the warehousing, circulation, advertising, sales and distribution of literature were also advantageous. These women's London location put them at the centre of the book trade and was a significant element in their success.

Expansion of a literate middle class.

The expansion of a literate, middle-class population during this period was also a beneficial influence on the production and dissemination of nonconformist texts. Literacy advanced steadily during the eighteenth century. Michael Suarez estimates that, in 1700, 'the English reading public aged fifteen or over numbered 1,267,000', but, by 1750, the number was 1,894,000, an increase of nearly 50%.⁷⁶ Earle claims that middle-class people from 1660 to 1730 were 'almost uniformly literate and the demand for self-improvement was eagerly met by publishers'.⁷⁷ Arguably, increases in a middle-class literate population would have been beneficial to all printers and booksellers, regardless of religious affiliation. The large quantity of religious texts produced during

⁷⁶ Michael F. Suarez, 'Introduction', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. by Suarez and Turner, pp. 1–35 (p. 11).

⁷⁷ Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Life in London 1660–1730* (London: Methuen, 1989), p. 10).

the century has been noted. Self-improvement was frequently a core topic of religious texts, particularly for Arminians, those that advocated exemplary conduct and good works as a means to salvation. These women booksellers were themselves literate. They were from the middle classes and were ideally placed to benefit from the growth of sales that resulted from this growth in literacy amongst others like them.

Ruth Watts notes that women during the eighteenth century were ‘generally not regarded as needing an education for their domestic role in life’, explaining that ‘girls were debarred from public and grammar schools, private classical and vocational schools and all higher education’.⁷⁸ Although Marjorie Reeves points out that there were both boarding and day schools for girls by the eighteenth century which taught reading, writing and sometimes French, their syllabuses were more concerned with the care and morals of their ‘Young Ladies’ and concentrated their efforts on teaching domestic skills and dancing. Reeves notes, however, that ‘to a large extent the real education of intellectual young women was fostered by the men in their environment’.⁷⁹ She cites the poet Elizabeth Rowe as a ‘striking example’ of this. Women in the print trades needed advanced literacy skills in order to operate effectively in their workplace. Women printers and booksellers were, by the nature of their work, literate. Emma L. Greenwood in her study of the work and identity of letterpress printers in Britain from 1750 to 1850 has noted that printers ‘do not easily fit working-class models, having for much of their history exhibited above average levels of literacy’.⁸⁰ As masters of printing businesses, nonconformist women booksellers were of superior status to the

⁷⁸ Ruth Watts, ‘Rational Dissenting Women and the Travel of Ideas’, *Enlightenment and Dissent: Intellectual Exchanges, Women and Rational Dissent*, 26 (2010), 1–27 (p. 5).

⁷⁹ Marjorie Reeves, *Female Education and Nonconformist Culture 1700–1900* (London: Leicester University Press, 1997), p. 19.

⁸⁰ Emma L. Greenwood, ‘Work, Identity and Letterpress Printers in Britain, 1750–1850’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Manchester, 2015), p. 13.

men they employed and enjoyed higher levels of literacy than most women in their class.

The culture and status of the eighteenth-century print and book trades.

During the eighteenth century, book trade activities overlapped and were not clearly defined. For example, printers could also be copyright holders. Copyright owners, or publishers, may or may not have been printers but could be book sellers or produce pamphlets for street sales and distribution. Although not an authoritative guide to the contribution of each participant, imprints offer clues to the role each bookseller took in the production of any particular text; phrases such as ‘printed by’, ‘printed for’, or ‘printed and sold by’ demonstrate subtle differences in the contribution each bookseller or printer made. This distinction is important to consider when identifying responsibilities for production and often demonstrate the relationships between authors and their booksellers and printers and their booksellers.⁸¹ The frequency with which women shared imprints with men suggest not only their status as owners of copyrights but also their equal status to men in the book trade. Using imprints for identification purposes presents difficulties, however, since the custom of using just an initial and a surname has often resulted in women’s contribution being mistaken for that of a man and has historically been one of the reasons that the contribution of women printers has not been recognised.

⁸¹ An ‘imprint’ was the legal requirement that the producer of any printed text should record his or her name and address on the title page for reasons of traceability and accountability. See James Raven, ‘Investing in Books’, in *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade 1450–1850* (London: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 119–153 (p. 126, 127).

Women and work during the eighteenth century.

Women booksellers were exceptional as working women since they were skilled, literate professionals who were able to work autonomously. Bridget Hill notes that, although ‘the vast majority of women in the eighteenth century worked’, as the century progressed, an expanding industrialised society increasingly separated women and the domestic environment from men and the business or industrial environment, at least for the middle classes.⁸² The acquisition of literacy and professional skills separated women printers and booksellers from most other working women during the eighteenth century. For them, the separation of work from home was not applicable since their homes were also their places of work. McDowell has noted that ‘the survival of family history in the book trades meant women were still widely active as printers and publishers’.⁸³ As daughters of printers and booksellers, girls served unofficial apprenticeships in the family business. As adults, women in the print trades were already cognizant with the systems and skills needed for printing, producing, and selling books and pamphlets. Moreover, as mistresses of their households, they were accustomed to being in positions of authority over apprentices, servants and journeymen. Grundy notes that, ‘in the book trade itself, family involvement was not something that would be specifically noted at a time when most publisher-booksellers lived in the same building with their business operation’.⁸⁴ Women printers, however, enjoyed more in common with the men in their trade than with other working women. Affiliation to a guild, in their case the Stationers’ Company, enabled them to operate their own or their families’ businesses before and during marriage, and as widows. Women booksellers, however, did not view themselves

⁸² Bridget Hill, *Women, Work and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 259.

⁸³ McDowell, p. 5.

⁸⁴ Grundy, ‘Women and Print’, in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. by Suarez and Turner, pp.146–159 (p. 148).

as a community of independent professionals. McDowell maintains that, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, ‘divisions of rank and occupation within social orders, competing religious and political allegiances and an array of other differences for the most part prevented these women from understanding themselves as a group’.⁸⁵ Religious differences remained throughout the eighteenth century and, although the women booksellers discussed below were likely to have known each other, given that they were close geographically and sometimes collaborated, they would not have seen themselves as a group as such. As printers, they often worked in family businesses before they were married, and they continued to do so throughout their first or second marriages and after they became widows.

It is important to note, however, that there were other independent middle-class women at work in London who supported the luxury goods trade around the Cheapside area between St Paul’s and the Royal Exchange, the same area that was at the centre of the book trade. The women booksellers discussed here had much in common with the women who sold luxury goods around Cheapside, not least in the operation of their own businesses and in being members of London’s livery companies.⁸⁶ Books were often considered luxury items and the women booksellers situated within the area of the City were able to supply them.

Women booksellers enjoyed an exceptional status compared to other working women. Family immersion in the trade as girls in cottage-style businesses offered training by way of informal apprenticeships, which prepared them for professional work for the rest of their lives, irrespective of marital status. Women booksellers worked at

⁸⁵ McDowell, p. 5.

⁸⁶ See Amy Erickson, ‘City Women in the 18th Century: An Outdoor Exhibition of Women Traders in Cheapside, London, 21 September–18 October 2019’, *London’s Forgotten Businesswomen* <<http://www.hist.cam.ac.uk/citywomen>> [accessed August 2020].

the same level as their male counterparts with the support of their livery, the Stationers' Company. They remained close within their trade communities, with whom they shared copyrights and common religious interests.

Women in the print trade and their affiliation with the Stationers' Company.

James Raven tells us that, by the middle of the eighteenth century, many bookselling communities were strong and many booksellers and printers married others within their trade. He uses Little Britain as an example of an area of publishing activity where 'sons and daughters of printers married each other and various apprentices married daughters and widows', noting 'a certain communal working identity'.⁸⁷ Women printers and booksellers were linked by marriage or family to other printers and they were largely dependent on their families for their skills and trade connections and their subsequent status and independence. The skills and knowledge that they acquired went largely unremarked upon because of their commonplace acceptance within their community, and subsequent androcentric prejudices of some book trade commentators.

The support of the Stationers' Company and practice of apprenticing girls, rights of patrimony to daughters, and subsequent *feme sole* status to daughters and widows of male livery members, suggests a recognition of women's intrinsic skills in the book trade. Affiliation to the Stationers' Company was advantageous. Crucially, membership could result in women being both valued by, but vulnerable to, men looking for an entry into the trade. As McDowell explains,

the wife of a freeman of the Stationers Company automatically became a freewoman upon her husband's death. Providing that her husband was not in debt, she retained the family rights, equipment, and shares in the English stock. Released from her legal status as *feme covert*, she could sign contracts, be granted

⁸⁷ James Raven, *Bookscape: Geographies of Printing and Publishing in London before 1800* (London: The British Library, 2014), pp. 72–3.

loans, and bind apprentices in her own right. At the same time, though, because marriage into the trade was a standard way for journeymen to acquire businesses, recent widows were a vulnerable group.⁸⁸

There is some circumstantial evidence to suggest that some women here may have been vulnerable to opportunist men. Mary Fenner's first husband, William, may have exploited her and her mother's situation in marrying Mary and investing her family money into his experimental printing business. Martha Lewis married her mother's apprentice, Henry Trapp, who proved a less than ideal husband. Their case studies show, however, that both women were able to overcome the difficulties of less than successful first marriages and remained resourceful and capable business women.

Women's contribution to the print trades has often been obscured because of the privileges accorded to the men in the profession. A husband's name took precedence, even though he may have had no skills or family connection to the print trade at all. As soon as a single woman married or a widow remarried, her name was replaced by that of her husband. Even as a widow, operating her own business under her own imprint, a woman book printer's name and gender were obscured, because only an initial and surname appeared on imprints; a 'Mrs' or 'Widow' moniker was only occasionally used in this capacity. This has resulted in the identification of women as men in some cases. After marriage, it was the husband's name that appeared on imprint pages, even if he — like Mary Fenner's second husband, James Waugh, and Martha Trapp's second husband, Timothy Priestley — was not a printer.⁸⁹ Tace Sowle overcame this potential for obscurity by using the imprint 'Assigns of J. Sowle' following her marriage and the death of her mother. As such, she avoided using her husband's name on imprints

⁸⁸ McDowell, pp. 40–1.

⁸⁹ James Waugh is known to have been an apothecary and was made 'Free of this City of London by Redemption in the Company of Glassmakers for the sum of forty-six shillings and eight pence', in 1742. LMA MS London, England, Freedom of the City Admission Papers, 1681–1930: James Waugh, Feb–July 1744, <<http://ancestry.co.uk>> [accessed 11 January 2021].

completely until long after his death, even though she had adapted her surname to Sowle-Raylton.

Through circumstance of birth, wives and daughters of London book trade families were literate and learned professional skills. They gained access to property and printing equipment and inherited family reputations and affiliation to their livery. Despite these women's professional status and independence, their male counterparts were more numerous and more prominent. The leading publishers of nonconformist texts have recently been identified by Isabel Rivers.⁹⁰ Some of these male publishers were related to the women booksellers discussed here, while others worked collaboratively with them in sharing copyrights or imprints with them. These male booksellers were often similarly denominationally or idealistically aligned and nonconformist male booksellers worked often with women booksellers.⁹¹

Men booksellers of dissenting literature.

The leading male disseminators of nonconformist texts who collaborated with women booksellers during the period 1680–1830 were: the brothers Edward and Charles Dilly; Joseph Johnson; James Buckland; John Noon; James Waugh, second husband of Mary Fenner; Richard Hett; Richard Ford; Aaron Ward; John Lewis, husband of Mary Lewis and father of Martha Trapp; and Joseph Gurney, brother of Martha Gurney. For the purposes of this research, they have been listed in chronological order of their output of nonconformist or evangelical literature.

Joseph Johnson (1738–1809) was probably the most prolific nonconformist publisher between 1760 and 1813 and was fundamentally sympathetic to 'ideas

⁹⁰ Rivers, *Vanity Fair and the Celestial City*, pp. 9–41.

⁹¹ In addition to Rivers' research, the BBTI, *ODNB*, and ESTC have been used to identify the contribution of male nonconformist booksellers.

favouring improvement and reform'.⁹² He published 1067 religious titles, including Unitarian works.⁹³ Mary Lewis shared several imprints with Joseph Johnson, including works by William Mason (1719–1791) and Richard Elliot (*fl.* 1788).

The names of Edward Dilly (1732–1779) and Charles Dilly (1739–1807) appear individually or together as booksellers on 739 imprint pages, which were predominantly religious titles. The brothers were well known for a particular specialism in dissenting literature. They shared imprints with many other booksellers of dissenting titles named here, including Mary Lewis, James Waugh and later his widow, Mary Waugh. The 'E & C Dilly' imprint appears on many works by Isaac Watts (1674–1748), but the Dillys were best known as booksellers for Samuel Johnson and James Boswell. They enjoyed a reputation for sociability and the brothers' business based at the sign of The Rose and Crown at 22 Poultry was described as a 'kind of coffee house for authors'.⁹⁴

James Buckland (1710–1790) was also a prolific dissenting publisher-bookseller. His list was almost entirely made up of the work of dissenting authors. The ESTC database records well over one thousand titles with his name on the imprint page. His name also appears on some secular works, including Samuel Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* in 1781, eight titles by Daniel Defoe between 1761 and 1784, and twelve travel books by John Ogilvy. The dissenting writer he published most frequently was Isaac Watts. As early as 1743, Buckland's name appears alongside that of Mary Fenner as a seller of John Mason's *A Plain and Modest Plea*. Mary Lewis also printed W. Giles's *A Treatise of Marriage* for Buckland and Joseph Gurney in 1771. Between 1747 and his

⁹² Helen Braithwaite, *Romanticism, Publishing and Dissent: Joseph Johnson and the Cause of Liberty* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003), p. xii.

⁹³ Leslie F. Chard, 'Joseph Johnson: Father of the Book Trade', *Bulletin of the New York Public Library*, 79 (1976), 51–82.

⁹⁴ J. J. Caudle, 'Edward Dilly (1732–1779), bookseller' and 'Charles Dilly (1739–1807), bookseller', *ODNB* <<https://oxforddnb.com>> [accessed September 2020].

death in 1790, Buckland printed or sold 191 titles by Watts. He was also the first to publish Anne Steele's *Poems on Subjects Chiefly Devotional* in 1760. His name appears on imprints of thirty-nine titles by Philip Doddridge. In 1739, he printed a sermon for Doddridge, although in 1740 a further Doddridge title was printed for R. Hett and J. Buckland. From 1748 to 1757, Buckland's name appears on only five Doddridge titles, alongside those of J. Waugh and W. Fenner, Mary Fenner's second husband and son respectively. From 1760, he printed Doddridge's titles 'by assignment to the author's widow', with a number of other London booksellers whose names appear alongside his imprint.

John Noon (trading dates 1708–1765) was based at the White Hart, near Mercer's Chapel in Cheapside 1720–1755, then in Poultry until 1758. He published 513 titles, of which 446 were religious, mainly dissenting, works. The authors in whose titles or editions his name appears most frequently are Samuel Chandler (1693–1766), with twenty-three titles, and James Foster (1697–1753), with twenty-one titles. David Fate Norton has established, through typographical research, that, while the first two volumes of David Hume's *A Treatise on Human Nature* were published anonymously in January of 1739 by John Noon, these were actually printed by John Wilson, who was Mary Fenner's first business partner following the death of William Fenner.⁹⁵

Of the 451 titles which appear with Aaron Ward's (c. 1710–1747) imprint on ESTC, 263 concern religion. The remainder are an eclectic mix of Greek and Latin classical authors, three editions of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, many plays by Ben Jonson, and books about architecture, science, mathematics, geography and history. His religious titles included works by John Tillotson (1630–1694), with seven titles, three

⁹⁵ See David Fate Norton, 'John Wilson, Hume's First Printer', *British Library Journal*, 14 (1988), 123–135 (p. 123).

editions of John Mason's (1646–1674) *Spiritual Songs* produced in 1718 and 1735, and two editions of Isaac Watts's *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* in 1740 and 1744. Aaron Ward died in a tragic carriage accident in August 1747. The newspapers recording the event described him as: 'A very considerable bookseller in Little Britain [who] had acquired a good fortune with Reputation and was generally beloved and esteemed'.⁹⁶ On the imprint page of *A New Year's Gift* by Amos Harrison, Aaron Ward's name appears with Mary Fenner's imprint in 1742, along with that of John Noon.

James Waugh (1745–1766) married Mary Fenner in July 1744. From 1745 to 1766, his name appears on imprints at the Turk's Head in Gracechurch Street and/or Lombard Street, some with his stepson William Fenner, who was listed as his apprentice. Waugh's name appears on 395 titles. This study, however, has identified that it was Mary Fenner who was the actual printer of these works, and continued to publish under her own imprint, 'M Waugh', after James Waugh's death in 1766. In addition to fifty-two works or editions of Isaac Watts, Waugh's name appears on twenty-two by John Mason (1706–1763) and twenty-one by John Taylor (1694–1761). Twenty-four texts or editions by Philip Doddridge (1702–1751) were published exclusively from the Turk's Head address until Doddridge's death in 1751. After 1759, Doddridge's widow assigned the copyrights to James Rivington.⁹⁷

Richard Ford was active between 1716 and 1738 and was based at the Angel in the Poultry, Stocks Market, London. His name appears on 338 titles on the ESTC database. The authors he sold more frequently than any others were Isaac Watts, with fifty-one titles or editions, and William Harris (1675–1740), with twenty-one titles or

⁹⁶ [Anon.], *The General Advertiser*, 8 August 1747, *17th and 18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers Online* <<http://gdc.gale.com/products/17th-and-18th-century-burney-collection-newspapers>> [accessed 14 September 2021].

⁹⁷ Tessa Whitehouse, 'The Family Expositor, the Doddridge Circle and the Booksellers', *The Library*, 7 (2010), 321–344 (p. 384).

editions. His publications were almost all concerned with nonconformist religion, particularly sermons, books of practical divinity, and Biblical commentary, although he infrequently published titles on history. His name frequently appears alongside that of Richard Hett.

The name Richard Hett appears on 353 titles between 1724 and 1785. However, there were two booksellers or printers called Richard Hett, father and son. The first Richard Hett is listed on BBTI as having been in partnership with Richard Ford and the ESTC records imprints that certainly support that information. Yet, the BBTI offers no further biographical details. The second Richard Hett listed on BBTI was active between 1752 and his death in 1785. The second Richard Hett was apprenticed to Samuel Richardson and is recognised by the contributor to BBTI as ‘largely employed by Dissenters’. This evidence suggests, therefore, that both father and son were dissenting booksellers. The authors most frequently appearing with a Richard Hett imprint are Isaac Watts with 33 titles, John Guyse (1680–1761) with 11 titles, and John Evans (1680–1730) with nine titles. Richard Hett 1 apprenticed in 1717, in trade between 1725 and 1766, was an early publisher for Philip Doddridge, whose work was later produced by John Wilson, for Hett, then Mary Fenner and her husband James Waugh.

James Hutton’s (1715–1795) name appears on 106 titles on the ESTC database between 1737 and 1748. His bookshop was located at The Bible and Sun in little Wild Street from 1736. He was ‘awakened’ by the Wesleys, John and Charles. Unable to follow them to Georgia, he founded a Methodist society. At his bookshop in 1738, Peter Bohler established a Moravian-style band, which grew into the Fetter Lane Society and headquarters of the English Moravians and Evangelical Revival. In 1741, Hutton was elected first president of the Fetter Lane Society. He remained a bookseller until 1749,

when he was ordained a deacon. According to Podmore's entry in the *ODNB*, Hutton published the Moravian's English publications.⁹⁸ The ESTC database also records that he published thirteen titles by George Whitefield before 1741, when he broke with Whitefield upon 'refusing to publish two pamphlets by Whitefield with which he disagreed'.⁹⁹ The Moravian English titles came to be published by Mary Lewis, widow of John Lewis, and their descendants at Paternoster Row.

John Lewis was active as a publisher bookseller between 1739 and his death in 1755. He was based at Bartholomew Close between 1741 and 1754 and then moved to Paternoster Row in 1754. Mary Lewis, his widow, took over the business after his death. His name appears on imprints in the ESTC database on eighty-seven religious titles and five secular works. He published Church of England, Methodist and Baptist works. He produced *Nine Sermons*, by George Whitefield, in 1743. The author that appears most frequently is Anne Dutton (1692–1765), a Calvinist Baptist, poet and theologian, with thirteen titles. Likewise, he was the publisher of work by John Cennick (1718–1755), the Moravian evangelist. Seven titles of Cennick's appear exclusively with John Lewis's imprint. Cennick and Lewis both died in 1755 and Mary Lewis took over as exclusive publisher of Cennick's work. John Lewis published *A Vindication of the Methodists and Moravians*, for the Moravians, in 1751. John Lewis was also publisher of the *Christian's Amusement* and the *Weekly History*.

Joseph Gurney (1744–1815) was a Particular Baptist and abolitionist, brother to Martha Gurney, and son of Thomas Gurney, the Old Bailey court stenographer. As a shorthand writer for the Old Bailey, as his father had been, he published not only his father's guide to shorthand, *Brachygraphy*, with his sister, Martha, but also the printed

⁹⁸ C. J. Podmore, 'Hutton, James (1715–1795)', *ODNB*, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 29 Sept 2021].

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

reports of court sessions and parliamentary records, and he was active in societies which supported the abolition of slavery. His name appears with that of his sister, Martha, on his official works. He also appears on the imprints of 33 religious titles. On some imprints, his name appears with that of Mary Lewis.

Although John Wesley (1703–1791) remained a clergyman within the Church of England, and therefore did not consider himself a nonconformist, he and his brother, Charles, were leaders of ‘the Societies of People called Methodists’ and key figures in the Evangelical Revival. Throughout his career, John Wesley ‘edited, abridged, printed and distributed on a wide scale different kinds of religious writing by authors belonging to a number of different religious traditions’.¹⁰⁰ His name appears on 337 imprints on the ESTC database. The Methodists, however, did not separate from the Church of England until after Wesley’s death in 1791. Generally, Wesley used almost exclusively male booksellers, but Elizabeth Farley, a Quaker and the widow of Felix Farley, succeeded her husband in printing his works in Bristol from 1753 until 1758.

One argument central to this thesis is that the women subjects of this research produced a disproportionately larger number of nonconformist texts than their small number would suggest. These brief accounts of male booksellers producing nonconformist texts reveal the relationship of women booksellers to some of their male contemporaries and demonstrate their family connections. They also suggest a professional community inclusive of women in the same trade, particularly those women who were related to them or whose religious convictions were aligned with their own.

¹⁰⁰ Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England 1660–1780, Volume 1, Winchcote to Wesley* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), I, p. 217.

Nonconformist women booksellers, like their male counterparts, were at the intersection of commerce and religion. Since to publish means ‘to make public’, by definition, anyone involved with publishing, secular or religious, participates and contributes to some degree in a public sphere.¹⁰¹ The sheer number of religious texts produced during the century undercuts Jürgen Habermas’s treatment of eighteenth-century society as essentially secular.¹⁰² More specifically, the considerable contribution of women to literary production before and after 1730 belies Habermas’s claim that women did not have a role in influencing the public or political spheres. Religious literary discourse, generated by Protestant dissent and sold in a literary marketplace, contributed not only to the literary sphere, but also had potential to influence ideas developed in the public and political spheres. Women, therefore, who produced this literature made as significant a contribution to all three spheres, as their male counterparts.

Habermas, religion, women booksellers, and the literary, public and political spheres.

Jürgen Habermas posits that the eighteenth century was an overwhelmingly androcentric and secular society. Nevertheless, Habermas’s concept is a particularly relevant framework for this research, because he maintains that public opinion was formed through a literary sphere which itself informed the public and political spheres. This study is concerned with that literary realm. Furthermore, Habermas considers that England, and London in particular, were at the centre of this transformation. He situates women and religion outside the public sphere, yet this study argues that, in producing Protestant nonconformist and evangelical literary texts, women nonconformist

¹⁰¹ Definition of ‘To publish’, *Oxford English Dictionary* <<http://oed.com>>[accessed 2 December 2021].

¹⁰² See Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*.

booksellers made a hitherto unrecognised contribution to these literary, public and political spheres. A more nuanced approach to Habermas's theory is needed in order to understand the role that both religious activities and women booksellers of nonconformist and evangelical literature played within these spheres.

Habermas theorises that the development of market economies was constructed upon the commercial exchange of commodities, social labour, and news that resulted in a shift of control from feudal hierarchal structures to liberal democracies, centred upon the needs of commercial marketplaces and the power of individuals who joined together in a public sphere. Habermas's overarching aim was to trace liberal democracies in European civil societies, from their origins in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to their eventual erosion and decline in the twentieth century. He claims that the original transformation, however, from feudal state to liberal democracy, occurred first in England, where mercantilism, a parliamentary system, and an uncensored press, as a result of the lapse of the Licensing Act in 1695, had already existed from the late seventeenth century. London, as the largest city in England, was at the forefront of this transformation.¹⁰³

Habermas's blueprint was 'conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public'.¹⁰⁴ He argues that the public sphere was an essential element in developing a liberal democracy and that public opinion depended upon the world of letters, a literary sphere. This literary domain served the public sphere and the market economy through printing and circulating news and opinion in newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals, books, plays and, from the middle of the eighteenth century, novels. This

¹⁰³ Peter Earle tells us that the population of London in 1700 was half a million, making it the fourth largest city in the world, and that 'London was the seat of government, the main residence of the court, the only banking centre, virtually the only publishing centre and the home of the majority of professional people'. See Earle, p.17.

¹⁰⁴ Habermas, p. 27.

sphere relied upon an uncensored press. Published material was readily available for consumption by private individuals since much of it was distributed widely, particularly in newspapers, pamphlets and periodicals, in numerous coffee houses throughout London.

Coffee houses, established during the seventeenth century, were widespread by the eighteenth century, and Habermas claims that their culture and character as centres for sociability, social equality and critical debate — ‘literary at first, then also political’ — were crucial to the formation of public opinion within a public sphere.¹⁰⁵ He suggests that they were frequented by individuals who valued the quality of rational, critical discourse above social status. It was at this juncture of the literary, private and public spheres, and coffee-house culture, that he claims a space was created which had the capacity to generate public opinion that was based on rational, critical debate. Public opinion functioned as a critical moderator of the actions of state and government. Private individuals collectively ‘claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves’.¹⁰⁶ In this way, private individuals in the public sphere formed public opinion with the potential to influence the political sphere.¹⁰⁷ Markman Ellis, while noting that values of politeness, virtue, orderliness and propriety were feminine virtues, challenges this representation of the coffee house, claiming that contemporaneous evidence suggests that the coffee house was often anything but quiet, polite and business-like, and moreover, that ‘disputatious stimulation’ was part of their attraction. Furthermore, Ellis notes that women were often a feature of coffee houses as

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 32.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁰⁷ Markman Ellis notes that Samuel Johnson’s definition suggests ‘an idea, a way of life, a mode of socializing, a philosophy’. See Ellis, *The Coffee House: A Cultural History* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2004), p. xi.

owners or servers and highlights that ‘the figure of the coffee-women [...] has the greatest power to disrupt Habermas’s model of the public sphere’.¹⁰⁸

Whatever their appeal, nonconformists supported and frequented coffee houses. Dissenting booksellers Edward and Charles Dilly were known for their sociability, and, as mentioned above, the brothers’ business has been described as a ‘kind of coffee house for authors’.¹⁰⁹ There is further evidence that Protestant nonconformists frequented and socialised in coffee shops. In a preface to her father’s poem, *A Dialogue between Old Mr Pious and Madam Finic His Wife* in 1788, Martha Gurney, a Baptist bookseller, refers to her father, a strict Calvinist Baptist, attending a ‘Board of Ministers, then meeting at Blackwell’s Coffee House’ around 1745.¹¹⁰ Within the coffee house, the seating arrangements were based on the principle of equality, hence ‘unlike all other social institutions of the period, rank and birth had no place’.¹¹¹

Nonconformists used public forums just as others did in London society and should not be discounted as prominent formulators of public opinion. The private individuals that constituted Habermas’s concept of a public sphere were propertied, educated men and nonconformists were amongst these bourgeoisie. The bourgeois public sphere was not, however, inclusive, since, for Habermas, it excluded women along with non-property-owning men. Yet, the place in coffee-house culture for men of all ranks and levels of education already challenges this concept. Habermas maintains that the bourgeois man’s autonomy was based on his status as head of the family, including the security of having

¹⁰⁸ Markman Ellis, ‘Coffee-women, “The Spectator” and the Public Sphere’, in *Women, Writing and the Public Sphere 1700–1830*, ed. by Elizabeth Eger et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 27–52 (p. 31).

¹⁰⁹ J. J. Caudle, ‘Dilly Charles (1739–1807)’, *ODNB* <<https://oxforddnb.com>> [accessed June 2021].

¹¹⁰ Thomas Gurney, ‘To the Reader’, *A Dialogue between Old Mr Pious and Madam Finic His Wife* (London: Printed by H. Trapp, No 1 Paternoster Row, for M. Gurney, No 128 Holborn, 1788), p. 2.

¹¹¹ Ellis, *The Coffee House*, p. 59.

his commodity and property ownership protected for him by law and thus beyond the reach of the state or monarch. This individual's capacity for rational and critical reasoning, formed by his education, enabled him to contribute fully to the literary public sphere, the bridge that connected the private individual to the public sphere. Habermas, however, also acknowledges this private individual's subjective character: 'The status of private man combined the role of owner of commodities with that of the head of the family, property owner with that of "human being" *per se*'.¹¹² Man's qualities of 'human being', therefore, also brought into a public sphere intrinsic characteristics of love, interiority and subjectivity, formed within the 'intimate sphere' of the conjugal family. The private family man, capable of both rational critical reasoning and emotional subjectivity, brought both personal and critical elements to the literary, public and political spheres. Extending Habermas's concept to the present context, there is nothing in this depiction which would exclude nonconformist individuals from participating in the literary, public or political spheres and hence bringing both their rationality and religious subjectivity to it.

The role of religion and women in the literary and public spheres.

Habermas's theory, though compelling as an account of the ideal development of a liberal democracy, sidelines both women and religion. On the latter, he states: 'The so-called freedom of religion historically secured the first sphere of private autonomy'.¹¹³ He considers that 'the Church itself continued to exist as one corporate body amongst others under public law'.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, he envisioned religion as a supporter of the state and in a realm of its own, a first sphere separate and beyond the influence of

¹¹² Habermas, p. 29.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 11.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 12.

private or public spheres. Habermas does not give any further space to religion or religious literature.

I argue that religious conviction for Protestant dissenters was not confined to the first sphere of private autonomy. Their intellectual and literary culture of thriving debate spread ideas to a wider community. Furthermore, their tradition of debating theological ideas publicly was adopted by later commentators of political and social debates. Habermas does not mention either the status of Protestant dissent, the phenomenon known as the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival, or the religious origins of the movement to abolish slavery and the slave trade, three aspects of eighteenth-century life prominent in English society during the eighteenth century. The idea that the formulation of a politically engaged male public sphere was developed within one section of society in a mostly secular coffee-shop culture, is *per se* too reductive.

In acknowledging that the meaning of ‘to publish’ is ‘to make public’, this study endorses Habermas’s theory that a literary public sphere was essential for individuals to influence the political sphere. It expands on this concept, however, by suggesting that religious literary discourse generated particularly by Protestant nonconformists and evangelicals also contributed to the literary sphere. Thus, they too had the potential to influence political ideas debated in the public sphere. Craig Calhoun, while recognising the value of Habermas’s theory in understanding the shift in power to the public domain, describes this omission of religious influence as ‘Habermas’s blind spot’ and argues that ‘religious debate was as important as literary discourse in paving the way for the political sphere’.¹¹⁵ To this must be added that a considerable portion of this literary discourse was generated by Protestant dissenters. Furthermore, the quantity of religious

¹¹⁵ Craig Calhoun, ‘Introduction’, in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. by Craig Calhoun (London: The MIT Press, 1992), pp. 1–51 (p. 36).

texts produced during the first half of the eighteenth century, as examined in the previous chapter, supports Calhoun's argument that religious debate was as important as literary discourse in paving the way for the political sphere. Through the print trade's contribution to literary discourse, nonconformist booksellers participated in the public sphere by contributing logistically to the 'religious debate' cited by Calhoun.

By the same token, Habermas's concept positions the influence of women in a distinct sphere: the 'intimate or domestic sphere' at the core of the private sphere. Habermas recognises women's participation in the literary public sphere, but only in a limited way and denies that they participated in the political sphere, because of their inferior social status, stating: 'Women and dependents were factually and legally excluded from the political public sphere, whereas female readers as well as apprentices and servants often took a more active part in the literary public sphere than the owners of private property and family heads themselves'.¹¹⁶ His theory limits women's participation in the literary public sphere to that of readers. On the contrary, this research demonstrates that women, in their role as printers and booksellers of nonconformist texts, made a contribution to the literary sphere far beyond that. This is consistent with McDowell's observation that, for some women in the print trade, 'the public sphere in England was not always already masculine or bourgeois'.¹¹⁷

Not only is it incorrect that all women were confined to a private or domestic sphere but the 'systematic use of "separate spheres" as the organizing concept of the history of middle-class women' is inconsistent with the material presented in this study.¹¹⁸ The women here were certainly not 'drained of economic purpose and public

¹¹⁶ Habermas, p. 56.

¹¹⁷ McDowell, p. 9.

¹¹⁸ Vickery, p. 383.

responsibility'.¹¹⁹ All of them were active professionals in trade for many decades during the eighteenth century. Here, women's presence in the literary marketplace demonstrates equivalent participation in literary, public and political spheres to that of their male counterparts.

Despite its major limitations on the topics of religion and women, Habermas's theory still offers a particularly useful way of positioning nonconformist literary discourse and the contribution of women booksellers to it. While an uncensored press and an increasing commercial and secular society indicate an overall transformation from a hierarchal to a liberal society, particularly in London, this study claims a role for nonconformist literature and the women who produced it in the forming of public opinion and ultimately a liberal society.

The Anglican church and the political public sphere.

For Habermas, the Anglican Church was a supporter of the monarch and the state and was, therefore, in a realm of its own, the first sphere beyond the public or private realms. Habermas's view of the Anglican Church as a patriarchal institution, however, takes no account of what J. C. D. Clark argues was 'the intellectual vitality and strength of Orthodox churchmanship in the eighteenth century [or] its capacity to put forth new branches [such as] Methodism and Evangelicalism'.¹²⁰ More importantly, it takes no account of 'the extensive expansion of Protestant Dissent during the eighteenth century which operated outside the Church of England'.¹²¹ Neither does it extrapolate from the insight that man was a "human being" *per se* to note that individual religious

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 387.

¹²⁰ J. C. D. Clark, *English Society 1688–1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 235.

¹²¹ Briggs, pp. 3–26.

convictions would have been instrumental in men's contributions to the public sphere.¹²²

Although Habermas and others do not mention either the status of Protestant dissent or the phenomenon that became known as the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival, other commentators, amongst them Craig Calhoun, J. C. D. Clark and David Zaret, recognise that religious beliefs could influence the wider political sphere. While Calhoun does not separate Anglican from Protestant nonconformist religion, his argument that 'religious voices may help shape secular, that is, worldly engagements' supports the idea that religion could influence the public and political realms.¹²³

David Zaret acknowledges that Habermas's model of the public sphere is an ideal model and one that simply neglects religion, in addition to science and printing, in England. Zaret, however, does not differentiate between Anglican, evangelical and nonconformist elements of religion, which he views as one entity. He emphasises that Habermas 'glosses over the relevance of religion for the emergence of a public sphere in politics at a time when religious discourse was a, if not the, predominant means by which individuals defined and debated issues in this sphere'.¹²⁴ This was also understood to be the case by J. C. D. Clark, writing before Habermas's work was published in English. Clark maintains that, towards the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century, 'the political and social spheres were conceived to overlap with the religious to such an extent that the roots of reform lay in theology'.¹²⁵ Although Habermas may not have accounted for religious influence on the public sphere, commentators prior to, and after, Habermas maintains that religion had

¹²² Habermas, p. 29.

¹²³ Calhoun, p. 87.

¹²⁴ David Zaret, 'Religion, Science, and Printing in the Public Spheres in the Seventeenth Century', in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. by Calhoun, pp. 212–235 (p. 212).

¹²⁵ Clark, p. 348.

significant capacity to influence public opinion. This study demonstrates that religious and moral convictions central to nonconformists and evangelicals' beliefs circulated widely in their literature and serve as evidence of their desire to influence public opinion and hence the public and political spheres.

Michael Warner points out that the meanings of the words 'public' and 'private' can be conflicting. Developing a model for how public and private can be defined, he outlines the overall attributes that constitute a public: 'The making of a public requires conditions that range from the very general — such as the organization of media, ideologies of reading, institutions of circulation, text genres — to the particular rhetorics of texts'.¹²⁶ These attributes could certainly be applied to the Anglican church in that it was organised, sponsored Protestant Christian ideologies, and used textual rhetoric in its sermons to guide its congregations. Warner's classifications for a public institution when applied to the Anglican Church 'open to everyone', 'state-related', 'political', 'official', 'common', 'national', 'outside the home', 'widely known', and 'in physical view of others' would define the Church as a public institution.¹²⁷ This classification, however, does not align with Habermas's consignment of the Church to its own realm outside both public and private spheres.¹²⁸ Far from being isolated, it 'continued to exist as one corporate body among others under public law' and functioned hand in hand with the 'ubiquitous agency of the state [...] impinging on the daily concerns of the great majority'.¹²⁹ Clark argues that the Church 'must occupy a large place in any picture of eighteenth-century society, since it played a role defined by constitutional law, in addition to its role as an agency of religion'.¹³⁰ He was convinced

¹²⁶ Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2005), p. 14.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹²⁸ Clark, p. 277.

¹²⁹ Habermas, pp. 11–2.

¹³⁰ Clark, p. 277.

that these qualities helped shape political reform by the end of this period. Habermas, however, while recognising that ‘political values of eighteenth-century England were those appropriate to a society Christian, monarchical, aristocratic, rural, traditional and poor’, ignores a role for religion in the development of a liberal democracy.¹³¹

Many of the state’s values would have been circulated from the pulpit in the form of sermons preached to congregations. Jennifer Farooq, in her study of Anglican and nonconformist eighteenth-century preaching in London, emphasises the continuing importance of sermons for people who took no direct part in state politics, including men without property, women, and servants. While observing that there was a notable decline in the publication of some political sermons throughout the century, she notes that over ‘3,600 London sermons were published between 1700 and 1760’ and the ‘majority (60%) of these were preached by Anglicans’.¹³² D. W. Bebbington points out that the ‘pulpit ministry of the Church of England was partly designed to teach the lower orders their place in the order of things’, suggesting that the intention behind some Anglican sermons was to reinforce the status quo.¹³³ Farooq argues, however, that ‘the pulpit remained an important forum for political debate’.¹³⁴ It is difficult to see how political debate would have occurred within Anglican churches since they were primarily places of authorised worship, not forums for debate. Many sermons were published and circulated, however, although not necessarily to the same people who had first heard the sermon preached.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Jennifer Farooq, *Preaching in Eighteenth-Century London* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013), p. 40.

¹³³ D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Routledge 1989), p. 17.

¹³⁴ Farooq, p. 17.

Despite many elements of the Anglican church adhering to Warner's classifications for what constituted a public institution, the potential influence of the Anglican Church on forming public opinion was limited since, as Habermas claims, it was not an advocate for change but was primarily invested in maintaining the status quo for the monarch and aristocracy. Clark and Farooq, however, strongly suggest that religion was not a sealed-off element of society, but a common factor and activity in people's lives that helped form or maintain public opinion and values. On occasion, the Anglican church moved away from its role as upholder of traditional values, in what Clark refers to as 'its capacity to put forth new branches [such as] Methodism and Evangelicalism'.¹³⁵

The Evangelical Revival and the public sphere.

At the end of the seventeenth century, the Church of England remained 'the nominal church of the overwhelming majority of the English'. Very few people belonged to the minority Protestant denominations and even fewer to Roman Catholicism, but 'the political and social significance of both groups was far greater than their numerical strength'.¹³⁶ The Evangelical Revival was the most significant eighteenth-century, interdenominational, religious movement that affected society and religious publishing. It was a religious phenomenon that spread to England in the 1730s. It became a national and international movement that responded to a move away from what evangelicals regarded as complacency in Anglican theological ideology. Some evangelicals objected to what they considered was the 'lethargy of [religious activity] in the late seventeenth century', while others attributed the expansion of this phenomenon to 'the awakenings

¹³⁵ Clark, p. 235.

¹³⁶ Spurr, p. 208.

to the Holy Spirit'.¹³⁷ Amongst the leaders of the Evangelical Revival in England were two men who were ordained in the Church of England, George Whitefield and John Wesley, known as Methodists because of their ordered method of working. The followers of Wesleyan Methodism remained within the Church of England until the death of John Wesley but were closely associated with nonconformists. A tension between traditional Anglican and evangelical theology was often the subject of religious literary debate. Evangelical debates were centred on the adoption of two competing theologies, both focused on the roles of God and man in 'the matter of man's salvation'. Calvinists believed in predestination and salvation for a chosen few, while Arminians supported the belief in justification by faith alone.¹³⁸ Evangelical beliefs divided opinion and disrupted friendships, both professional and personal. Both theologies required the individual to be convinced of personal salvation or to pursue this objective through spiritual conversion, i.e. being born again.

Evangelical leaders published works that developed or supported their ideas and arguments. Evangelical genres included sermons, discourses, Bible commentaries, conduct literature, tracts, hymns, biographical 'lives', and periodicals containing the accounts of spiritual conversions both biographical and autobiographical. With no episcopal structure as such, nonconformist congregations were reliant on ministers and published literature to inform and support their individual spiritual lives. Evangelicals often changed their denominational allegiances during their lives as their own developing spiritual beliefs and individual religious convictions developed. This frequently resulted in an emotional, and sometimes confrontational, religious literary culture. The Evangelical Revival had a long-lasting influence on religion and society

¹³⁷ Watts, *The Dissenters from the Reformation to the French Revolution*, p. 394, 406.

¹³⁸ See Alan P. F. Sell, *The Great Debate: Calvinism, Arminianism and Salvation* (Eugene: WIPF & Stock, 1998), p. 6.

into the nineteenth century and beyond. Davidoff and Hall argue that it was the Evangelical Revival above all influences ‘which made religion so central to middle-class culture’.¹³⁹ Although the central tenet of evangelical doctrine was to secure the means for personal salvation, many of its values derived from a focus on egalitarian spiritual beliefs, which later informed ideas about social reform and the abolition of slavery. The Evangelical Revival inspired substantial amounts of religious literature. Much of this was published by nonconformist booksellers, and particularly by the women addressed in this study.

Not all Anglican clergy shared exactly the same theological beliefs. Anglican evangelicals, such as George Whitefield and Charles and John Wesley, challenged conventional Anglican methods of worship and embraced evangelical faith, while remaining within the Anglican Church. These men were amongst the earliest supporters of the Revival. As will be seen in the final case study on Martha Gurney, evangelical support for ideas regarding individual liberty and universal human rights came to influence public opinion and political reform, particularly with regard to abolition of the slave trade.

While Wesley encouraged his followers to continue worshipping at their parish churches, in addition to attending their meeting houses, most activities adopted by evangelical Methodists and nonconformists occurred in private. Group prayer and Bible reading took place in private homes and followers worshipped in registered meeting houses and chapels. These personal elements to individual spiritual endeavour do align with Habermas’s theory that religion was an essentially private matter for the individual. Nevertheless, just as there were some aspects to the Anglican Church that could be considered public, so there were elements to evangelicalism that existed

¹³⁹ Davidoff and Hall, p. 78.

outside the private realm. The main public manifestations of the Evangelical Revival were revival meetings, which occurred in the open air and could attract huge crowds. These contravened the law to the extent that they often took place on unlicensed, open-air areas. These religious rallies, where charismatic preachers such as John Wesley, George Whitefield and John Cennick preached, ‘attracting huge crowds’, alerted and encouraged followers to the need for securing their own salvation through grace.¹⁴⁰ These rallies constituted a very public face of the Evangelical Revival. Open-air preaching and evangelical theology itself were disdained by many traditional Anglicans, who rejected their ‘enthusiasm’ primarily as an over-zealous concern with one’s own salvation; and for ‘antinomianism’, the idea that faith in one’s own predestination negated the need for moral behaviour or ‘good works’ since this was not regarded as a condition of final salvation.

Revival meetings were the overt ‘public’ expression of evangelical activity. The Evangelical Revival also generated abundant religious texts in the form of pamphlets and periodicals, which were circulated widely to support the evangelical cause. While most Protestant dissenters supported evangelical ideology, this was not the case for all. Rational dissenters (Unitarians), Socinians and Arians, rejected ideas of Trinitarianism, including belief in the divinity of Christ. These doctrinal differences also generated numerous publications.

Applying Warner’s designations of public and private to the Evangelical Revival, categorises this religious movement as belonging to both the public and private spheres, since it was a ‘national’, ‘international’, and ‘popular’ phenomenon, with Revival meetings ‘open to everyone’ and ‘conducted outside the home’. It could at the same time, however, be judged in his terms as belonging to the private sphere, since it

¹⁴⁰ Farooq, p. 36

was ‘not state sanctioned’ and was constituted by small, ‘local groups or classes’. In addition, individual spirituality was ‘non-political’, ‘nonofficial’, ‘private’, ‘personal’, and ‘known mainly to initiates’.¹⁴¹ Preoccupied as it was with the status of individual salvation and religious conviction, the Evangelical Revival would not appear to have been concerned with the political, public sphere.

Nevertheless, Bebbington maintains, Evangelicalism ‘set the tone of British society’.¹⁴² While noting that ‘the greatest example of Evangelical humanitarianism, the anti-slavery campaign, was undoubtedly the fruit of the Enlightenment’, he argues that, ‘If Evangelicals had not been imbued with the values of benevolence, happiness and liberty, they would not have taken up the cause’.¹⁴³ Furthermore, as the century progressed, ‘an influx into the ranks of Dissent by Evangelicals who could not reconcile their conversion with continued membership of the established church [...] bolstered Dissenting denominations’.¹⁴⁴ Evangelicals, whose first preoccupation was with individual personal conviction of salvation, were nevertheless sympathetic to ideological politics supporting individual liberty and social reform. The Evangelical Revival, therefore, while motivating individuals to have concern for their own salvation and personal moral behaviour, had huge potential to influence and contribute to the public sphere, to the extent that it promoted a heightened appreciation for egalitarian humanitarian values.

¹⁴¹ Warner, p. 14.

¹⁴² Bebbington, p. 1.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 71

¹⁴⁴ Watts, *The Dissenters from the Reformation to the French Revolution*, p. 451.

Protestant dissent and the public sphere.

Following the Toleration Act of 1689, nonconformists were free to follow their religious preferences and consciences lawfully. They were no longer censured for worshipping outside the Anglican Church. Nevertheless, for the whole of the eighteenth century, their status technically prevented them from ecclesiastical, military, and political, avenues of advancement within the English establishment. The universities of Oxford and Cambridge demanded subscription to the Thirty-Nine articles on matriculation and graduation at Oxford until 1854, and on graduation from Cambridge until 1856', effectively preventing Nonconformists from a career within the Anglican Church¹⁴⁵. This exclusion was to have a galvanising effect on dissenters, who concentrated their efforts on developing their own academies and participating in the centres of economic and cultural public life. Watts maintains that because dissenters were excluded 'from the universities and from the established centres of influence and power', their exclusion 'encouraged them to make a distinctive contribution to the nation's educational, scientific, industrial and commercial progress'.¹⁴⁶ He claims that, 'Dissent taught the value of devotion, discipline, personal probity and responsibility'.¹⁴⁷ All these qualities that promoted self-improvement were cultivated by the middle classes. This portrayal of dissenters as a group of industrious, moral contributors to the nation's growth and prosperity suggests their common acceptance as not merely followers of individual spiritual preoccupations, but a *de facto* group whose religious and moral codes influenced their social, working and political lives, and whose beliefs had significant potential to influence and contribute to the public sphere.

¹⁴⁵ See Dissenting Academies Online:

<https://www.qmul.ac.uk/sed/religionandliterature/dissenting-academies/historical-information/academies/>

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 5.

Whereas the Anglican Church could be viewed as a vehicle of the state outside the public or private spheres, Revivalism operated within both public and private spheres. Protestant nonconformists who operated outside of the Anglican Church typified a ‘public sphere constituted by private people’.¹⁴⁸ Daniel White has claimed that the dissenting public sphere represents a subcategory of the classical public sphere, or a ‘fragment that exerted critical pressure from within’.¹⁴⁹ Applying Warner’s definitions of public and private to nonconformist denominations is again problematic, since many of these indicators could be interpreted differently for separate dissenting denominations. For example, attributes that characterise membership as ‘restricted to some’, ‘non-state’, ‘belonging to civil society’, ‘concealed’, and ‘group, class or locale’ would point to any given dissenting group as belonging to the private sphere, since some of these employed strict criteria for inclusion. Some nonconformist denominations, however, for example Baptists and Quakers, became popular and spread nationally and internationally.¹⁵⁰ Likewise, some set up missions overseas and became internationally recognised.¹⁵¹ These actions could be designated as public actions. Whilst many of their meeting houses embraced a philosophy of ‘heartfelt worship, devoted prayer and warm fellowship’, implying an entirely private and spiritual sphere, for some, their views on the right to private judgement and liberty of conscience were consistent with political support for social reform and the abolitionist cause.¹⁵² White maintains that these multiple views helped to ‘unify a wide range of theologically, economically and culturally discordant groups into what seemed to both dissenters and

¹⁴⁸ Habermas, p. 30.

¹⁴⁹ Daniel E. White, *Early Romanticism and Religious Dissent* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 67.

¹⁵⁰ Bebbington, p. 3.

¹⁵¹ Ian M. Randall, ‘Nonconformists and Overseas Mission’, in *T& T Clark Companion to Nonconformity*, ed. by Pope, pp. 381–406.

¹⁵² Watts, *The Dissenters from the Reformation to the French Revolution*, p. 5.

Anglicans alike to be one coherent oppositionist body'.¹⁵³ Not surprisingly, Keith Robbins points out that 'there is no single document, declaration, statement or confession which sets out beyond doubt what "Dissenters believed" about the State'.¹⁵⁴

Throughout the century there was a fluid quality to Protestant nonconformist theologies and denominations. Individuals adopted, developed and sometimes abandoned theological and doctrinal beliefs throughout their lives. Personal religious conviction was not static or uniform. Theologies supporting Calvinist, Arminian, Trinitarian and Unitarian and other beliefs, were often publicly debated, adopted or rejected by individual nonconformists and Anglicans alike. This resulted in a plurality of religious activity and ideologies throughout the century. The circulation of doctrinal and theological ideas from these religious groups in published form was a fundamental element to Protestant nonconformist denominational practice, identified by Habermas as crucial to establishing a literary public sphere, although *his* concern was with a literary sphere that supported social comment and political criticism.

What is important is that the printed discourse that nonconformists generated opened the private nature of their spiritual conviction to public forums for religious and/or political debate. This supports Habermas's theory that literary discourse was an essential factor in the forming of 'the public sphere in the political realm [which] evolved from the public sphere in the realm of letters, through the vehicle of public opinion where private people came together as a public'.¹⁵⁵

Protestant dissent thus had a significant potential for participating in the political public sphere, since nonconformists brought their religious beliefs to the wider realms

¹⁵³ White, p. 8.

¹⁵⁴ Keith Robbins, 'Nonconformity and the State', in *T& T Clark, Companion to Nonconformity*, ed. by Pope, pp. 75–88 (p. 76).

¹⁵⁵ Calhoun, p. 36.

of work, education and politics, and reinforced their values through the medium of print. Tessa Whitehouse maintains that dissenters demonstrated a sincere desire to reach beyond their own circle through this culture. She argues that their textual culture during the period 1720–1800 developed as a direct result of them ‘lacking free access to the physical institutions of the national establishment’; they were ‘highly motivated to construct print as an alternative institution which could grant them a public voice’.¹⁵⁶ White supports this argument in pointing to the existence of ‘an extensive network of nonconformist writers, educators, reviewers, and publishers to define and publicise their marks of separation’, which formed an influential and distinct fragment of the bourgeois public sphere.¹⁵⁷ He claims that the dissenting public sphere represents a subcategory of the classical public sphere or a ‘fragment that exerted critical pressure from within’. His work identifies a culture through which nonconformists provided a ‘structural link between the intimate domain of the conjugal family and the civil sphere of middle-class commercial existence’.¹⁵⁸ A similar culture is identified by Whitehouse too, who interprets this culture as having elements of a ‘counterpublic’, a public subordinate to the dominant culture, and suggests that nonconformists understood publishing activities, in either print or manuscript form, as part of that culture.

It is not the purpose of this thesis to define the exact contours of the nonconformist public sphere. Rather, the point of this discussion is to demonstrate that Protestant nonconformists took a distinct role in establishing a religious literary realm with significant potential to influence the public political sphere. The volume of literature that was generated by the Anglican Church, the Evangelical Revival, and

¹⁵⁶ Whitehouse, *The Textual Culture of English Protestant Dissent 1720–1800*, p. 19.

¹⁵⁷ White, p. 11. While White’s concern is with the Unitarian Barbauld/Aiken family during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, I am applying his comments more broadly.

¹⁵⁸ White, p. 67.

Protestant dissent contributed to this distinct religious literary sphere. Consequently, booksellers who published it, including the women studied in this research, participated and operated within this sphere.

All booksellers, men and women, were dependent on favourable commercial circumstances, such as a free press, being located in London, extensive sales and distribution networks, and a literate community of readers, authors, copyright holders, printers and other professionals in their trade. Women printers and booksellers utilised their connections to nonconformist authors and denominations, their *feme sole* status, professional skills, London addresses, the cottage-style model of their business operations, fortuitous legislative changes, the rise of a literate middle-class, and the effects of the Evangelical Revival on publishing, to participate in, and to contribute to, the literary sphere and, in doing so, indirectly influenced the public sphere. The nonconformist women booksellers discussed in the case studies that follow were able to resist the forces of mass industrialisation and segregation which confined most other women to the domestic sphere. Furthermore, through the support of their families and trade and religious communities, they took advantage of their exceptional status to successfully contribute to the nonconformist literary marketplace for many decades throughout the eighteenth century.

Case Study One:

Tace Sowle (1666–1749)

‘So did all the women that were wise in heart, manage their particular talents, to praise the glory of God’.¹⁵⁹

Tace Sowle was the best known and most prolific publisher for the Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers. She made the single most important contribution to Quaker publishing of any woman, or man, during the late seventeenth century and first half of the eighteenth century. She produced almost seven hundred and fifty titles and held a virtual monopoly over the production of Quaker texts between 1691 until her death in 1749. Her work brought the theological ideas and experiences in Quakers’ texts to readers in the literary marketplace. In addition, as the foremost publisher for the Quakers, her working practices connected the London Quaker community with Friends nationwide and worldwide.

During the eighteenth century, second-generation Friends came to eschew the more radical activities of their seventeenth-century forebears that had often resulted in public approbation of early Quakers. They continued, however, to revere the courage and testimonies of their founders. As the daughter of an early Quaker publisher, Tace Sowle acted as a link between early Friends and second-generation Quakers through her person and her work. She continued to publish edited, original works of founding Quakers, such as George Fox, William Penn, Thomas Ellwood and Robert Barclay, which her father had first published. She also published writings by later Quakers and so represented ‘three theological tendencies among Quakers – quietism, rationalism and

¹⁵⁹ Elizabeth Bathurst, ‘The Sayings of Women, Which Were Spoken on Sundry Occasions, in Several Places of the Scriptures’, in *Truth Vindicated by the Faithful Testimony and Writings of the Innocent Servant and Hand-maid of the Lord, Elisabeth Bathurst, Deceased* (printed and sold by Tace Sowle, near the Meeting House in White Hart Court, Gracious Street, 1705), p. 200.

evangelicalism'.¹⁶⁰ During her career, Quakers came to be accepted by the wider community as honest, reliable, respectable business people, of whom she was undoubtedly one.

While Tace Sowle was born into circumstances that offered her an outstanding opportunity to develop a career in publishing, this cannot altogether explain her exceptional longevity during a period when many women were disappearing from all but the retail side of the publishing business. Indeed, her exceptional abilities, professional skills and consistent hard work, in addition to her affiliation to the Stationers' Company, were as important to her success as her birthright. Sowle's career demonstrates a combination of qualities such as self-confidence, energy, professional skills, business acumen, and a consistent approach to her work on behalf of her denomination, which resulted in a career that lasted for almost sixty years. Much of her success was undoubtedly due to her position as the Friends' exclusive publisher. As discussed below, however, that benefit was reciprocal: the Quaker community profited equally from Tace Sowle's skills, loyalty, experience and ambition.

In addition to printing Friends' work, Sowle was responsible for handling all the organisation of printing, warehousing and distribution of Quaker titles countrywide as well as to the colonies and Europe. As a woman who owned property and operated her own business independently of any authoritarian male, she was an unusual Quaker figure. Mary Van Vleck Garman acknowledges that 'women have played crucial roles in every stage of Quaker history [and] scholars have usually attributed their unusual levels of participation to the much-admired Quaker tradition of "equality"'.¹⁶¹ This

¹⁶⁰ Robynne Rogers Healey, 'Quietist Quakerism 1692–c. 1805', in *The Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies*, ed. by Angell and Dandelion, pp. 47–62 (p. 48).

¹⁶¹ Mary Van Vleck Garman, 'Quaker Women's Lives and Spiritualities', in *The Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies*, ed. by Angell and Dandelion, pp. 232–44 (p. 232).

equality evolved from the Quaker spiritual belief in the ‘light within’. Phyllis Mack maintains that ‘Quaker women and others defined agency not as the freedom to do what one wants but as the “freedom to do what is right”’.¹⁶² Sowle appears to have developed her agency based on her status, skills and abilities alongside a belief in the ‘freedom to do what is right’. Her status as a woman with a foot in both camps, religious conviction and professional work, enabled her to combine two key areas of her life. She was a woman whose occupation reflected her own religious conviction, as she operated in an environment that made commercial demands on her as an independent, printer and bookseller.

While spiritual equality for women was accepted by Quaker men, in worldly matters at least, Mack has noted that ‘male Friends were uneasy about Quaker women acting independently and, in many cases, [took] steps to bring their activities under male authority, and to ensure that any decisions they made were ratified by the men’s Meeting’.¹⁶³ This does not appear to have been the case for Tace Sowle. While she was largely dependent for her texts on the Second Day Morning Meeting, which edited a regular supply of approved Quaker manuscripts or texts, on occasion, this all male committee was sometimes advised by her. Furthermore, she remained their publisher and only bookseller for life, without interference or direct challenge from any male bookseller.

In this way, Tace Sowle participated in the literary sphere that contributed to the public sphere. She published mainly Quaker religious titles and theological discourse, but also developed a list that included titles relating to medicine, ideas for banking and credit, practical works such as tide timetables, texts providing weights and measures,

¹⁶² Phyllis Mack, ‘Religion, Feminism and the Problem of Agency: Reflections on Eighteenth Century Quakerism’, *Signs*, 29 (2003), 149–77 (p. 153).

¹⁶³ Mack, p. 233.

and other non-religious works. These titles were often written by Friends, or those sympathetic to them, and supported the developing commercial interests of second-generation Quaker industrialists and business people. In addition, she sometimes advocated for, and published the experiences and theology of, Quaker women.

Kate Peters, in her work on early Quaker publishing, argues that the Quakers' 'own zealous and sustained use of the press describes a very purposeful and organised movement which requires explanation'.¹⁶⁴ This case study explains how the organisational structure of the Religious Society of Friends benefitted many of Sowle's business practices. It shows how the Quaker organisational hierarchy was essential in supporting Tace Sowle's career as a major printer and bookseller, but it also argues that the Quaker leadership and denomination as a whole also profited from her abilities and experience. Her publishing operation was considerable, with a number of retail, printing and warehouse premises.

The dissenting denomination that produced the greatest number of dissenting texts from the late seventeenth to the mid eighteenth century was the Quakers. Richard Allen maintains that, 'more than other Dissenters, Friends successfully exploited the expansion of print culture in the pre and post-Restoration period'.¹⁶⁵ Ian Green similarly claims that, 'from the beginning the Quakers proved particularly adept at using print to defend and publicise their views'.¹⁶⁶ According to Russell S. Mortimer, as their name 'Publishers of Truth' suggests, 'it has been estimated that in the course of the second half of the seventeenth century over 6000 [Quaker] publications were issued on their

¹⁶⁴ Kate Peters, *Print Culture and the Early Quakers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 9.

¹⁶⁵ Richard C. Allen, 'Restoration Quakerism, 1660–1691', in *The Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies*, ed. by Angell and Dandelion, pp. 29–45 (p. 34).

¹⁶⁶ Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England*, p. 185.

behalf'.¹⁶⁷ McDowell agrees that, 'early Quakers made extensive use of the power of the printed word to shape public opinion and foment socio-political change'.¹⁶⁸ Quakers were considerable contributors to a religious literary sphere.

Tace Sowle's career was the first of the women booksellers in this study to have benefitted from legislative changes at the end of the seventeenth century, namely the Toleration Act of 1689 and the lapse of the Licensing Act in 1695. By 1691, when she first took over her father's business due to his ill health, the Act of Toleration allowed Quakers, and other nonconformists, to worship lawfully in licensed premises. By 1695, the year after her father's death, the lapse of the Licensing Act meant that she could freely publish without fear of prosecution or imprisonment. Tace Sowle's career was, therefore, not subject to the same risk and constrictions as that of her father.

Tace Sowle's publishing career has been well documented, particularly by McDowell, whose work on women in the book trade in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries has recognised the exceptional nature of Sowle's career.¹⁶⁹ A recent study of the Sowle dynasty and their work as printers for the Quakers by Sally Jeffery also offers a detailed history, not only of the activities of Tace Sowle, but also members of the extended Sowle family, including her sisters in London, Pennsylvania and New York.¹⁷⁰ The present chapter focusses on Tace Sowle's working practices and

¹⁶⁷ Russell S. Mortimer, 'The First Century of Quaker Printers', *The Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, 40 (1948), p. 38.

¹⁶⁸ McDowell, p. 145.

¹⁶⁹ Paula McDowell, 'Tace Sowle (London: 1691–1749), Andrew Sowle (London: c. 1600–c. 1690)', in *The British Literary Book Trade 1475–1700*, ed. by James K. Bracken and Joel Silver (USA: Brucoli Clark Layman, 1996), pp. 249–57.

¹⁷⁰ Tace Sowle's two sisters also married printers. Elizabeth married her father's apprentice, William Bradford, and the couple settled in Pennsylvania setting up the first press in Pennsylvania in 1685. They later moved to New York. See Sally Jeffery, *Dissenting Printers: The Intractable Men and Women of a Seventeenth-Century Quaker Press* (London: Turned Up Press, 2020), p. 68.

uses her experience as a basis to compare the activities, output and practices of the other women booksellers featured in the thesis.

Following a brief biographical account, this chapter explores the people and events that influenced Sowle's work, her business practices, and the authors and texts she published. It explores her entire career, but pays particular attention to her presence after 1730. She remained one of the five leading nonconformist women booksellers who remained prominent after this date, which marked the period when most women disappeared from all but the retail side of the bookselling business.

Biography.

Tace Sowle's parents, Andrew Sowle (1628–1695) and Jane Sowle (*d.* 1711), were booksellers. She was their third daughter. Andrew Sowle had been apprenticed to Ruth Raworth, a nonconformist woman printer, who married Thomas Newcomb, 'an important radical (Puritan) publisher'.¹⁷¹ Andrew Sowle 'engaged himself freely in the printing of Friends' books'.¹⁷² He became the preferred printer for Friends from 1674, probably through his relationship with William Penn, founder and first governor of Pennsylvania. Sowle's friendship with Penn was indicated by the latter's visit to him the day before he died. From 1669 onward, 'Penn used the Sowle firm almost exclusively'.¹⁷³ His earliest imprint, William Penn's *Innocency with Her Open Face Presented By Way of Apology*, was published in 1669. In the same year, Andrew Sowle published Penn's *No Cross, No Crown*, which outlines the main characteristics of

¹⁷¹ Paula McDowell, 'Tace Sowle (London: 1691–1749), Andrew Sowle (London: *c.* 1600–*c.* 1690)', in *The British Literary Book Trade 1475–1700*, ed. by Bracken and Silver, pp. 249–57 (p. 249).

¹⁷² [Anon.], 'Andrew Sowle', in *Piety Promoted*, ed. by Evans and Evans, I, p. 115.

¹⁷³ David Fraser, 'William Penn and the Underground Press', in *William Penn's Published Writings 1660–1726: An Interpretive Bibliography*, ed. by Edwin B. Bronner and David Fraser (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), pp. 77–86, (p. 78).

Quaker discipline. Andrew Sowle published sixty-nine titles by William Penn. In total, 184 titles recorded on the ESTC carry Andrew Sowle's 'Crooked Billet in Holloway Lane in Shoreditch' imprint. This was his residence and workplace for thirty years. Other prominent Quakers published by Sowle include George Whitehead (c. 1636–1723), George Fox (1624–1691), Thomas Ellwood (1639–1713) and Stephen Crisp (1628–1692). Mortimer notes that, '[During] times of difficulty and high feeling on religious questions, Friends' works would be published only by those who were in sympathy with them because of the risk involved'.¹⁷⁴ Andrew Sowle's support for the Friends was staunch, since he 'was repeatedly committed to Newgate for unlawful assembly'.¹⁷⁵ He sometimes had his press vandalised by the Stationers' Company wardens and his equipment was destroyed, yet he continued to risk arrest by publishing Quaker texts. To avoid detection and prosecution during this period, Sowle printed Quaker works with minimal information on the imprint page. For example, while his name appears on the imprint of *No Cross, No Crown*, there is no address provided, which would have made it more difficult for the authorities to have traced him. Tace Sowle was the youngest of Andrew's three surviving daughters. She took over the Sowle press due to her father's ill health in 1691 and was named as his successor along with her mother to the family business in Andrew Sowle's will.¹⁷⁶ She continued to print Penn's publications in addition to those of other prominent Quaker authors who had been published by her father.

Printing presses tended to be based in the homes of their owners. The printer's family and apprentices lived over the shop and traditionally the women of the house

¹⁷⁴ Russell S. Mortimer, 'The First Century of Quaker Printers', *The Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, 40 (1948), p. 38.

¹⁷⁵ Jeffery, p. 21.

¹⁷⁶ London, NA, PROB 11/467, Last will and testament, Andrew Sowle, 9 September 1695. Sowle bequeathed the bulk of his estate equally to his wife Jane and his daughter Tace.

worked in the retail side of the bookseller's business. In her family workplace, Tace would have been exposed to religious literature from childhood and would have benefitted from a form of education that this offered. There is no extant record of Tace Sowle serving an apprenticeship outside of her father's business nor any reference to her attending school. Hence, her family was responsible for her education and training. Her father or mother most likely taught Tace and her sisters literacy, compositing and printing skills.

John Dunton, a contemporary bookseller, described 'Mrs Tacy Sowle' as follows:

Both a Printer as well as a bookseller, and the Daughter of one; and understands her Trade very well, being a good Compositor herself. Her love and piety to her aged Mother is eminently remarkable; even to that degree, that she keeps herself unmarried for the very reason [...] that it may not be out of her power to let her Mother have always the chief command in her house.¹⁷⁷

Although Dunton refers to Tace keeping herself unmarried, she did marry. In 1706, the year following the publication of Dunton's memoir, she married Thomas Raylton (1671–1723), a Quaker minister. His name, however, does not appear on her imprints until after his death, possibly in order to honour her promise to her mother, or possibly because Tace herself wanted to maintain 'chief command in her own house', as Dunton suggests. Traditionally, as soon as a woman was married, her name would be replaced by her husband's own imprints, according to Stationers' Company rules. However, Tace always maintained the Sowle name on her imprints. During her tenure, she used a number of imprint names. From 1691 until 1706, the year of her marriage, she used the imprint, 'T. or Tace Sowle', then, from 1707 until 1711, she used her mother's 'J. Sowle' imprint while she was managing the business. This may have been because of

¹⁷⁷ John Dunton, *The Life and Errors of John Dunton Citizen of London* (London: S. Malthus 1705), II, p. 222–3.

the love and piety to her mother which Dunton refers to, or could have been a move to avoid having her husband take command of her business, since, by the time of her marriage, she had been in control of the Sowle press for some fifteen years. Following her mother's death in 1711, the imprint 'assigns of J. Sowle' appears, from 1712 to 1735. It was not until 1736 that the Raylton name finally appears on her imprints, some thirteen years after Thomas's death. Even then, it appeared as an adjunct to her own name: 'T. Sowle Raylton with Luke Hinde'. This joint imprint appears alternatively with the 'assigns of J. Sowle' imprint between 1736 and 1738. From 1739 until 1749, a 'Tace Sowle Raylton and Luke Hinde' imprint appears.¹⁷⁸ The promise to her mother that Dunton describes was honoured until long after her mother's death. This convoluted reframing of names on imprints suggests a woman reluctant to cede authority to her husband and determined to connect her name with the family business throughout her working life.

The marriage certificate of Tace Sowle and Thomas Raylton records him as being a 'hosier', although we know from other sources, including his autobiography, that he had been apprenticed as a blacksmith before arriving in London in 1705.¹⁷⁹ Raylton was born in Yorkshire and became convinced of the Quaker faith at the age of fourteen, against his father's wishes. He was helped by other Friends to find a Quaker master, a blacksmith in Durham, who was approved of by his family. During his apprenticeship, his faith was nurtured, although he waited many years before speaking at meetings:

¹⁷⁸ Luke Hinde's imprint also appears occasionally on its own, suggesting that he sometimes published independently of his aunt and/or that she was not always present at the business address. Tace Sowle is known to have owned a house in Clapton from 1716 and she may have spent some time away from the business.

¹⁷⁹ Religious Society of Friends Library (LRSF) MS BOX L5/14, Marriage Certificate of Thomas Raylton and Tace Sowle, 10 October 1706.

Until I was fully satisfied it was my incumbent duty, I found it safe not to appear in the ministry until I was fully satisfied of the Lord's requirings therein, although the Lord had been often with me from meeting to meeting, and, in his visitations, left his holy dew upon my spirit. Thus was I filled with the odor of his good ointment, with which I was anointed to preach the gospel; and thus I was led into the ministry.¹⁸⁰

Raylton's diffidence in speaking as a minister reflects the quietist approach adopted by second-generation Quakers that self-censored them until they were convinced of God's intention for them to speak publicly. Raylton came to London in 1705 and, by 1706, he was part of the Second Day Morning Meeting. Sowle's marriage to Raylton appears to have had no immediate influence on her publishing activities, since she had already printed more than two hundred titles for Quakers before her marriage. 'Very serious and edifying in his ministry, sound in his doctrine, mighty in the holy Scriptures', Thomas Raylton nevertheless remained influential to her business in his role as a member of the Second Day Morning Meeting, the Quaker publishing committee.¹⁸¹

Raylton suffered from ill health for most of his life and died at the age of fifty-three. He does not refer to his married life in his autobiography, but describes his early struggles to 'leave the corrupt life and shun evil company', recounting that 'about the 30th day of the Tenth month, 1695', he spoke for the first time at a Quaker meeting.¹⁸² At the end of Raylton's autobiographical account, an anonymous Friend makes the only reference to his marriage: 'To his wife he thus expressed himself; "My dear, be easy, let me go, and rejoice when I am gone to so great salvation"'.¹⁸³ Tace was forty years old when she married. Raylton's last words to his wife suggest that it was an affectionate

¹⁸⁰ Leeds, Leeds Friends Old Library (LFOL) fol. 274 MS Some Account of The Faithful Minister of the Gospel, Thomas Raylton, Found in His Own Hand Writing, After His Decease; and a Short Testimony of Friends Concerning Him.

¹⁸¹ LFOL MS fol. 274.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

relationship, albeit one that, while conforming to Quaker rules of endogamy, adopted an unusual approach to traditional male/female roles.

Tace Sowle married just once and was widowed in 1723. There were no children from the marriage. Her nephew, Luke Hinde, the son of her sister Jane's first marriage to her father's apprentice, Andrew Hinde, was apprenticed to her in line with a promise that she had made to her sister. Luke Hinde then became her business partner from 1736. She bequeathed her nephew most of her estate, including the press, her house in Clapton, and the George Yard premises. Luke Hinde continued as foremost printer and bookseller to the Quakers. He was the first to publish *Lloyd's List*, the marine information newspaper. Jeffery claims that the famous mercantile paper, started by Edward Lloyd, 'sustained the Quaker press for decades'.¹⁸⁴ Following Luke Hinde's death, his widow, Mary, operated the business between 1767 and 1775. Mary Hinde turned the business over to her relative James Phillips in 1775, who continued publishing for the Quakers.¹⁸⁵ Then, twenty-two years later, his son, William, operated the business from 1800 to 1828. Thus, while Tace Sowle married late and had no children of her own, by taking her nephew Luke Hinde into partnership during the final thirteen years of her life, she secured the succession of the family Quaker publishing business for a further seventy years.

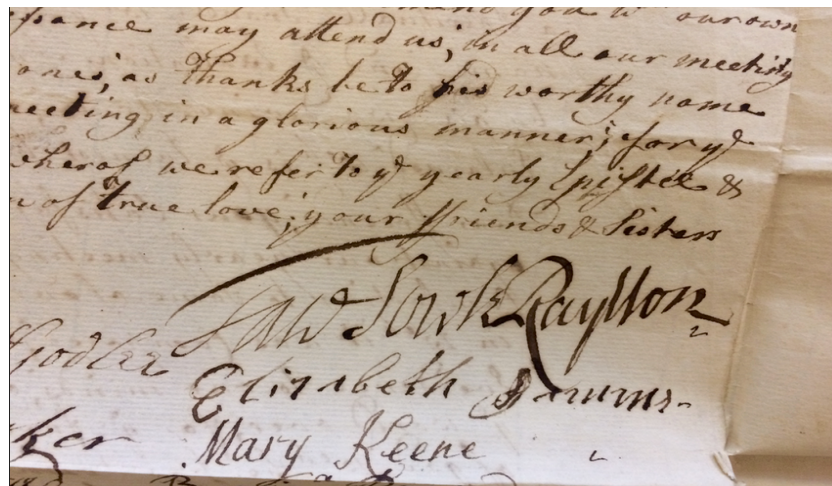
Tace Sowle's status within the Quaker community was exceptional. Although never a 'public Quaker', the term used to define a female Quaker preacher, she was a prominent woman within the Quaker community. Figure 4 shows Tace Sowle Raylton's bold and characterful signature, on the minutes of a Women's Meeting in London in 1747, two years before her death. This is twice the size of the signatures of other

¹⁸⁴ Jeffery, p. 94.

¹⁸⁵ James Phillips was closely associated with Martha Gurney and the abolitionist cause.

women and offers an impression of a woman confident of her status within the community.

Figure 4: Tace Sowle Raylton's signature from minutes of women's meeting in London, 27 May 1747.¹⁸⁶



Tace Sowle clearly enjoyed a status within the Quaker community as their printer and bookseller superior to any contemporary male Quaker bookseller. It is reasonable to speculate that this loyalty was afforded to her because of her father's efforts and losses. Yet, male support of female equality was sometimes offered only grudgingly. An example of this is provided by William C. Braithwaite, who quotes from the minutes of the Morning Meeting of 1701:

This meeting finding that it is a hurt to Truth for women Friends to take up too much time, as some do, in our public meetings, when several public and serviceable men Friends are present and are by them prevented in their serving, it's therefore advised that the women Friends should be tenderly cautioned against taking up too much time in our mixed public meetings.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ (LRSF), MS Box Mtg 55, Women's Meeting, 27 May 1747.

¹⁸⁷ See William C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism* (Classic Reprint: Fb&c Ltd, 2018), p. 287. He cites J. S. Rowntree, *Meetings on Ministry and Oversight*, No 2, p.16.

As a result of men's reluctance to support women in their non-spiritual roles, a properly constituted Women's Yearly Meeting was not formally established until 1784 in Britain. There were, however, many non-constituted women's meetings. The image of Tace's signature above shows that she attended a London Women's Meeting in 1747. Some exercise of gender equality may well have been an element in the longevity of Tace Sowle's career. More likely, their loyalty was the result of her financial security, professionalism, respectable middle-class Quaker printing family background, and her loyal, consistent and efficient work performance, which meant that no challenge to her publishing monopoly was needed.

Influences.

Andrew Sowle's determination to print Quaker texts, even at risk of his liberty and personal safety, would have made a substantial impression on Tace's young life and faith. Andrew Sowle frequently suffered for his work, although he continued 'even in the hottest persecution, believing it his duty so to do'.¹⁸⁸ He frequently endured his premises being raided: 'For several years together he was in continual danger upon that account, his house being often searched, and his printing materials, presses, letters as often broken to pieces and taken away'.¹⁸⁹ Nevertheless, it has been reported that he 'would often exhort his family to faithfulness, and his young ones also to seek the Lord in the days of their youth'.¹⁹⁰ His parental influence, therefore, would have encouraged not only Tace Sowle in the Quaker faith, but also her sisters, Jane and Elizabeth. As the daughter of a persecuted, first-generation Quaker publisher, Tace Sowle must have relished the freedoms offered her following the Act of Toleration and the lapse of the

¹⁸⁸ Fraser, p. 78.

¹⁸⁹ [Anon.], 'Andrew Sowle', in *Piety Promoted*, ed. by Evans and Evans, I, p. 115.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

Licensing Act, which may account for the productivity and energy she brought to her early career.

Since Tace was born in 1666, and printing presses were located in the family home, she and her sisters most likely witnessed these raids and her father's subsequent forgiving attitude to his persecutors when he 'set forth meat and drink before them'.¹⁹¹ Hence, Tace Sowle was brought up in a culture of religious conviction but was aware of the dangers involved in this context. When she took over the business in 1691, her father was still alive, although in poor health. The fact that he left the running of the business to Tace, rather than to a male relative, suggests he believed not only in her occupational capabilities and skills, but also her commitment to the Quaker faith.

Tace's sister, Elizabeth, also married one of her father's apprentices, William Bradford, and emigrated to Pennsylvania, where the couple became the first Quaker printers in the American colonies, before moving to New York, where they 'imported books from Tace Sowle for the American market'.¹⁹² Hence, Quaker publishing was served in the 'New World' through the extended Sowle family's publishing activities. This was not the only example of the Sowles' interest in America. In correspondence to James Logan in 1703, William Penn refers to a plot of land which Andrew Sowle had purchased in Pennsylvania and which Tace Sowle had inherited. In the same letter, Penn refers to her as 'our only Stationer, now, as well as printer', demonstrating her undiminished status in his eyes and the loyalty of the Quaker leadership towards her.¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p. 115.

¹⁹² Jeffery, p. 75.

¹⁹³ LRSF, MS Gibson vol. II 76, William Penn to James Logan, 10 March 1703/4.

Business practices.

Tace Sowle's business practices reflect the organisational structure that the Quaker leadership had adopted to control a consistent theological message. In order to avoid persecution, George Fox and other Quaker leaders had developed an organisational system for promoting the consistency of the Quaker message through regular meetings that incorporated nationwide representatives who met in London, particularly the Yearly Meeting, the Second Day Morning Meeting, and the Meetings for Sufferings. As McDowell notes, '[They] shared central control of the society. From the beginning, one of the primary purposes of Quaker central organization was to supervise the control of the Quaker press'.¹⁹⁴ The Second Day Morning Meeting was in effect the publishing committee for the Friends.

From 1706, a further advantage for Tace Sowle was that the Morning Meeting included her husband amongst the four Friends on the committee. An entry in the minutes from 1706 report that, 'They [the committee] have read through Tho' Hopkins manuscript and the places marked by them were viewed and corrected in the meeting, and the meet confirms it be printed if the Author be satisfied with the Corrections and Thomas Raylton to advise him'.¹⁹⁵ This minute reveals not only Raylton's role on this committee but also the method that the Morning Meeting members used to control the Friends' message. It shows that manuscripts were read by a small group of representatives and sent back to the author for correction and approval before being recommended for publication. Raylton's role in the Sowle publishing business, previously acknowledged only as helping with 'warehousing and accounting', was

¹⁹⁴ Paula McDowell, 'Tace Sowle (London: 1691–1749), Andrew Sowle (London: c. 1600– c. 1690)', in *The British Literary Book Trade 1475–1700*, ed. by Bracken and Silver, pp. 249–57 (p. 251).

¹⁹⁵ LRSF MS Morning Meeting Minutes Book, vol. III, 1700–1711, 24 December 1706.

probably much more significant, since his position meant he was ideally placed to consistently procure manuscripts for his wife to print.¹⁹⁶

For the most part this was how Tace Sowle's texts originated. She produced more titles than most of her female contemporaries, and many male booksellers, but collaborated only occasionally with just five or six other printers or booksellers who were not family members and lived in areas outside London. Her imprints rarely show other booksellers, with the exceptions of Felix Farley, a Quaker printer from Bristol; T. Trye near Greys-Inn Gate, Holborn, London, (probably Thomas Trye, a bookseller/publisher in Holborn); Isaac Jackson, a bookseller from Dublin; J. Peacock at the George in Great East Cheap; and P. Valliant, the Strand and H. Whitridge, the Royal Exchange. By the time of her takeover of the Sowle press in 1691, finance for publishing Quaker texts was generated by general collections and monies from countrywide quarterly meetings. Sowle would be advanced sums of up to £300 from the Morning Meeting and titles were frequently printed in editions of one thousand copies. This regular source of work and income was advantageous for Sowle since other publishers 'faced high, up front and one-off investment coupled with very slow returns [and] the liquidity predicament heightened the need of sure-fire, calculable undertakings'.¹⁹⁷ The names of collaborative booksellers appear on one-off works only and two or three of the few advertisements that Sowle placed in the press. The lack of reliance on sharing imprints with other booksellers was a direct result of the Quaker system for financing, approving, and supplying authorised texts, and is the main difference in her business practices compared to those of other nonconformist women booksellers. Although Tace Sowle did not publish exclusively Quaker texts, a steady

¹⁹⁶ McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street*, p. 36.

¹⁹⁷ James Raven, *Publishing Business in Eighteenth-Century England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014), p. 49.

source of manuscripts and regular one-off payments from the Morning Meeting meant that generally she did not have to compete for texts in an open marketplace or offset financial risk by sharing copyrights with other booksellers.

The efficiency of the Quaker publishing committee enabled her to produce a far greater number of printed texts than other contemporary women booksellers. She produced work written by over one hundred and forty authors. Her community was made up of members of her own family: her mother, Jane, or her nephew, Luke Hinde, and her husband for warehousing retail work and through his position on the Second Day Morning Meeting and Quaker leaders. As Quaker printer and bookseller, Sowle worked in cooperation with the Morning Meeting from the start of her career and before her husband became a member of this committee. One example shows that, as early as 1691, she ‘proposed the issuing of a collection of Elizabeth’s Bathurst’s books “to Joyne to her Biggest Book called the Vindication”’; this proposal was accepted.¹⁹⁸

We know from John Dunton’s comments that she was a good compositor. As such, she would have required a high standard of literacy. It appears she was numerate too. Soon after she had taken control of the press for her father, she approached the Second Day Morning Meeting to collect outstanding debts that her father had not pursued, with evidence of ‘several account Books sent to Barbados and Bristol some years since and not paid for’, which suggests she understood the accounting side of the business.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸ LRSF, MS Morning Meeting Minutes vol. 1, 13 April 1691. The text Sowle referred to was Elizabeth Bathurst, *Truth’s Vindication; Or, A Gentle Stroke to Wipe Off the Foul Aspersions, False Accusations, And Misrepresentations Cast Upon the People of God Called Quakers, Both with Respect to their Principle and their Way of Proselyting People over to Them; Also An Epistle to Such of the Friends of Christ that Have Lately Been Convinced of the Truth As It Is In Jesus*, published in 1679. Elizabeth Bathurst died 1691.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

In exchange for a continual supply and steady income, however, the Friends expected more than just the finished published texts delivered to them. From the moment of receiving a manuscript for publication, the organisational setup for the distribution of Quaker works was handled exclusively by their printers: ‘The printers undertook the clerical work, warehoused the stocks of books, and collected the money for books sent down to the counties’.²⁰⁰

Figure 5 shows ‘An Account of the Abstract of Sufferings from 1650–60’, typifying the quantities and counties to which Quaker texts were distributed and the amounts charged to these Quaker Meetings, and it also includes Tace Sowle Raylton’s signature on the account. Tace Sowle’s business acumen was first signalled in her move from her father’s long-established premises at the Crooked Billet in Shoreditch, to White-Hart Court, in Gracechurch Street, sometimes referred to as Gracious Street, next door to the Friends Meeting House. This meant that she had an almost continual passing trade, since Friends met there several times a week. Gracechurch Street in the City of London was a central location:

This neighbourhood became the centre of the Quaker business community in the city. By the eighteenth century 20–25% of the immediate population were Quakers. City Friends mingled piety with prosperity and earned reputations as sober, honest tradesmen. Some, like the Barclays, Lloyds, and Gurneys, made fortunes in trade and banking.²⁰¹

Her press was close to other bookselling businesses in London, such as Cornhill, Paternoster Row, and Bartholomew Close. Although Tace Sowle did not work in conjunction with other booksellers, the home and business of another of the case study booksellers in this research, Mary Fenner, was also located in Gracechurch Street, at the

²⁰⁰ Mortimer, p. 39.

²⁰¹ Peter Daniels, ‘Quakers Around Shoreditch’
<<http://studymore.org.uk/quasho.htm#GraciousStreet>> [accessed March 2021].

Turk's Head, from about the same time that Tace Sowle went into partnership with Luke Hinde.

Figure 5: Distribution details of quantities and counties for the Abstract of Sufferings 1650–1660.²⁰²

An Account of the Subscriptions^{76.38}
 From the Counties for the Abstract
 of Sufferings from 1650 to 60
 J. Rayner

BRITISH REFERENCE LIBRARY

✓ Bedfordshire	4
✓ Berkshire	13
✓ Buckinghamshire	30
✓ Cheshire	20
✓ Cheshire	32
✓ Cornwall	10
✓ Cumberland	56
✓ Devonshire	10
✓ Dorsetshire	13
✓ Durham	36
✓ Essex	4
✓ Hertfordshire	39
✓ Lancashire	56
✓ Northampton	12
✓ Nottingham	2
✓ Norwich	20
✓ Oxfordshire	30
✓ Staffordshire	13
✓ Suffolk	24
✓ Warwickshire	19
✓ Westmoreland	40
✓ Worcestershire	13
✓ Yorkshire	171
✓ Wales	14
<hr/>	
✓ Hampshire	726
✓ Northumberland	27
✓ Sussex	6
✓ Wiltshire	20
67	14
<hr/>	
	793
Derbyshire	6
Norfolk	40
Lincolnshire	12
Hertfordshire	9
Gloucestershire	18
Somersetshire	25
Devonshire	12
<hr/>	
	915

²⁰² LRSF, MS Port 26.38.

The original Friends' Meeting House in Gracechurch Street was destroyed in the Fire of London of 1666, the year of Tace's birth. It was replaced with a purpose-built Meeting House (Figure 6). Sowle frequently promoted the convenience of her location and described her address on imprints and in advertisements as 'next to the Meeting House'. She also continued with another retail bookshop in Leadenhall Street 'at the sign of the Bible' which served as an additional retail outlet.

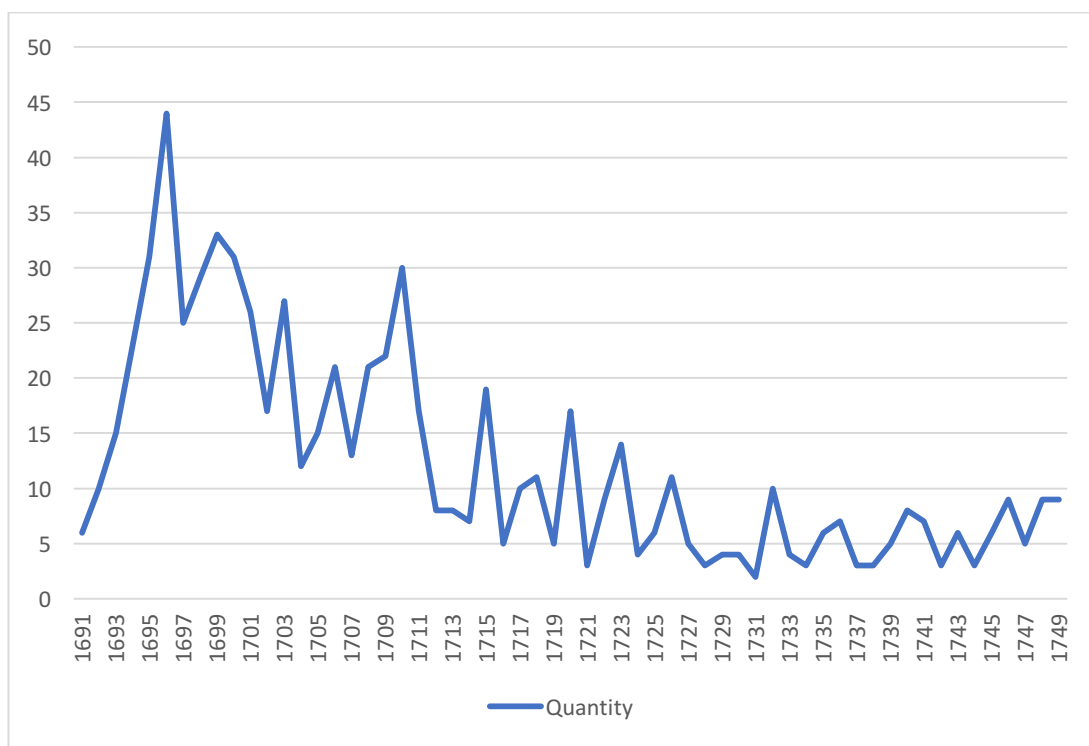
Figure 6: Gracechurch Street Meeting House, c. 1770, artist unknown.²⁰³



These business activities indicate that Tace Sowle deployed her skills and drive to develop her family business in support of the Quakers from the first days of her tenure. This early commitment is further demonstrated in the volume of print she produced within the first three decades of her career. Figure 7 shows not only the large number of texts that Tace Sowle produced throughout her working life, but also the high number of titles she produced in the immediate years following her takeover.

²⁰³ LRSF, MS Pic F072 Original Quaker Strongrooms.

Figure 7: Number of titles published each year by Tace Sowle, compiled from ESTC.



Although this chart evidences the fluctuations that exist in the number of her titles published each year between 1691 and 1749, it also shows that Sowle's most prolific years were between 1691 and 1695. During the first 37 years of Tace's tenure of the Sowle press, she brought energy and confidence to her work and her career flourished. The first fifteen years, from 1691 to 1723, were particularly productive, with the publication of 596 titles or editions. Her most productive year was 1696, the year following the lapse of the Licensing Act, when she published 44 titles. By 1723, however, she published just fourteen titles and, from then, there was a marked reduction in the number of titles that she produced annually. Tace Sowle was, by then, 57 years old. Figure 7 shows a considerable reduction in the number of texts that were published in 1711, the year of her mother's death, suggesting that her mother may have been more involved in running the business than has previously been supposed. After 1723, following Thomas Raylton's death, there was a general reduction in the number of texts

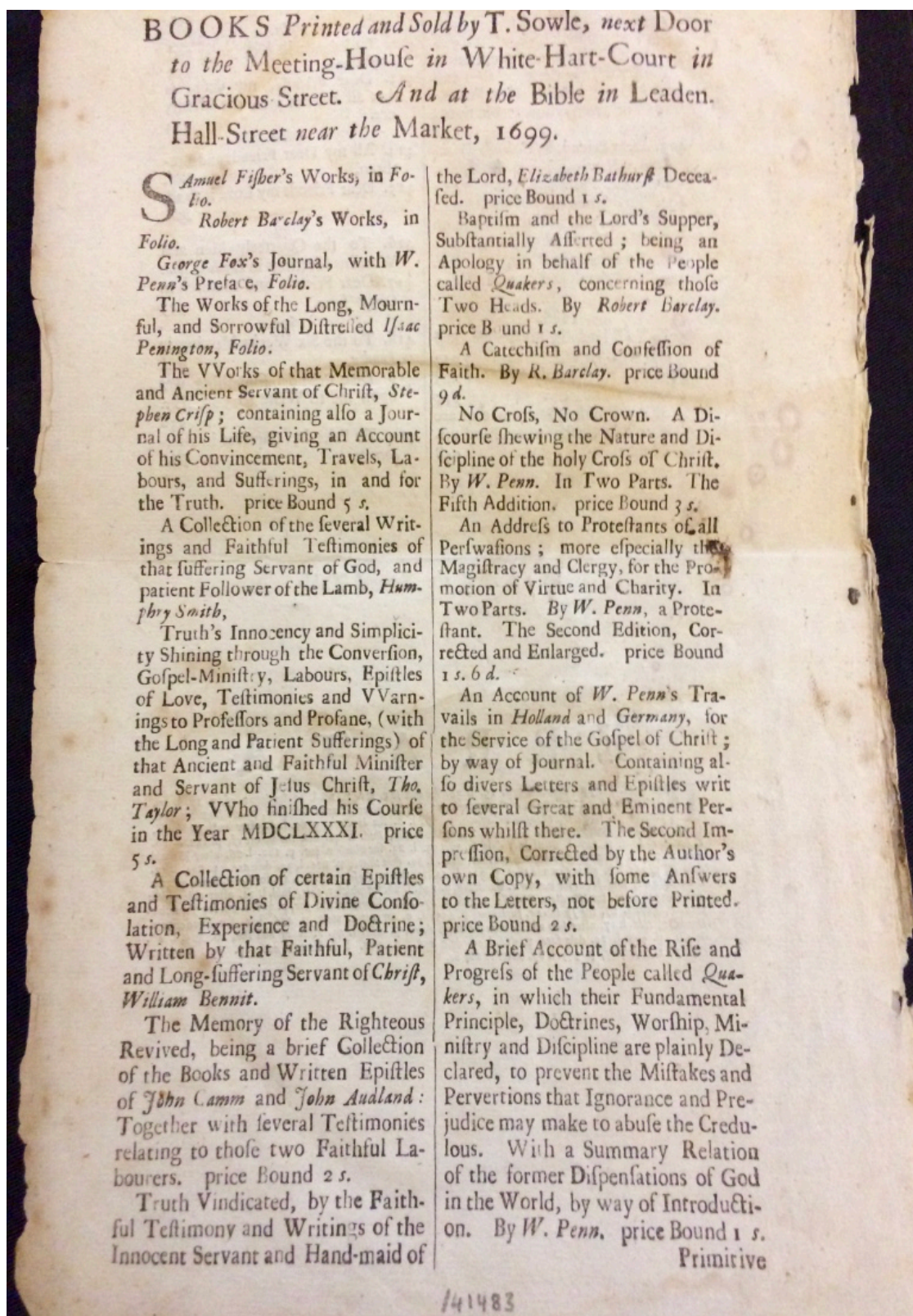
produced. Then, production began to rise to pre-1723 levels during the final ten years of her life, when she took on Luke Hinde as her business partner.

One business practice Tace Sowle used in common with most other booksellers was to regularly compile lists of the texts that she published: first as stand-alone publications, then by placing lists within the last few pages of her author's works. In 1698 she published her catalogue *Books Printed and Sold by T. Sowle, Next Door to the Meeting House in White-Hart Court, in Gracious Street, and at the Bible in Leadenhall Street Near the Market*, in twelve-page octavo. Then, in 1703, another list took up the final six pages of Daniel Phillips' *Vindiciæ Veritatis: Or, An Occasional Defence of the Principles and Practices of the People called Quakers*. These catalogues advertised that the titles were available from White-Hart Court or Leadenhall Street. In 1699, the prices she charged for each publication ranged from as little as three pence to the most expensive at five shillings (Figure 8). The catalogue of 1736, *Books Printed by T. Sowle Raylton and Luke Hinde*, indicate price increases. They also show that she produced a greater number of collected, prestigious works, such as *A Collection of the Works of the Memorable William Penn, Late Governor of Pennsylvania* sold for 30 shillings.²⁰⁴

One difference between Tace Sowle's business practices and those of other women nonconformist booksellers was that she seldom advertised in daily newspapers. Only twenty-one small advertisements appear in London or countrywide newspapers which was significantly less than her contemporary, Mary Fenner, who advertised three hundred and seventy times in the years 1741–1744. The newspapers that Sowle did use were the *Flying Post* or *The Post Master* in 1698 and 1699; *Post Man* and *the Historical Account* in 1698, 1699, 1701, 1702 and 1703; *New State of Europe Both As to Publick*

²⁰⁴ LRSF, MSS. SR 17.2. Books printed and sold by T. Sowle,

Figure 8: Books printed and sold by Tace Sowle, 1699.²⁰⁵



²⁰⁵ LRSF, MS, SR 17.2.

Transactions and Learning in 1701; *General Evening Post* in 1739 and 1745; *London Evening Post* in 1739, 1741 and 1742; *Daily Gazetteer London Edition and Country Edition* in 1741; *London Evening Post* in 1741 and 1742; *Daily Post* in 1742; *Daily Advertiser* in 1742, 1745; *General Evening Post* in 1745 and the *General Advertiser* in 1744.²⁰⁶

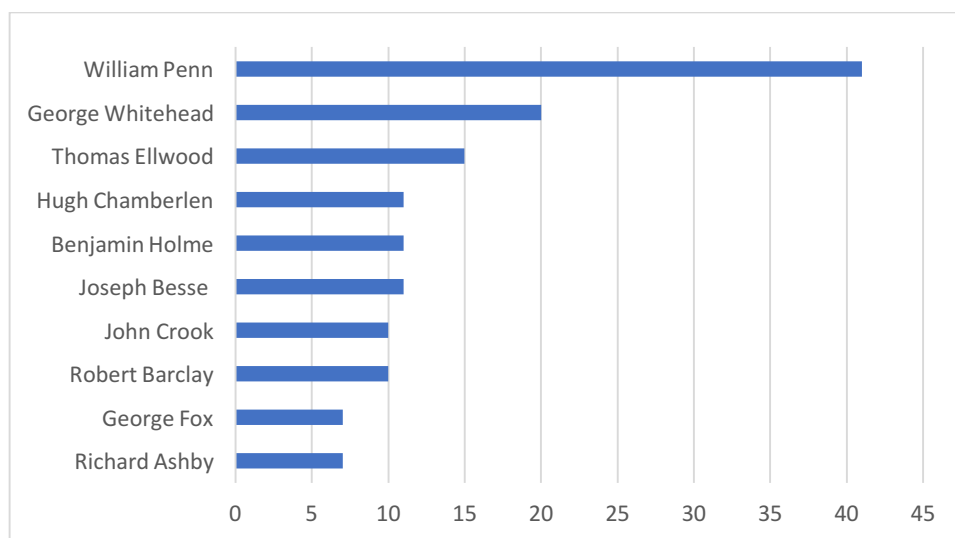
Those of her publications that she advertised were predominantly, political, theological discourses or arguments that exculpated or vindicated the Quakers, such as Joseph Besse's *A Vindication of a Book Intituled: A Brief Account of Many of the Persecutions of the People Call'd Quakers &c, (presented to the members of both Houses of Parliament)* which was advertised in November 1742 and argued for exemption from having to pay tithes to the Church of England. One reason for the small amount of paid advertising she undertook was that she had less need to advertise widely because of the benefits of the steady customer base that Quaker organisation and distribution provided.

Titles, genres and authors.

Tace Sowle published titles by 145 authors. These are predominantly Quaker works, though not exclusively so. Apart from the works of William Penn, Tace Sowle also produced the work of other prominent authors from her father's time, such as George Fox, Robert Barclay, George Whitehead, and Thomas Ellwood. Most of Tace Sowle's titles are devotional or theological in content. Figure 9 shows that the author most often published was William Penn, with forty-one titles.

²⁰⁶ This list of publications was distilled from Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Burney Collection Newspapers Online.

Figure 9: Most frequently published authors by Tace Sowle.



Sowle's religious output, in her first few years, was interspersed with titles relating to philosophy, medicine and trade. In particular, Hugh Chamberlen's controversial proposals for a land bank were frequently published together with titles that featured weights and measures and that related to health and medicine. These texts do not appear to have been directly linked to Quaker religion nor were they processed by the Second Day Morning Meeting. They were written by authors who, though not themselves Friends, were sympathetic to Quaker theology or leadership. One example was Hugh Chamberlen, a physician and economist.²⁰⁷ It is not known how extensive Chamberlen's personal connection to the Quakers or the Sowles was, but he probably knew William Penn since his signature appears as one of the witnesses to Penn's document offering concessions to the Province of Pennsylvania.²⁰⁸ In 1692, Tace Sowle

²⁰⁷ Helen King, 'Chamberlen, Hugh, the elder (b. 1630x34, d. after 1720)', *ODNB* 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 3 December 2021].

²⁰⁸ M. Carey and J. Biorden, *Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Republished Under the Authority of the Legislature Certain Conditions or Concessions, Agreed Upon by William Penn, Proprietary Governor of the Province Of Pennsylvania, And Those Who are the Adventurers and Purchasers in the Same Province, The Eleventh of July, One Thousand Six Hundred and Eighty-One* (Philadelphia: Printed by J. Biorden, No. 88 Chestnut Street, for Mathew Carey and Self, 1803).

published Chamberlen's *The Proposal for the Fishery-stock Formerly Presented to the Members of Parliament* and his proposal for a land-bank, *A Brief Narrative of the Nature & Advantages of the Land-bank as Proposed by Dr. Hugh Chamberlen, the First Author of Founding a Bank on an Annual Revenue*. The mystic and vegetarian polemicist Thomas Tryon (1634–1703), who formed 'an interesting link between the Behmenists and the early Quakers', was published by Tace Sowle.²⁰⁹ In a preface to *Some Memoirs of Mr Thomas Tryon Late of London Merchant, Written by Himself*, an unidentified commentator, possibly Tace Sowle herself, explains that the published text is not the same as that which Tryon had intended because those memoirs, 'Were not to be found in the place where he assigned them to be; neither can we now, after eighteen months search, find them out, which is the reason we now Publish these'.²¹⁰ These comments suggest a close association and personal friendship with the author. Tryon's earlier works had been published by Andrew Sowle who was born in the same village, Bilbury, in Gloucestershire. Tryon subsequently lived in Clapton, where Tace Sowle also resided from 1716. In 1684, Thomas Tryon had published *Friendly Advice to the Gentlemen Planters of the East and West Indies*. Part One of this publication lists the health benefits of native herbs and fruit, while parts two and three present objections to slavery. The second part, *The Negro's Complaint of their Hard Servitude and Cruelties Practiced Upon Them*, uses an unusual autobiographical voice, giving an impression that the writer was identifying himself as a slave. The third part, *A Discourse in Way of Dialogue Between an Ethiopean or Negro Slave and a Christian that was His Master in America*, presents an imaginary dialogue between a 'heathen slave' who points out the

²⁰⁹ Virginia Smith, 'Tryon, Thomas (1634–1703)', *ODNB* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 3 December 2021].

²¹⁰ Thomas Tryon, *Some Memoirs of Mr Thomas Tryon Late of London Merchant Written by Himself* (London: Tace Sowle, 1705), p. 61.

hypocrisy of his supposed 'Christian' slave master, consistent with later Quaker opposition to slavery. Tace Sowle died before the campaign for abolition began in earnest. It is interesting to note, however, that James Phillips, one of her successors, together with eleven other Quakers, instituted 'the Society for effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade' in 1787, from Tace Sowle's George Yard address.

Tace Sowle also printed books and tracts written by more than a dozen women writers. Amongst her first publications of 1691 was the one that she had recommended to the Second Day Morning meeting, *Truth Vindicated by the Faithful Testimony and Writings of the Innocent Servant and Hand-maid of the Lord, Elizabeth Bathurst, Deceased*. Other women writers published by Sowle included Mary Forster (c. 1619–1686), 'a Quaker activist and polemicist', whose text, *A Declaration of the Loving Kindness of the Lord, Manifested to His Hand-maid Mary Harris*, was published in 1693; Abigail Fisher's *A Few Lines in True Love to Such that Frequent the Meetings of the People Call'd Quakers and Love to Hear the Sound of Truth*, was published in 1694; Jane Lead's (1623–1704) *The Laws of Paradise, Given Forth by Wisdom to a Translated Spirit* was published in 1695; and Anne Docwra's (1624–1710) *An Apostate-conscience Exposed, and the Miserable Consequences Thereof Disclosed, For Information and Caution*, was published in 1699.²¹¹ Most of these works by women were nonetheless published through male intermediaries, who often wrote prefaces to their texts.

Tace Sowle's catalogue of authors and titles show that she consistently published titles that advocated theological argument or political concerns. Her catalogue reveals the interests that preoccupied Friends, such as marriage within the

²¹¹ Elizabeth Sauer, *Paper Contestants and Textual Communities in England, 1660–1675* (London: University of Toronto Press, 2005), p. 110.

denomination, defending Quaker beliefs and practices against outsiders, and advising Friends on correct conduct. A significant market persisted for texts written by founding Quaker authors, such as William Penn and Robert Barclay, into the middle of the eighteenth century. Most significantly, her titles show the preoccupation with the lives and sufferings of persecuted Quakers, like those presented in *Piety Promoted* and *An Abstract of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers*. Quakers were concerned with establishing and maintaining their own history, using the testimonies and biographies of exemplary Friends to support their view of themselves as virtuous individuals of a misunderstood but devoutly Christian denomination.

Her list of titles after 1730 features mostly further editions from her back catalogue. These works by first generation Quakers, including William Penn, Robert Barclay, Benjamin Home and George Whitehead, continued to be popular, in addition to interpretive discourses on their works by subsequent authors, such as John Bellers's (1654–1725) *An Abstract of George Fox's Advice and Warning to the Magistrates of London*, published in 1724. An examination of the titles from this period shows that they were still concerned with defending or vindicating Quaker beliefs to outsiders, while many offered conduct, parental, and spiritual advice to Quakers. Others were concerned with arguments against paying tithes, such as Anthony Pearson's (1628–1670) *The Great Case of Tithes Truly Stated* of 1730; Moses West's (fl. 1726) *A Treatise Concerning Marriage* in 1726 in support of endogamy; John Bockett's (1658–1715) *The Drunkard's Looking-glass* in 1730 encouraging sobriety; Isaac Pennington's (1616–1679) *The Doctrine of the People Called Quakers, In Relation to Bearing Arms and Fighting*, published in 1746 and advocating pacifism. In publishing these titles concerned with the central tenets of Quaker convictions, Tace Sowle's work could be understood as supporting political ideas supported by religious conviction.

Tace Sowle's most frequent new works during the later years of her career were texts by Joseph Besse (1683–1757). From 1726, his titles were major contributors to the Sowle catalogue. From 1730, Besse 'was employed to catalogue and sort books belonging to the central archives and library of the society'.²¹² These works included elegiac discourses on exemplar Quakers, including his most well-known title, *An Abstract of Sufferings of the People Called Quakers*, the first instalment of which was published in 1733. He also published titles that argued against misrepresentation of Quakers by Anglican clergy and entered into debates regarding water and infant baptism. He defended Quakers against charges of Deism and wrote to the Houses of Parliament advocating recovery of tithes for Quakers. He consistently used words such as 'defence', 'refute', 'vindication', 'answer to', and 'confutation' in his titles. For example, *A Defence of Quakerism*, was published in 1732; *A Confutation of the Charge of Deism* in 1734; and *A Vindication of a Book Intituled: A Brief Account of Many of the Persecutions of the People Call'd Quakers*, was published in 1737. Sowle published 21 works by Besse between the years 1726 and 1747. His works continued to be published by her successor, Luke Hinde, including *A Collection of the Sufferings*, in 1753, *The Universality of the Love of God to Mankind*, in 1755 and *Some Scriptural Observations*, in 1756. This accumulation of titles arguing for the interests of Quakers indicate that Friends contributed to public debate and sought understanding from a public wider than their own denomination.

²¹² David J. Hall, 'Joseph Besse (1683–1757)', *ODNB*, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 3 December 2021].

Conclusion.

Tace Sowle's early experiences of witnessing her father's persecution may have influenced her own conviction to continue to publish for the Friends. Her tenure provided a link between the founding Friends of her father's generation and the move towards the quietist, industrious beliefs and practices of second-generation Quakers. Although she produced mostly Quaker texts, this was not exclusively the case. Throughout her career, and particularly within the first few years, she often published material that participated in theological and worldly debates which contributed to the public and political spheres. From the start of her career, she demonstrated a considerable grasp of good business practice. Although women Quakers held positions of respect and spiritual authority within their denomination, they nevertheless generally remained under the control of their men in other areas of their lives. However, Tace Sowle, despite being married to a prominent Quaker minister, manipulated the use of honorifics and imprints to demonstrate that control of the press was hers from the beginning to the end of her career and her position as Quaker publisher was never challenged.

Through her affiliation with Quakers, she undoubtedly enjoyed certain benefits to her business practices that her contemporaries did not enjoy. A steady source of texts from them meant that she did not have to compete for work or offset financial risks with which other booksellers of her generation had to contend. Furthermore, contemporary legislative issues meant that she no longer risked the sort of treatment from the authorities and persecution that her father had faced. Yet, she was required to handle all the distribution and warehousing for the Friends, which would have entailed extra work, time and expense. Undoubtedly, she and her husband had some influence over the texts that Quakers authorised for publication, and her monopoly for printing them was a huge

advantage to the success and longevity of her career. Tace Sowle maintained the confidence of the male Quaker publishing Morning Meeting committee for all of her life, including the periods either side of her marriage. Her trade community was restricted mainly to her immediate family, the Second Day Morning Meeting, and Quaker meetings nationwide and abroad. The leaders of the Quakers clearly held her in high regard and accepted advice from her; her competence in their eyes is evidenced by her position never having been challenged.

Many of Tace Sowle's publications, however, demonstrate an engagement with contemporary debates within the Quaker community and wider public. Her publishing contributed to several theological and political debates and produced texts that supported Quaker practices, such as closed marriage and non-payment of tithes. While titles that defended Quakers and their practices and reprints of the works of exemplar Quakers were the mainstay of her later catalogue, she also produced texts supporting commercial ideas, such as Hugh Chamberlen's land bank.

Ultimately, her abilities, skills and judgement ensured the longevity of her career. Her childlessness, however, meant that she had to look elsewhere for a successor. Following her death in 1749, the Sowle Press continued under Luke Hinde's leadership until 1766, when his wife, Mary Phillips Hinde, also a Quaker woman publisher, continued printing for the Friends for a further ten years. Mary Hinde passed the business on to her relation, James Phillips, who, in turn, passed it on to his son, William. This record of succession enabled the Sowle press to continue to print Quaker texts from the George Yard address in Lombard Street until 1828, a continuous contribution to Quaker publishing of over one hundred and fifty years.

Case Study Two:

Mary Fenner (1703–1772)

‘In what melancholy condition I was left’.²¹³

This case study presents a quantitative and qualitative investigation that reconstructs the life and career of Mary Fenner from material selected from archives and book trade databases. It reveals her early career struggles with members of the Anglican establishment during her attempt to restructure her husband’s printing enterprise in Cambridge following his death and her subsequent recovery of her family business with the support of individuals in the Protestant nonconformist community in London. It examines how she used her skills, agency and autonomy to engage with her religious community in order to participate in, and contribute to, the eighteenth-century book trade. This case study contrasts her working and business practices to those of Tace Sowle, as examined in the previous case study.

Mary Fenner has hitherto been known mainly for her unsuccessful attempt to remain the printer for the University of Cambridge during the 1730s. This period in her professional life is important to consider because it offers an insight into the experiences of a widowed bookseller dealing with prominent Anglicans outside London and without the protection of her guild. Her subsequent career, however, as a printer and bookseller for Protestant nonconformists is more significant for the purposes of this study. A re-evaluation of the career and experiences of Mary Fenner, giving full consideration to both early and late periods of her life and work, is overdue.

This case study is divided into three parts. The first presents biographical information detailing the significance of Mary Fenner’s family to her work, the location

²¹³ Cambridge, Cambridge University Library (CUL) MS 1/5/5/2/1/, fol. 69, Mary Fenner to Vice Chancellor Dr. Newcombe’, 20 December 1737.

of her family business and how her personal experience of marriage and widowhood impacted her career. The second part uses archival records to reconstruct Mary Fenner's dealings with the University of Cambridge, following her husband's death. It reveals her personal battle to save the printing enterprise from collapse and the entrenched opposition from Anglican men as she attempted to do so. This section also considers the participation of William Fenner, Mary's husband, in a new printing enterprise in the 1730s. Crucially, it uses Mary Fenner's own words to explicate her approach to the task of recovering her family business after the experiment encountered difficulties. The third part of this case study reveals how Mary Fenner overcame the obstacles she had faced as a young widow in Cambridge, re-establishing herself as a substantial printer and seller of nonconformist texts in London throughout a prolonged period of the eighteenth century. Like Tace Sowle and the other women booksellers examined in this study, a combination of factors assisted her publishing career. These included her own professional skills and expertise, access to family property, and her inheritance of printing materials from her business partner. This research reveals, however, that it was her relationship with her community of Protestant nonconformists prominent in the London book trade community — her authors and readers, particularly the leading independent nonconformist Philip Doddridge — which supported her career and her regeneration as a successful and respectable woman printer and bookseller.

Part one: Mary Fenner, 'A printer till her death'.²¹⁴

Mary Parson, born in 1703, was the daughter of booksellers Elinor and Henry Parson. Henry Parson was a City of London stationer who operated from the Three Bibles and Three Ink Bottles near St Magnus Church on London Bridge, where Mary was baptized,

²¹⁴ [Anon.], 'Obituary of William Fenner', in *the Gentleman's Magazine*, 79 (1809), p. 1082.

before moving his business to the Turk's Head in Gracechurch Street by 1719.²¹⁵ Henry bound eight apprentices between 1716 and 1727, including John Fenner, brother of his future son-in-law, William Fenner.²¹⁶ Mary married William Fenner around 1731. William Fenner died in December 1733, at a crucial time in his new printing venture, 'the Invention of Stereotyping', which he undertook for the University of Cambridge in a financial partnership with Elinor Parson, Mary's widowed mother, and three business partners: the inventor, William Ged, an Edinburgh goldsmith, John James, an architect, and his brother, Thomas James, a letter founder.²¹⁷

Due to William Fenner's unexpected death, Mary Fenner was forced to attempt to restructure the business in Cambridge to complete the contract with the university. However, she was left with business debt and met with fierce opposition from her husband's remaining business partner. This period of her life is documented in 'the Invention of Stereotyping' archive, within Cambridge University Library.²¹⁸ Her attempt was ultimately unsuccessful. Three years after becoming a widow, Mary Fenner entered into a new business venture with a master printer, John Wilson (*fl.* 1715–1740), a member of both the bookselling and nonconformist communities, whose practical expertise and support enabled her to regain solvency and reputation. Wilson died some three years into the arrangement, leaving Mary to work alone until 1745. David Fate

²¹⁵ Henry Parson spelt his surname without a final 's'. McKenzie refers to him as 'Henry Parsons' and Plomer uses both spellings. There is a record for a female child born to Henry Parson baptized at Saint Magnus the Martyr and Saint Margaret's, New Fish Street, London, in 1703, whom I believe to be Mary Parson. MS London Select Births and Christenings', 1538–1975 birth and baptism record, Parson, Female 1703 <<http://search.ancestry.co.uk/>> [accessed 17 September 2021].

²¹⁶ Plomer, *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers 1726-1775*. The earliest imprint for Henry Parson at the Turk's Head is recorded in the ESTC as Edward Ridgway, *Truth Defended*, 1720.

²¹⁷ Sally Jeffery, 'James, John (c. 1672–1746)', *ODNB*, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/>> [accessed 16 September 2021].

²¹⁸ CUL, MS Invention of Stereotyping UA Press 1/5/5/2/1/, and CUL, MS UA CUR 33/6.

Norton, who has identified John Wilson as the accomplished printer of David Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature*, claims that Wilson's successors 'continued for some years to produce books according to the standard of appearance he set'.²¹⁹

Mary Fenner published a number of titles for the leading Congregationalist, theologian and dissenting academy tutor, Philip Doddridge, and other authors amongst his community of Protestant dissenters. A few years later, with her business reputation and finances secure, she married for a second time. James Waugh, her second husband, was a Freeman of the City of London. He was not a printer but an apothecary and glass maker. Nonetheless, his name appeared on imprint pages as convention decreed as he took over financial responsibility for the business. Mary worked for the remainder of her life from the Turk's Head in Gracechurch Street, sometimes referred to as Lombard Street, as the company's printer and bookseller. Mary Fenner's career has been obscured by the conventions of the Stationers Company, which gave precedence to a husband's name on imprints. Hence, it reveals itself in official records only during times of widowhood and in periods of financial jeopardy.

Mary Fenner's name appears on just one imprint with a Cambridge address, the sixth edition of Richard Bentley's *Folly and Unreasonableness of Atheism: Eight Sermons Preach'd at the Honourable Robert Boyle's Lecture*, printed by M. Fenner for W. Thurlbourn, over against the Senate-House, in 1735. Between 1741 and 1744 in London, she produced sixty-one nonconformist texts that show her imprint 'M. Fenner at the Turk's Head, Gracechurch Street' before her second marriage. The imprint 'M. Waugh' then appears on three further titles before her husband's 'J. Waugh' imprint appears from 1745 until his death in 1767.²²⁰ The Fenners' second son, also William,

²¹⁹ Norton, 'John Wilson', p. 134.

²²⁰ The three texts printed under the M. Waugh imprint in 1744, before imprints record J. Waugh as the printer, are: John Allen, *A Sermon Preached at New Broad Street London on*

was officially apprenticed to James Waugh in 1745. In the same year, Mary and James Waugh baptized their daughter, Mary Waugh, on 22 September at the Presbyterian Chapel in Crutched Friars in the City of London.²²¹ James Waugh died in 1767, and Mary's imprint 'M. Waugh' appears between 1767 and 1773 on a further seventeen titles. She died in 1772, aged sixty-nine.

James Waugh's will, like that of Mary, suggests the importance of family for both of them, since all their beneficiaries were members of the extended Fenner or Waugh families. Of particular interest is the phrasing of a legacy to her granddaughter, which reveals that Mary Fenner's experiences in Cambridge and the vulnerable position in which she had found herself after William Fenner's death, with the loss of most of her family's investment in his business venture, had left a lasting impression on her. Her last will and testament shows that Mary's concern was with protecting her granddaughter from a similar fate. She bequeathed her £3800 upon her twenty-first birthday, but stipulated that her executors had a right to control the payment if she wanted to marry before her majority, 'in such manner [...] so that her granddaughter be not subject or liable to the *debts control management or dispositions of the husband with whom she shall marry*'.²²²

Occasion of Death of John Nicholas Esq; A Justice of the Bridge Yard, And One of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of Surrey; and Francis Spilsbury, A Thanksgiving Sermon Preached at Little St Helen's (London: Frances Spilsbury, printed for J. Brackstone at the Globe in Cornhill, R. King at the Bible Crown and M. Waugh at the Turk's Head, 1744); and John Brekell, *Euroclydon: Or, The Dangers of the Sea Considered, and Improved, in Some Reflections Upon St Paul's Voyage and Shipwreck, Acts XXVII*. (London: Printed for J. Noon, at the White Hart in Cheapside, R. King, at the Bible and Crown, in Fore Street, M. Waugh, at the Turk's Head in Gracechurch Street, R Fleetwood, in Liverpool, M. Bryson, in Newcastle, T Cadell, in Bristol, J. Eaton, in Yarmouth, and J. Munby, in Hull, 1744).

²²¹ NA MS England & Wales, Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Registers, 1567-1936, baptism record of Mary Waugh, 22 September 1745. The child died in infancy
<<https://www.ancestry.co.uk>> [last accessed 20 December 2021]

²²² NA MS, PROB 11/983, Last Will and Testament Mary Waugh, 18 November 1772. [My italics].

There is no conclusive proof of Mary's denominational affiliation. Her leaning towards dissent, however, is suggested within correspondence in the Cambridge archive that implies that she had undergone a religious conversion. It can also be determined from her publications which were confined only to texts by nonconformist authors; the record of her daughter's baptism at the Church of Crutched Friars, which identifies as Presbyterian; and her close association with John Wilson, whose family were Baptist ministers. These various details indicate that Mary Fenner was, or had become, a Protestant nonconformist by 1735. The quantity and subject matter of all the publications that Mary Fenner printed and sold, individually or in partnership with other booksellers, suggest an idealistic or vocational impulse behind her work.

As the daughter of printers and booksellers, Mary Fenner's skills, like those of Tace Sowle, were most likely developed within the family business. She would have had early access to the printed word and hence was literate, although she not formally educated, as indicated by her correspondence. Female involvement in bookselling was part public and part private and 'was not something that would have been specifically noted at a time when most publisher/booksellers lived in the same building with their business operation'.²²³ Equipped with professional skills acquired from her parents, Mary Fenner was set for a career in the print trades, which was crucial for the survival of her family business. It is probable that John Fenner, her father's apprentice, connected Mary and the Parson family with his brother, William, who became Mary's husband in or around 1731.²²⁴ David McKitterick and William Ged refer to William

²²³ Grundy, 'Women and Print', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. by Suarez and Turner, pp.146–159 (p. 148).

²²⁴ The exact date and place of their marriage are unknown. The Fenners' son, also William, was apprenticed on 6 August 1745. Boys were apprenticed at age 14, indicating that their marriage probably took place in or before 1731, the year that William Fenner was freed by redemption from the Company of Bakers.

Fenner as a ‘London Stationer’, although there is no record of him having been apprenticed to the Stationers’ Company.²²⁵ McKenzie’s *Stationers’ Company Apprentices 1701–1800* records only his son, also William Fenner, who was apprenticed to his stepfather, James Waugh. There is proof, however, that William Fenner, the father, was freed by redemption from the Company of Bakers in 1731 for the sum of forty-six shillings and eight pence.²²⁶ This document confirms that Rest Fenner, the father of John Fenner, Henry Parson’s apprentice, was also William’s father. Rest Fenner was a printer in Mercery Lane, Canterbury. William Fenner would have had knowledge of printing from his family business. Paying for redemption from the Company of Bakers allowed him to become a Freeman of the City of London and, as such, he was entitled to trade in the City and to marry. In the same year, 1731, Fenner’s name appears as the widow Elinor Parson’s business partner at the Turks Head in Gracechurch Street in Vestry and Land Tax records.²²⁷ William and Mary Fenner had two children, Parson and William Fenner.

Mary Fenner was married twice and widowed twice. Widowhood in the eighteenth century has been described as, ‘the most independent place a woman could have in society. Freed from masculine authority she could trade on her own account’.²²⁸ However, this study will show that, for Mary, her first period of widowhood, far from

²²⁵ See David McKitterick, *A History of the Cambridge University Press* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), II, p. 177; and William Ged, ‘Ged’s Narrative of Block Printing’, in *Biographical Memoirs of William Ged: Including, A Particular Account of His Progress in the Art of Block-printing* (London: J. Nichols, 1708), pp. 1–23 (p. 2).

²²⁶ London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) Freedom of the City Admission Papers, 1681-1930, Redemption record from Company of Bakers for William Fenner, 13 October 1731 <<https://www.ancestry.co.uk>> [accessed 17 September 2021].

²²⁷ Norton dates Fenner’s arrival in the Parish of Allhallows, Lombard Street at Midsummer 1731 from Vestry Books. Land Tax records of 1733 show that William Fenner paid £15 and 3 shillings for 2 houses in Allhallows, Lombard Street. See Norton, ‘John Wilson’, p. 123.

²²⁸ Jane Spencer, *The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), p. 12.

offering independence and respect, was an isolating experience that placed her at a disadvantage in her dealings with the Vice Chancellor of the University of Cambridge and her husband's business partner, John James. Her husband had died insolvent.

Whereas affiliation with the Stationers Company generally benefitted widows, granting them *feme sole* status, Fenner's widow had no rights to support from this guild, since her husband had died in debt. Her skills and family property would nevertheless have been valuable assets. McDowell explains:

A wife who assisted in the family business was for most book trade households in this period an economic necessity. But such a wife took on still greater economic importance when she was the widow or daughter of a member of the Stationers' Company. Marriage was a standard way for journeymen to acquire privileges, copyrights, equipment, connections and customers.²²⁹

Mary may have had no privileges, equipment or copyrights, but she did have skills and access to her mother's premises in Gracechurch Street. Her mother was a widow of a member of the Stationers' Company, and still enjoyed those privileges, and she was master of an apprentice, Samuel Galpine. With access to these valuable assets, Mary re-established her printing and bookselling career in London. Her first action was to take on a new business partner, John Wilson. The family address at the Turk's Head would have been attractive to Wilson because of its location. Wilson had helped Mary prepare Fenner's probate inventory and was therefore known to her. He was also a Renter Warden, an official of the Stationers' Company, in addition to being a master printer. John Wilson's connections to the book trade and nonconformist community supported Mary Fenner's subsequent career. The ESTC lists seventeen titles printed, or printed and sold, by John Wilson from the Turk's Head, before his death in 1740. Many of these were later produced under Mary Fenner's imprint. John Wilson bequeathed Mary

²²⁹ McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street*, p. 38.

all his printing materials which allowed her to continue the business under her own auspices. Following Wilson's death, she did not marry James Waugh until 1744. This was nine years after the death of William Fenner, and four years after the death of John Wilson. During this period, Mary Fenner re-established herself as a flourishing printer and bookseller. Her second marriage appears to have been successful since, in his will of 1767, Waugh refers to his 'loving wife', bequeathing her two thousand pounds.²³⁰

Marriage and widowhood acted both negatively and positively on Mary's career. Although her first husband lost all her family money in his experimental printing business, following his death, she was able to pursue a bookselling career that supported her religious beliefs. Following John Wilson's death, and a considerable period of working alone, her second marriage to James Waugh supported her business, since he took responsibility for finances while she remained its printer. Although Mary Fenner's experience displays some elements common to women booksellers during the period, her dealings with the Anglican establishment as a widow outside the protection of the Stationer's jurisdiction mark her career as singular. Widowhood was an experience that Mary and her mother, Elinor, shared. Mary Fenner had not been directly involved with the Cambridge enterprise, although her mother, Elinor, was William Fenner's financial business partner. It was left to Mary to recover the family business.

These biographical details highlight the extent to which family status was a powerful influence on the occupation of Mary Fenner. As a daughter of a bookseller she was taught the skills and knowledge she needed, and had access to her mother's property when she re-established the press. These factors operated in tandem with her

²³⁰ NA PROB 11/924, Last Will and Testament, James Waugh, 2 December 1766

connection to a nonconformist community of colleagues, authors and readers, and provided a secure structure for her later success.

Part two: The Invention of Stereotyping and the contract with the University of Cambridge.

The impact that William Fenner's participation in the Invention of Stereotyping had on the Parson/Fenner family's finances, and the reputation of his widow, was devastating. This section offers some background to the enterprise and indicates the risk that William Fenner had undertaken with the Parson family's money in involving himself in the project. It also evidences the elite status that the Fenners might have acquired had the enterprise succeeded.

Stereotyping was a revolutionary new method of block printing invented by William Ged, an Edinburgh goldsmith. Ged's first partnership had been undertaken with another printer in Edinburgh, but this had failed. After a chance meeting in the same city with William Fenner in 1729, the two men agreed to enter into a printing business together. The original agreement, according to Ged's account, was for twenty-one years. Fenner had agreed to provide Ged with free board and lodging in London to pursue his invention. Fenner was to advance all the money for the project and take half the profits, while Ged 'was obliged to communicate to him the art'.²³¹ This 'art' was the method which came to be known as stereotyping or block printing, a form of intaglio printing.²³² The partners believed that this method of printing would revolutionise the

²³¹ Ged, p. 2.

²³² For further historical personal accounts and scholarly reflections on the Invention of Stereotyping experiment, see Ged, pp. 1–23 and pp. 33–40; Black, *A Short History of the Cambridge University Press, 1584–1984*; CUL, MS Invention of Stereotyping 1/5/5/2/1, The Case of Mary Fenner, Widow, Administratrix of W. Fenner, Printer to the University of Cambridge, Lately Deceas'd, 10 July 1735, and McKitterick, pp. 175–194.

speed and efficiency of reprinting popular titles like Bibles, primers and Common Prayer books. When the partnership was extended to include two further partners, John and Thomas James, an arrangement, or ‘privilege’, with the University of Cambridge was entered into, to provide the university with Bibles and Common Prayer books in 1732. This project was a risky venture since it was untried and untested, demonstrating a high tolerance for risk on the part of William Fenner and the other partners.

Fenner funded his contribution, in part, via Henry Parson’s widow, Elinor. She went into co-partnership with her son-in-law in 1731. William, having been apprenticed to the Company of Bakers, was not affiliated to the Stationers’ Company. However, as ‘marriage has been recognised as a standard way for journeymen to acquire privileges, copyrights, equipment, connections and customers’, it is tempting to speculate that William may have married Mary to access his mother-in-law’s funds and buy himself redemption from the Company of Bakers.²³³ Whatever his motivation, her money was at risk. There is nothing to suggest that Mary Fenner was involved in the day-to-day operation until after William Fenner’s death, although she most likely provided the hospitality offered to William Ged in London. The events of the venture are recorded in a number of personal narratives. These include a manuscript by Mary Fenner herself, ‘The Case of Mary Fenner, Widow, Administratrix of W. Fenner, Printer to the University of Cambridge, Lately Deceas’d, July 10, 1735’, a ten page appeal sent to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Cambridge setting out her case and her interpretation of the responsibilities and actions of members of the partnership.²³⁴ Other published personal accounts include William Ged’s own memoir, ‘Ged’s Narrative’, and another, ‘Mr More’s Narrative of Block-Printing’, which appear together in

²³³ McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street*, p. 38.

²³⁴ CUL MS Invention of Stereotyping 1/5/5/2/1, fol. 67. The Case of Mary Fenner, 1735.

Biographical Memoirs of William Ged. These testimonies have attracted occasional attention. Charles Henry Temperley, who examined the Cambridge archive, commented in 1839 that the enterprise resulted in ‘the agitation of all parties’ and that ‘in their attempt they sank a large sum of money, finished only two prayer-books, so that it [the contract] was forced to be relinquished, and the lease was given up in 1738’.²³⁵ He noted too, that William Ged was ‘advised to prosecute William Fenner but declined’.²³⁶ William Fenner, however, had died in December 1733.

David McKitterick describes Mary Fenner’s correspondence as a ‘vociferous, bitter campaign of her own against his [Fenner’s] erstwhile partners and the university’.²³⁷ Michael Black’s comments about Mary Fenner, mentioned above, that she ‘knew only a little more English than a parrot, and wrote illiterate letters to the vice-chancellor’ echoes the same hostility towards her that was shared by her husband’s partners.²³⁸ In fact, she always wrote in respectful terms to the Vice Chancellor(s), and the label of illiteracy is unjust. Temperley, McKitterick and Black all failed to acknowledge her subsequent career as a printer and bookseller in London.

The records of the Invention of Stereotyping show that it was poorly tested, badly overseen and managed, inadequately funded, and beset by mutual distrust between the partners. In addition, an inconvenient and expensive Chancery court case was brought by John Baskett, the King’s Printer, against Fenner and the university for breach of copyright. Baskett claimed that the university had no rights to publish, since he possessed exclusive copyright to print Bibles and Common Prayer books. Although Fenner had the case successfully dismissed, this process delayed the project and caused

²³⁵ Charles Henry Temperley, *A Dictionary of Printers and with the Progress of Literature, Ancient and Modern* (London: H. Johnson, 1839), p. 678.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 678.

²³⁷ McKitterick, p. 178.

²³⁸ Black, *A Short History of the Cambridge University Press*, p. 108.

Fenner extra expense. Furthermore, there were rumours that the Dutch compositors brought from Holland to carry out the work sabotaged the plates by deliberately damaging them when left unsupervised.²³⁹ Ged later claimed Thomas James had a vested interest in the project failing, since a successful plate printing process was a threat to his trade as a letter founder.²⁴⁰ From Mary's own account and the partners' correspondence that she reproduced, it appears that William Fenner invested £1454 into the partnership with the James brothers and spent a further £200 in fighting the Chancery case. In contrast, according to Mary, John James's contribution 'amounted to no more than £318:10s'.²⁴¹

Mary Fenner was not directly involved at the start of the project, except in her role in offering hospitality to Ged during the time he experimented with his invention in London. Following her husband's death, however, she revealed a detailed knowledge and understanding of the enterprise. Her own account of the venture tells us how the partnership was constructed:

W. Ged came to London, and W. Fenner paid the Expense of his journey, received him into his House, and provided him with a Place and Materials Suitable for carrying on the Design. But before Plates Suitable for the printing and Book were made, the said W. Fenner and W. Ged enter into an Indenture with Tho. James of London, letter Founder, in which Indenture it is agreed among other things, [T]hat the said Tho. James shall deliver Forms of Types of Letters of Several sorts at the following certain times after signing the Indenture: Vix [z]

A form of Pearl in three months

Nonpareil – two months

Minion – six weeks

Brevier – Ditto

Long Prim – five weeks

Small Pica – one month.

²³⁹ E. More, 'Mr More's Narrative of Block-Printing', in *Biographical Memoirs of William Ged*, p. 36.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 12.

²⁴¹ CUL, MS Invention of Stereotyping 1/5/5/2/1, fol. 67 The Case of Mary Fenner, 1735.

Together with sundry other types of Greek, Arabick, & therein mentioned, which Types were to continue the Property of the Said Company. Mr Tho. James on this Consideration, and on this only, is admitted to an eighth share of the profits for twenty years, however with the proviso, that in case the said T. James doth not punctually fulfill all the Agreement in the aforementioned Indenture contained, he shall lose to the Said W. Fenner and W. Ged all his Part and Share in the Said Partnership.²⁴²

The specialist language used here to describe the typefaces demonstrates that Mary Fenner was familiar with the correct terminology to describe the type and fonts that Thomas James was to supply. Her underlining of some of the text reinforces points that she considered were most relevant to her case. Quotations from correspondence between her husband and his partners are used to prove how Fenner was hampered by John James, who had acquired the contract with the university, and with William Ged, on a number of issues including a supply of poor quality paper and inaction by, and lack of funds from, John James. She claims too that William Ged ‘left the whole business at a stand, secreting or taking with him several tools and other things to which he had no right’, before his unexpected return to Edinburgh. Letters from William Fenner to John James and James’s reply, both undated, were reproduced in full within Mary’s testimony. Two, transcribed here, reveal the instability of the new business and the lack of confidence that John James had in the new process.

Sir,

I was in hopes I should have seen you in London therefore did not write to you. Your Presence is very much wanting, by reason Mr Watson will not go to Cambridge till he has seen you, for he wants Money before he can go. Mr Ged is not satisfied with the Paper I bought from you, and therefore nothing is doing, but the Money that is expended will all be lost, and the Money that is paying to the People at Cambridge every Week and as far as I know the Paper which they are printing, may be Spoiled for want of a proper Person to direct. I beg you will

²⁴² CUL MS Invention of Stereotyping, 1/5/5/2/1, The Case of Mary Fenner, fol. 69, 10 July 1735.

consider of the best Method you can by which these things may be rectified and let me know. I shall set out on my journey next Saturday.
Your Answer etc W. Fenner.

Good Sir,

I received yours and am as sorry as you could be that I could not get to London. I can't tell what to say to Mr Ged, whose Friends I thought might have been satisfied with what I had drawn up. I must own for my own Part that I would advise that You and I might go on with the Cambridge Patent Work in common Type Way by the Assistance of Mr Watson, and have nothing further to do in the Plate Way which has cost us so much Money without doing anything to the Purpose, or as far as I can See is like ever to do so. I remain,
Sir Yours J. James.²⁴³

The 'Mr Watson' referenced in James's correspondence was James Watson, brought in to oversee the press. Previously, he had worked for the King's printer, John Baskett, the printer who had brought the chancery case against the University of Cambridge, which Fenner had successfully fought. Watson, although experienced in producing Bibles and Common Prayer books, was unfamiliar with printing using the new method. This correspondence reveals that there was no partner in charge at Cambridge and that both lack of management and of funds threatened the project. It also reveals John James's strong desire to stop the experimental method of printing and continue by the traditional method.

Mary Fenner's appeal to the Vice Chancellor, although far from 'illiterate', did not influence him in her favour. The extent of the misogyny she suffered from John James may have prevented him from agreeing to her request. James's attitude is revealed in a letter of 1735 to Mary from her mother's apprentice, Samuel Galpine, whom she had sent on an errand to speak to John James on her behalf. Galpine wrote to Mary Fenner:

²⁴³ Ibid.

Madam,
[...] I enquired after Mr James and I have seen him — his answer is as followeth; he doth not know what Business you have of an answer — or what Business you have in it he will not answer yours but will write to the Vice Chancellor & other gentlemen of the University. He says you are a base woman & he hopes to make it appear so. This is all his answer [...]
From Madam
Your Moste Humble Servant at Comm'd
Samuel Galpine.²⁴⁴

James's objection to Mary sounds unequivocal, since he refers to her as 'a base woman'. Furthermore, his letter directly declares his intention to turn the Vice Chancellor and the 'other gentlemen of the university' against her. John James was a staunch Anglican and clearly unsympathetic to the plight of Fenner's widow. It seems possible that the James brothers objected to Mary Fenner, not just because she was the wife of William, whom they had come to distrust, but because of her religious leanings. In a letter of 12 August 1735 to the Vice Chancellor, Thomas James claims: 'My brother and I [...] do not find the change of Mrs Fenner's Religion has made any alteration in her morals'.²⁴⁵ While Mary Fenner was baptized into the Church of England, this letter provides us with the first indication, albeit one couched in malicious terms, that she may have changed allegiance to become a dissenter by 1735:

'The Case of Mary Fenner' reveals her overall hopes that

the Gentlemen will grant her a Lease for a longer term' and that she promises to pursue the Business in such a manner as to be always able punctually to pay her Rent to the University; having the Promise of being assisted by a Gentleman skillful in the Affair, whose fortune will enable her to carry on the Affair so

²⁴⁴ CUL MS Invention of Stereotyping, UA CUR 33.6, fol. 51, Samuel Galpine to Mary Fenner, 5 August 1735

²⁴⁵ Ibid., fol. 54, Thomas James to Vice Chancellor, 12 August 1735

vigorously as to make it an Honour to the University and of great Advantage to herself and Family.²⁴⁶

These words reveal a woman eager to continue with the business, already negotiating with a new business partner, possibly John Wilson, and determined to complete the contract to the benefit of all parties.

Further correspondence from Mary Fenner to the Vice Chancellor of the University reveals a woman frustrated at the evasiveness of her husband's partners, respectful of the Vice Chancellor, but eager to take over the lease. In a poorly written letter to the Vice Chancellor, she asks for more time to secure an agreement with John James:

Worthy Sir, I beg the favour you will be so good as to stay three weeks & then will wate on you in that time will do my indaver to see Mr James & if it is possible to bringe him to som agreement I rely on your Goodness till that time & then I shall have an opportuneity [*sic*] to inform your worship of my case & will do wat is in my power to make you easey as to the Deate is oing to the university
I am Sir your Dutiful Servant Mary Fenner.²⁴⁷

Mary Fenner, aware of the debt, the 'Deate' referenced in the letter, owed to the University for rent of the premises, was pleading for more time to negotiate with John James. However, John James's contempt for her is evident in a letter from January 1735. He had failed to keep his promises to meet with her to make arrangements. She wrote to him:

Sir,
I expected your company this Day according to your Promise, in order to concert Measures relating to our Cambridge Affairs, in which I am sorry I am disappointed. And as you have a Cold and it "may not be proper to come to London" please to Send your Opinion and Advice about y^e House which Mr

²⁴⁶ CUL MS Invention of Stereotyping, 1/5/5/2/1, The Case of Mary Fenner, fol. 69, 10 July 1735.

²⁴⁷ CUL MS UA CUR 33.6, fol. 49, Mary Fenner to Vice Chancellor, 19 June 1735.

Blagrove (whom I sent on the same errand) mentioned in his Letter, and if you do not approve of it, Send me a Line immediately, for I am going to Cambridge among other things to take a House much cheaper and as convenient. I am Sir,
Your most Humble Servant,

Mary Fenner

P.S. I wish you had called Yesterday.²⁴⁸

These excerpts demonstrate that Mary was prepared to take the steps necessary to secure the future of the business. It also displays a slight contempt for Mr James, who could not travel because he had ‘a cold’. The postscript, ‘I wish you had called Yesterday’, adds a plaintive tone of desperation. John James remained unmoved.

John James’s treatment of Mary Fenner was hostile. He obstructed her attempts to complete the contract herself, while considering himself the injured party. He wrote a further letter to the Vice Chancellor in 1735, defending his honesty: ‘I believe all the Divines in England that know me at all, know I have never done anything dishonourable to the body from which I have the honour to be descended’.²⁴⁹ He advised the Vice Chancellor to ‘put a stop to her proceeding’.²⁵⁰ As a male Anglican, he expected that his opinion should take precedence over the representations of Mary Fenner.

This correspondence displays Mary Fenner’s vulnerability and disadvantage in negotiating with powerful figures. She was forced to send letters and messages through male third parties. Her inferior writing skills and the hostile attitudes of the men with whom she was dealing prevented her from achieving her aim to continue with the contract. Mary Hodges tells us that generally widows were shown respect, and that widowhood ‘was by no means an isolating experience, nor was it a state without

²⁴⁸ Ibid., fol. 59, Mary Fenner to John James, 16 January 1735

²⁴⁹ Ibid., fol. 50, John James to Vice Chancellor, 4 July 1735

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

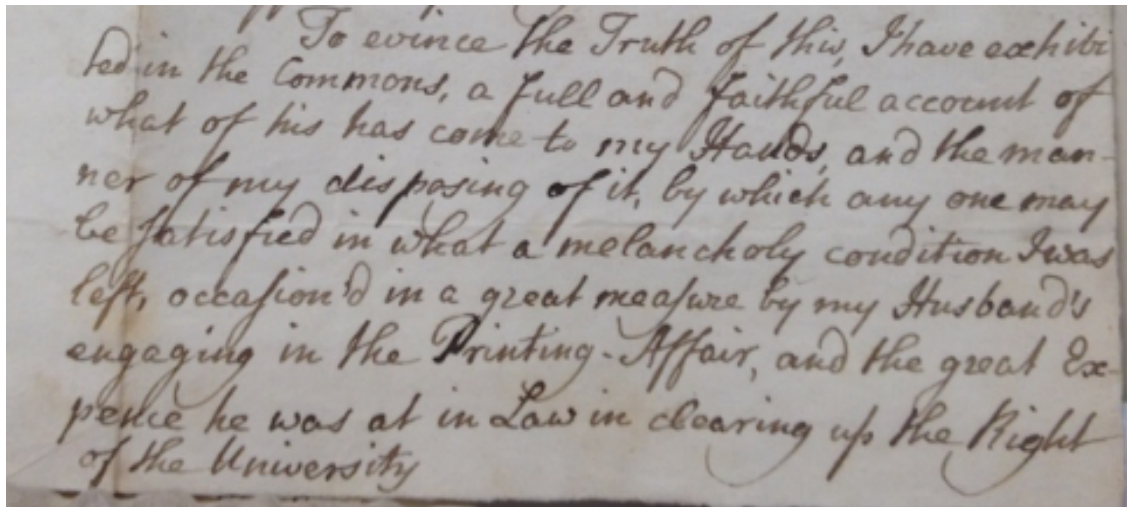
power'.²⁵¹ Mary Fenner, however, experienced a phase of both powerlessness and isolation in her dealings with John James, who referred to her with venom rather than respect.

Mary Fenner continued to defend her position. However, in a change of tone to her correspondence by December 1737, she cast herself as a forlorn widow as she relinquished the lease: 'I beg you would inform them of the melancholy condition in which Mr Fenner left me, there not being one penny paid of his private Debts, and but a Part of those which are owing by my Mother and he in partnership, as I have fully made appear by a faithful Inventory which I have exhibited in the commons'.²⁵² A further letter repeats her claims to poverty and implies that the University was, in part at least, responsible for her condition (Figure 10).

²⁵¹ Mary Hodges, 'Widows of the Middling Sort and their Assets in Two Seventeenth-century Towns', in *When Death Do Us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early Modern England*, ed. by Tom Arkell, Nesta Evans and Nigel Goose (Oxford: Leopard's Head Press, 2000), pp. 306–24 (p. 311).

²⁵² Fenner refers to Doctors' Commons, the association or college of ecclesiastical lawyers founded in 1511 and situated in Knightrider Street, London. It was dissolved following the Court of Probate Act, 1857. Doctor's Commons was also called the College of Civilians. See <<https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk>> [accessed 26 November 2021]. CUL, MS UA CUR 33.6, fol. 68. Mary Fenner to Dr Long, 20 December 1737. Dr Roger Long, Master of Pembroke College Cambridge, was Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University 1734–1735.

Figure 10: Fragment from correspondence from Mary Fenner to Mr Taylor, 20 December 1737.²⁵³



To evince the truth of this I have exhibited in the Commons, a full and faithful account of what of his [her husband's] came into my hands and the manner of my disposing of it, by which any one may be satisfied in what melancholy condition I was left, occasion'd in a great measure by my Husband's engaging in the Printing-Affair and the great Expen- ce he was at in Law in clearing up the right of the University.²⁵⁴

Mary Fenner clearly held the University responsible for the debt incurred by the court case that her husband had paid. The university, however, held John James partly responsible for the overall debt. Temperley notes that, in 1738, 'John James agreed to pay £150 in settlement of the university's claim upon the ill-fated partnership'.²⁵⁵ By this time, Mary had relinquished the lease.

Lack of funds, inexperience of a new printing method, and distrust between partners were instrumental in the project failing. The ultimate cause of the project's failure was most likely the unexpected death in 1733 of William Fenner. This left the project without any leadership and with an embittered partner, John James, who had no

²⁵³ CUL, MS UA CUR 33.6, fol. 69, Mary Fenner to Mr Taylor, Dec 1737.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., fol. 69.

²⁵⁵ Temperley, p. 99.

desire to risk more money or continue the project with Fenner's widow. Mary Fenner's attempt to restructure the business, extend the number of years of the contract, and lease cheaper premises, so that she could attract a new business partner and complete the contract by printing in the traditional way, was not supported by the University or John James. Her achievement in publishing Richard Bentley's *Eight Sermons* in 1735 nevertheless demonstrates that she had sufficient professional skills. It is possible that, had the university and John James supported her, she may well have served as a successful printer and bookseller on their behalf.

William Fenner's investment in an untested and untried printing method while entering into a contract with such a prestigious body suggests that he was a risk-taker. The lack of a will indicates that his death in 1733 was unexpected; he was only 37 years old. As the daughter of a master stationer, Mary Fenner would have been expected to continue the business as a widow had it been located in London. However, Stationers' Company protection did not extend to the universities of Oxford or Cambridge and, since Fenner had died in debt, his widow was not entitled to the privileges from them that she might otherwise have received.

These records of the Invention of Stereotyping are significant because they demonstrate the plight of a widow in the eighteenth-century book trade, to an unusual degree, in her own voice. They also reveal the misogynistic attitudes of the men with whom she had to negotiate, who were of far greater social status and education. These men, all members of the Anglican establishment, appear indifferent to her situation and illustrate the difficulties for a woman whose survival depended upon her ability to continue her business.

William Fenner's probate inventory.

Since William Fenner died intestate and insolvent, his widow had to provide a probate document. This document was most likely the 'full and faithful account' referred to above as having been exhibited by Mary Fenner 'in the Commons'.²⁵⁶ Generally, documents that show details of an individual's printing operations during this period are, in the words of James Raven, 'few and problematic'.²⁵⁷ William Fenner's probate inventory, 'Exhibit 1736/695: William Fenner of All Hallows, Lombard Street, London (Died Wakefield, Yorkshire)', is important because it reveals the extent of the investment, stock-in-trade, household goods, debtors, and creditors of this new printing enterprise and its subsequent financial losses for his widow.²⁵⁸ There are no other references to this document in previous research, which may suggest it has never before been examined.

William Fenner's probate document helps us to understand Mary Fenner's predicament, because it reveals the large scale of the new enterprise in Cambridge, the family investment in it, and the losses accrued. It also indicates the elevated financial status that the Fenners might have enjoyed had the project succeeded. Notwithstanding the complexities of the probate lists and calculations, the inventory is divided into four parts. The first two parts list 'The Goods, Chattells and Credits of William Fenner' and itemise the household goods, their whereabouts within the premises, the stock in trade, and the debts owed to the estate. The third section lists the contents of the print room, the type, printing materials, and also the furniture, goods and textiles that it contained.

²⁵⁶ CUL, MS UA CUR 33.6, fol. 68, Mary Fenner to Dr Long, 20 December 1737,

²⁵⁷ James Raven, *The Business of Books*, pp 83–153 (p. 97).

²⁵⁸ 'NA, MS PROB 31/158/695, Exhibit: 1736/695 William Fenner of All Hallows, Lombard Street, London (Died Wakefield, Yorkshire)', 13 November 1736. When referencing this document, I have used square brackets to indicate that the word enclosed is unclear in the original document:

The final section of the inventory is the account prepared by Mary Fenner. The account was the final stage in the process of administering an estate. It served two functions: ‘To acquit the accountant of further responsibility for the debts of the dead man; and to ensure that the residue or balance of the estate was distributed either according to the will or according to law’.²⁵⁹

This part of the inventory is an eight-page ledger and states that it is a ‘True and just accompt’ compiled by Mary Fenner, ‘the relict of William Fenner’.²⁶⁰ The widow of an intestate ‘had a legal right to the administration of his estate unless she chose to renounce it’.²⁶¹ Mary Fenner exercised her right and was appointed by the probate Court of Canterbury by letters of administration.²⁶² The document itemises all the monies paid to Fenner’s creditors and the amounts received by his debtors. It was signed by Mary Fenner and the court officials who witnessed her declaration.

The account set forth the value of the estate. This included the value of household goods, stock-in-trade, wearing apparel, plate and money received. This was offset against the disbursements which included, funeral costs, debts to creditors, and the court’s costs for processing the inventory and account. The letters of administration cost three pounds, four shillings and four pence. The cost of William Fenner’s funeral

²⁵⁹ Amy Erickson, ‘Using Probate Accounts’, in *When Death Do Us Part*, ed. by Arkell, Evans and Goose, pp.103–119 (p. 103).

²⁶⁰ PROB 31/158/695, A true and just accompt made by Mary Fenner, widow the Relict of William Fenner, 13 November 1736.

²⁶¹ Erickson, ‘Using Probate Accounts’, p. 110.

²⁶² When a person died intestate [i.e. leaving no will], the next of kin or a close friend would often have to apply to the probate court for Letters of Administration to enable them to take possession of and distribute the estate. The applicant had to swear that there was no will, that the applicant would pay all funeral expenses and debts, administer truly, and submit a true inventory and account of his/her stewardship. The Court then granted Letters of Administration and might require the administrator to enter into a bond to administer the estate faithfully, in which case a copy of the act was endorsed on the document. An inventory of all the goods of the deceased then had to be drawn up and exhibited into the Registry of the Court.

was twenty-five pounds. This is consistent with average costs for a funeral for a person from the middling section of society for the period 1731–1740.²⁶³ The total value of the estate before disbursements, the ‘charge’, was ‘two thousand six hundred and thirty-two pounds fourteen shillings three pence and three farthings’. The total cost of disbursements, the ‘discharge’, was three thousand and ninety-four pounds.²⁶⁴ This left a shortfall of some four hundred and sixty-two pounds.

Fenner’s probate inventory is complex because of its length, the number of sections included, and the extensive listings within each section. It is further complicated by the fact that Mary’s mother, Elinor Parson, was William Fenner’s business partner, and thus required some valuations to be halved. Furthermore, Mary Fenner claimed her widow’s moiety for some of the credits. The losses, however, were such that, despite this moiety, there was no money left after the creditors had all been paid. The inventory verifies the extent that Mary’s mother, but also her sister, were important financiers for the Fenner/Parson business. In the absence of banks, a business was reliant for finance from friends and family. Examining examples of seventeenth-century accounts, Peter Stafford states, ‘The single clear group of lenders [...] were the members of the borrower’s own family’.²⁶⁵ Elinor was responsible for paying her share of the business debt. She paid a number of creditors including her daughter, also Elinor. An early entry in the discharge reveals Elinor Parson senior paid ‘the sum of three hundred and sixty two pounds ten shillings being the half of seven hundred and twenty five pounds’ to Elinor Parsons junior, in part of ‘a bond for one thousand four hundred

²⁶³ Teerapa Pirohakul, ‘The Funeral in England in the Long Eighteenth Century’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, London School of Economics, 2015), p. 207.

²⁶⁴ PROB 31/158/695, Fenner Inventory, A true and just account

²⁶⁵ Stafford, ‘Long Term Credit in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century England’, in *When Death Do Us Part*, ed. by Arkell, Evans and Goose, pp. 213–218 (p. 223).

pounds'.²⁶⁶ Elinor's three hundred and sixty two pounds was possibly the extent of the family money that remained (Figure 11).

The first entry of the probate document records that Mary 'craves an allowance of the sum of four hundred and ninety pounds paid by this accountant to Henry Pelison Esquire in part of a bond of one thousand pounds with interest, two years interest due'.²⁶⁷ The term 'craves and allowance' was the official term meaning to make a payment from the charge. While Pelison received half of what he had invested, smaller amounts were paid to individuals in full, for example a further entry shows

²⁶⁶ PROB 31/158/695, A true and just accompt

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

Figure 11: Image taken from the first page of Mary Fenner's 'account' of William Fenner's probate inventory, 11 November 1736, showing some of the household goods valuations at the Cambridge premises.

A full and perfect Inventory of all and singular the Goods Chattels and Effects of William Fenner late of the parish of St. Dunstons Lombard Street London but at last deceased in the County of York deceased which since his death have come to the hands possession or knowledge of many Executors and Widow the Heir of the said deceased.

The following Household Goods were taken and valued and appraised on the twelfth day of October one thousand seven hundred and thirty five by Thomas Fisher and John Wilson appraisers and areas follow

In the Counting house
 A Desk and Desk Case containing a Stone and Stone Tongue Scales and Brass Scales and an ordinary oval Table three feet long } 3. 13. 6

In the Dining Room
 A Stone fire Shovel Tongue poker and Brass Scissors a Tea Table a small Table a Chimney Glass a large brass Dinner a pier Glass a gold frame Brass Dinner a Stone in a large frame } 6. 6. 0

In the Room two pair of Chairs
 A Bedstead complete with wallows and Rods two sets of red and white Callico Furniture a feather Bed Bolster and two pillows in easy Chair the same as the Bed a dressing Table and dressing Glass a wall mounted Chest of Drawers eight Case Cases of fashioned two Scones and some old China } 12. 11. 0

Other things in different parts in the House
 Two small oval Tables a dressing Table a feather Bed Bolster and two pillows a Leather Trunk six pair of Sheets six Table Cloths two Woolen Napkins six pair of pillow Cases two old Towels three pair of white window curtains two Brass powder pots two small brass pans a Stone plate } 10. 14. 2

Two pair of old Brass Candles ticks a Brass snuffer a pint Copper pot a pewter Cullender and Basin a Quilt panche a Spoon a pewter water Dish and taster plate a Bed Chair Furniture for a Bed a white Callico Furniture a Bedstead with wallows and Rods a large Glass Dish } 4. 17. 6

Plate and Jewells sold after the deceased's death
 One set of Cutlers a Coffee pot a small chine spoon a large mug a small Ditto two Chalks a large Salver two small Salvers one large Spoon eight Spoons one pepper Box a Childs Cup seven Tea Spoons Tongue and Strainer in all one hundred and eleven ounces weight } 10. 14. 2

‘this accomptant craves an allowance of four pounds ten shillings and sixpence to David Waily in full’.²⁶⁸

In compiling a probate inventory it was usual for ‘several specialists to value parts of the estate’.²⁶⁹ Amongst the specialist valuers for this probate document were John Wilson, the master printer who went on to become Mary Fenner’s new business partner in London, and William Caslon, a type-founder from the same area of London, Bartholomew Close, as Thomas James, and possibly a competitor in business.²⁷⁰

The value of the stock-in-trade alone was £1510.14.4½. The second entry under this heading, ten thousand seven hundred nonpareil Bible Quires valued at £757.13.4, made up roughly half the value of Fenner’s stock-in-trade.²⁷¹ By Mary’s account, the large number of quires were most likely the poor quality sheets produced from plates which, having ‘cost the Company a great deal more than a thousand Pound’, were ‘worth very little more than the metal of which they [were] made’.²⁷² Amongst the stock-in-trade, there were grammars, primers, spelling books, skins, and turkey leathers. Smaller quantities of common prayers, spelling books and psalters were itemised, including two hundred and eighty-seven Bibles bound with services and psalms valued at £32.00, which may have been of inferior quality produced by the stereotype process or the remaining stock from the Turk’s Head business brought from London to Cambridge (Figure 12).

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

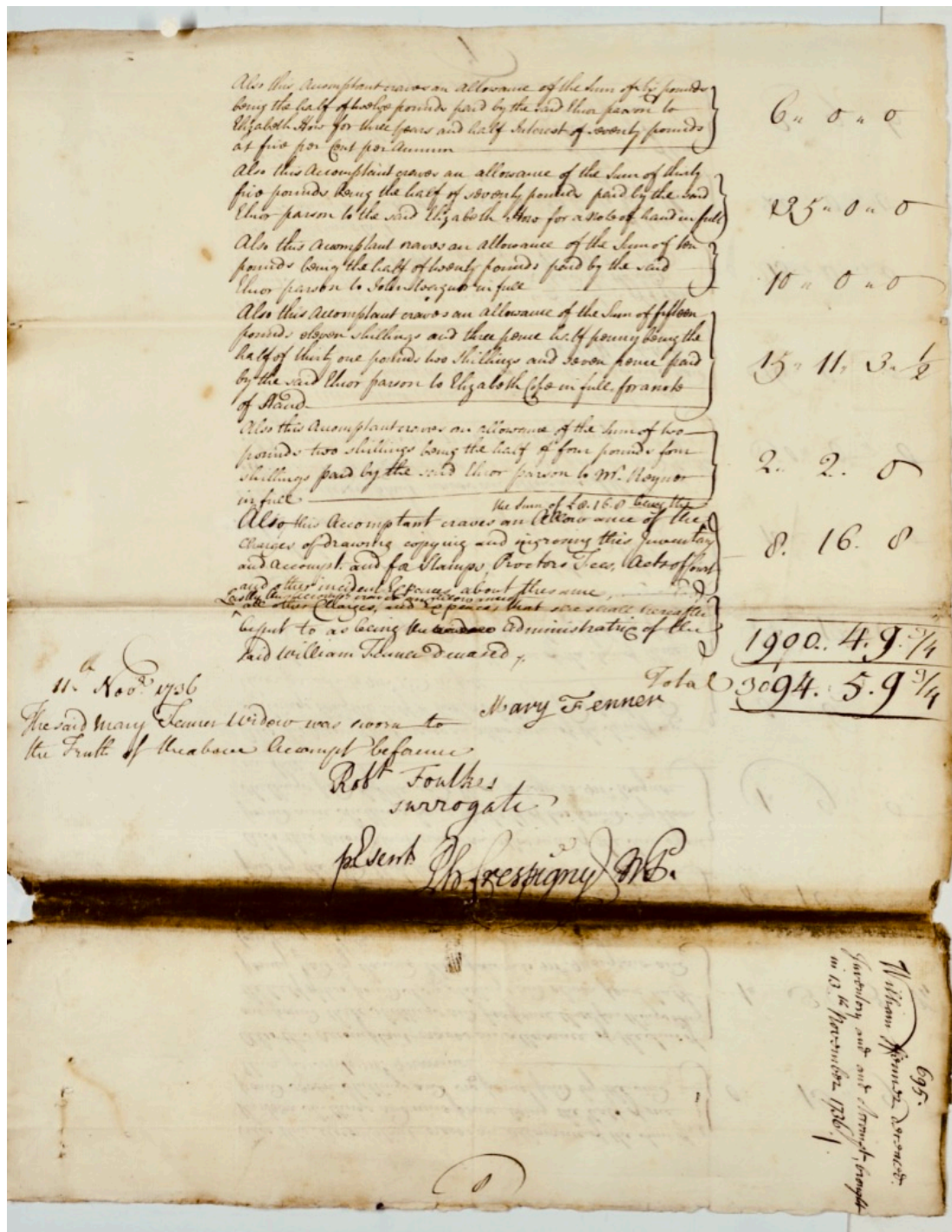
²⁶⁹ Jeff Cos and Nancy Cos, ‘Probate 1500–1800: A System in Transition’, *When Death Do Us Part*, ed. by Arkell, Evans and Goose, pp. 14–37 (p. 29).

²⁷⁰ This was probably William Caslon the elder (1692–1766), since his son, also William Caslon (1720–1778), would have been only 16 years old in 1736.

²⁷¹ PROB 31/158/69, Fenner Inventory, Stock-in-trade.

²⁷² CUL, MS Invention of Stereotyping 1/5/5/2/1, fol. 67, The Case of Mary Fenner

Figure 12: Final page of Mary Fenner's 'true and just account' of Fenner's probate inventory, displaying her signature and those of the court officials.



The final entries of the stock-in trade, 'three thousand one hundred and sixty Common Prayers 24 and 'one thousand seven hundred and thirty-three printed and ordinary

paper, thirty-three reams waste’, are valued at £6.0.0.²⁷³ These waste items indicate a large quantity of unusable printed pages, which support Mary Fenner’s claim. If the printed material, either bound or in quires, was useable, this inventory indicates that William Fenner was holding substantial amounts of Anglican religious literature in Cambridge, ready for resale and finished far more than ‘only two prayer books’ that Temperley claims. The value overall of this stock suggests that, had Fenner not died, the business may have been able to support the Cambridge contract in time.

Some entries of stock-in-trade indicate that the business was also run as a retail shop. These included: ‘Four thousand quills and pens six gross of pocket books bound and unbound five dozen of ordinary copy books and sixty dozens of pencils twenty one quires of bills of loading eighty reams of writing paper and sixty six quires of musick paper’.²⁷⁴ These items and quantities suggest that they were for resale rather than for use by the business itself.

The disbursements, or ‘discharge’, section of the inventory name the payee but not what the debt was for. This was common practice: ‘Names of the creditors whom the accountant paid are virtually always given [...] unfortunately the reasons for the debts are not always given in the same way’.²⁷⁵ For example, ninety-one pounds was paid to Thomas Mould, but the entry does not tell us what service or goods he supplied. Likewise, ten pounds four shillings and six pence was paid to Richard Maw and Company, but, again, we do not know for what this was paid.

The premises were furnished and equipped with valuable and commonplace objects. Items show that the ‘Counting House’ contained ‘A Desk and Book Case for

²⁷³ PROB 31/158/695, Stock-in-trade.

²⁷⁴ PROB 31/158/695, A true and just accompt.

²⁷⁵ Stafford, ‘Long Term Credit in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century England: The Evidence of Probate Accounts’, in *When Death Do Us Part*, ed. by Arkell, Evans and Goose, pp. 72–102 (p. 215).

the use of a [flour] Fire Shovel Tongs Poker and Brass fender an ordinary table and three old chairs' valued at £3.13.6. The dining room had a 'stove fire shovel Tongs Poker and brass Fender and Tea Table a Card Table a Chimney Glass Gold Frame (mirror) brass arms a pier glass gold frame brass arms a sconce in a gold frame', valued at £6.6.0. Rooms in what appears to have been the living area of the house were well furnished. In one room, described with 'two pairs of stairs', there was a 'Bedsted compleat with pillows and Rods, two setts of red and white Callico furniture, a feather bed bolster and two pillows on every chair the same as the Bed and Dressing Table looking Glass a walnut tree Chest of Drawers Eight Cane Chairs Old Fashioned two sconces and some old china' which were valued at £12.11.0. There were also 'Two pairs of brass candlesticks a brass [mortar] a pint copper plate a pewter cullender (Bason a heart) pewter flagon [wafer] Dish and [...] Plate a Red China furniture for a Bed in White Callico furniture a Bedstead with pillows and Rods a large glass Lanthorn' valued at £4.17.6.

In addition, 'Plate and jewells sold after deceased's death' included: 'One sett of castors a coffee pott a small sause pan a large mug a small ditto two salts a large salvor two small salvors one large spoon eight spoons one [paper] Box a childs cup seven tea spoons Tongs and strainer'. These and other valuables including: 'Sterling forty four ounces [...] penny weights at five shillings and four pence per ounce', were valued at £11.17.11, and 'nineteen penny weights at five shillings and two pence per ounce', valued at £17.6.0.²⁷⁶

The final three items listed under this section are:

One Gold Watch and Chain	£19.0.0
One Ring with fifteen small roses	£3.10.0
One small motto ring	£0.3.6. ²⁷⁷

²⁷⁶ PROB/31/158/695, Fenner Inventory, household goods.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

The total value of goods in this section of the inventory amount to £83.19.7. The final three items referring to personal jewellery, which could easily have been removed, suggests that, in declaring these personal objects, Mary Fenner did indeed provide ‘a full and faithful account’, as she had claimed was the case in correspondence to the Vice Chancellor of the University.

The inventory records that, in the Printing House, there were also ‘feather beds, bolsters and pillows’ and ‘a leather trunk six pairs of sheets six table cloths twelve napkins six pairs of pillow beers twelve old towels three pairs of white window curtains two [Brass] porridge potts and two small sauce pans a [slow paddle] twenty plates’ valued at £10.14.2.²⁷⁸ Large amounts of type and printing equipment demonstrate that domestic and work materials were present within the same areas. This confirms James Mosley’s observation that, ‘small to medium sized printing offices occupied conventional town houses, and the master printer with some apprentices, often lived over the shop’.²⁷⁹ It is interesting to note that William Fenner and his partners set up an experimental printing press along exactly the same lines as a traditional domestic press.

The inventory for the print room reveals that Thomas James fulfilled at least some of his agreement to supply the partnership, given the large amounts of type. It lists a variety of fonts similar to those that Mary references in her case to the Cambridge authorities. It details the typefaces and value of them by weight, for example, ‘Dutch non-pareil four hundred and forty three pounds at two shillings and sixpence per pound valued at £55.7.6, English non-pareil eighty-eight pounds at one shilling and six pence per lb, £6.12.0, Non-pareil Greek seventy six pounds at seven shillings and six pence

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ James Mosley, ‘The Technologies of Printing’, in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. by Suarez and Turner, pp. 163–199 (p.167).

per lb, £28.10,’ and ‘Pearl three hundred and twenty pounds at three shillings per lb valued at £48.0.0’.²⁸⁰ The total value of print shop materials was three hundred and forty pounds, eighteen shillings and eleven pence, showing a considerable investment in type that the stereotype process was designed to replace.

The household items reveal a well-equipped living area within the business. Inventories of ‘middling Londoners’ show how ‘their homes were transformed by the early eighteenth-century; most were comfortable and lighter, with many more upholstered cane chairs’, and they were also better lit, ‘with mirrors in nearly every room, and hung with lighter and more attractive textiles, especially in furnishing the better beds’.²⁸¹ This inventory lists similar items in Cambridge, such as cane chairs, mirrors (glasses) textiles, beds, soft furnishings and furniture. These valuable items place the inhabitants of this premises within the same social status as middling Londoners.

Although it appears from the dates and addresses of her correspondence that Mary Fenner had remained in London during the time the business was active in Cambridge, the number of beds in the living quarters and the presence of a child’s cup amongst the items suggest that she and her children may have been present in Cambridge. Other individuals, connected to the business, may have been in occupation, but the personal effects, particularly the evidence of pieces of jewellery, which must have belonged to the Fenners, otherwise would surely have been claimed by their rightful owners, indicate that the family lived there at times. The furnishings in the family area of the house also evidence a feminine influence in the property. Sets of red

²⁸⁰ PROB/31/158/695, Fenner Inventory, household goods.

²⁸¹ Tom Arkell, ‘Interpreting Probate Inventories’, in *When Death Do Us Part*, ed. by Arkell, Evans and Goose, pp. 72–102 (p. 90).

and white calico, linen in the form of table cloths, and sheets and two pillows on every chair suggest a degree of comfort and fashion.

The average value of a deceased person's estate between 1731 and 1740 was £200–£300.²⁸² William Fenner's estate, valued at over £2,632, was thus worth almost ten times more than the average estate. Arkell cautions however that, 'It is misleading simply to equate a man's financial standing before death with his debts and credits after it because his creditors moved immediately to demand payment of all outstanding bills'.²⁸³ Nevertheless, it appears that this home and business were well equipped and comfortable before Fenner died.

Although the total losses incurred by Fenner's death had negative implications for Mary Fenner's future for herself and her children, had her mother not still been in possession of the Turk's Head premises in Gracechurch Street in London, they would have been catastrophic. With access to property, Mary Fenner was able to re-establish the family printing business with her new business partner, John Wilson.

Part three: Mary Fenner's career as printer and bookseller in London.

Mary Fenner's later career has been ignored in most book trade histories. Nonetheless, she went on to contribute to religious publishing for the remainder of her life and became a resourceful and successful professional printer and bookseller of nonconformist texts. The conclusion of the Cambridge experiment in 1737 marked only the end of the first stage of her work. There is a clear distinction between this period of her life and her subsequent career. This section traces how Mary Fenner was able to utilise her skills as a printer and bookseller to recover her fortunes with the support of

²⁸² Pirohakul, 'The Funeral in England in the Long Eighteenth Century', p. 24.

²⁸³ Tom Arkell, 'The Probate Process', in *When Death Do Us Part*, ed. by Arkell, Evans and Goose, pp. 72–102 (p. 13).

her nonconformist community of printers, booksellers and authors and analyses the factors that shaped this later career. This period suggests an idealistic impulse behind her work, dedicated as it was to the exclusive production of nonconformist texts.

In addition to her compositing and presswork skills, Mary Fenner utilised complex commercial business and sales practices that depended on a close community of authors and other booksellers. Her business relationships, like those she enjoyed with her business partner, John Wilson, and with Philip Doddridge, were based on friendship and loyalty.

In 1737, Mary entered into a business partnership at the Turk's Head with John Wilson, the printer who had helped her to prepare William Fenner's probate inventory. John Wilson was connected to a family of prominent dissenters: both his father, Ebenezer, and his brother, Samuel (1702–1750), were Baptist ministers.²⁸⁴ In 1740, soon after the partnership had begun however, John Wilson, by this time a 'renter warden', an official of the Stationers' Company, also died. His death may have been expected since he had made a will in 1739. Wilson clearly thought highly of Mary Fenner, as he left 'his dearest and most kind friend Mrs Mary ffenner' his 'goods, chattels and credits including his printing materials'.²⁸⁵ This inheritance was beneficial because it enabled Mary to continue working from the Turk's Head, her family home. It is also likely that John Wilson had introduced Mary Fenner to Philip Doddridge, given that he was the printer of the first edition of Doddridge's *Family Expositor, Volume 1*, for the bookseller Richard Hett.

²⁸⁴ [Anon.], 'Memoir of the Rev. Samuel Wilson', in *The Baptist Magazine*, January 1819, pp. 141–5 <<http://baptisthistoryhomepage.com/wilson.samuelmemoir.brit.html>> [accessed 16 September 2021].

²⁸⁵ NA. PROB 11/711, Last Will and Testament of John Wilson, 1739/41,

Mary continued to produce Wilson's titles under her own imprint after his death. Following the first and second editions of the *Family Expositor*, which were published by Hett, forty-four works by Philip Doddridge were produced or sold from the Turk's Head in Gracechurch Street under either the 'M. Fenner' imprint or that of 'J. Waugh'. Between 1741 and 1744, Mary produced sixty-one nonconformist texts that show her imprint 'M. Fenner at the Turk's Head, Gracechurch Street'. Following her marriage to James Waugh, apart from just three titles which show an 'M. Waugh' imprint, her husband's 'J. Waugh' imprint appears. The 'M. Waugh' imprint appears on seventeen further titles following James Waugh's death in 1767, eleven of them on titles by Isaac Watts. Indeed, her name appears posthumously on the imprint of the twenty-third edition of Isaac Watts' *The Psalms of David*, alongside those of T. Longman, C. and R. Ware, H. Woodfall, J. Buckland, and others.

Mary Fenner's connection to family, trade and nonconformist communities.

Mary Fenner's bookselling career demonstrates the significance of communities, specifically her family, book trade, and nonconformist community, to her work. She was born into a bookselling family and, although neither of her husbands were apprenticed to the bookselling trade, they nevertheless worked in the same professional community. William Fenner lost her family's money in the Cambridge experiment but, from 1745, James Waugh, her second husband, handled the financial side of the Turk's Head business and it continued to be financially stable after he died. Mary inherited £2000 from him and, at her death, she bequeathed £3800 to her granddaughter. She was linked by friendship and business to John Wilson and other book trade nonconformists. They both shared imprints with other booksellers. The recurrence of the names, Richard Hett, James Brackstone, John Noon and James Hodges suggests a close and

longstanding connection with other booksellers who published and sold significant quantities of dissenting literature.

During the years 1741 to 1744, Mary's career is reasonably straightforward to reconstruct from extant titles, since her own initial and name appear on the imprints of the titles she printed or sold. The ESTC records a total of sixty-four titles with the imprint 'M. Fenner' or 'M Waugh' in these years. Sixty four religious titles may not appear especially prolific, yet her output during this period compares favourably with other dissenting booksellers for the years 1741–1744 (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Comparison of the number of titles produced by nonconformist booksellers for the years 1741–1744.

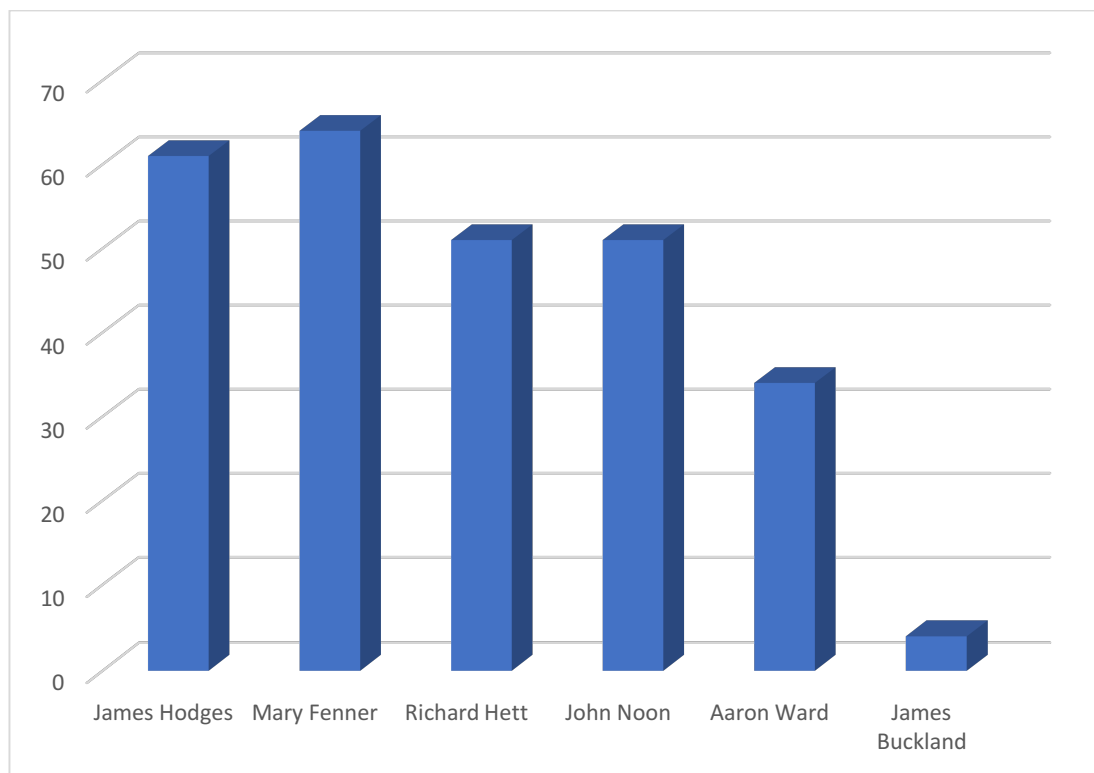
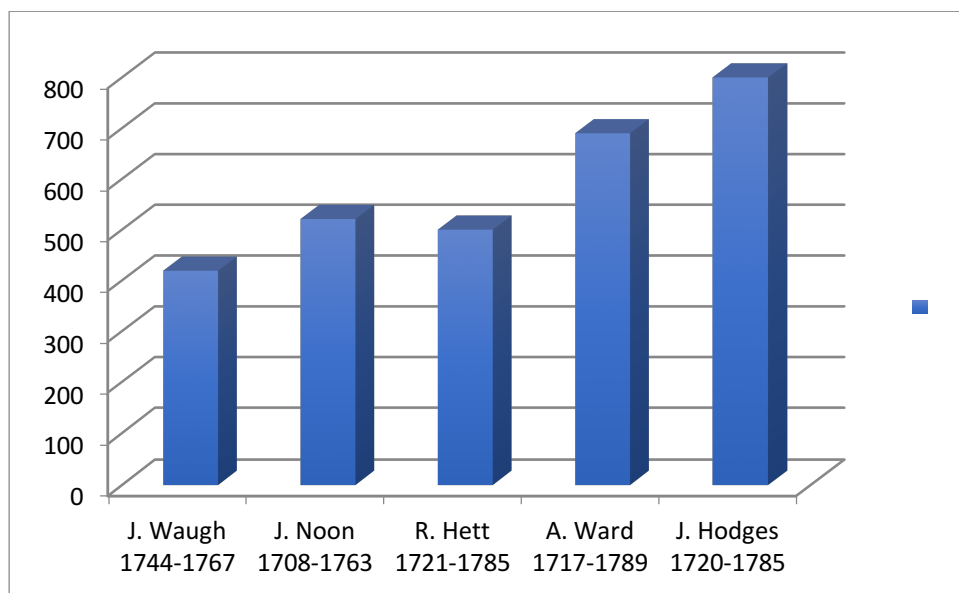


Figure 13 demonstrates that Mary Fenner was the leading contributor to the nonconformist literary marketplace between 1741 and 1744 amongst her book trade colleagues. Not only was Mary Fenner reliant on close geographical trading

communities to support her career, her contribution is significant for an additional reason: the other booksellers shown in Figure 13 produced a number of non-religious titles whereas Fenner’s imprint appears exclusively on nonconformist religious texts. From July 1745, James Waugh’s imprint appears on the Turk’s Head titles, although it was Mary who remained the printer at the establishment. In an obituary for her son, also William Fenner, she is significantly referred to as ‘a printer all her life’.²⁸⁶

Figure 14 presents a comparison of the number of titles produced and sold by male dissenting booksellers, including James Waugh. Although his output seems less, his imprint does not appear until some twenty-three years after the others. If Mary’s imprints were calculated within those of Waugh, the totals would position them at similar levels to Noon and Hett, thus demonstrating that the couple were prominent publishers of nonconformist texts.

Figure 14: Comparison of the output of nonconformist booksellers who were connected to Mary Fenner and James Waugh.



²⁸⁶ [Anon.], ‘Obituary of William Fenner’, p. 1082.

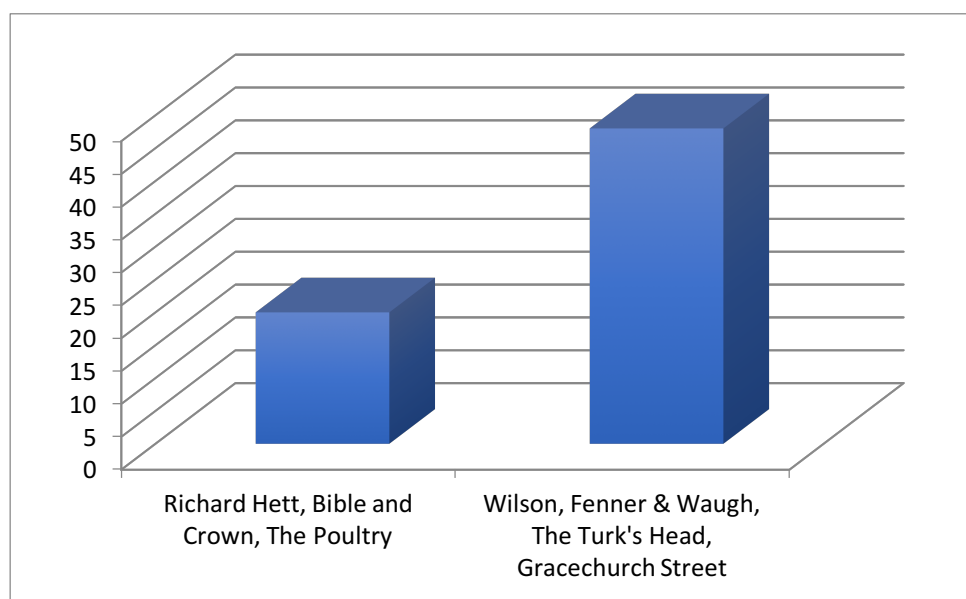
Collaboration with nonconformist printers and booksellers helped form a close and supportive network for Mary Fenner and James Waugh. Another nonconformist community central to Mary Fenner's success were the authors who provided the texts that she produced. These were mainly Baptist, Congregationalist or Presbyterian ministers. They included Henry Grove, Thomas Amory, John Taylor and Philip Doddridge.²⁸⁷ Without doubt, the most prominent dissenter with personal contact to Mary Fenner was Philip Doddridge. Alongside 'his academy work', he pursued 'a publishing career in order to spread his ideas to a wider community' and his work 'covered many genres including sermons, controversial works, biographies, devotional writings, hymns and scholarly works'.²⁸⁸ Figure 15 compares the output of Doddridge's titles from two establishments during his lifetime. Although Richard Hett at the Bible and Crown in Poultry was the first seller of Doddridge's work, more works were published for Doddridge by the Fenner/Waugh's at the Turk's Head.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁷ The authors of texts published by Fenner 1741–1744 include: Philip Doddridge (1702–1751); Caleb Fleming (1698–1779), dissenting minister and polemicist; George Benson (1699–1762), biblical scholar and theologian, and nonconformist minister from 1723; Joseph Borroughs (1685–1761), Baptist minister; Thomas Amory (1701–1774), principal tutor at Taunton Dissenting Academy; Thomas Steffe (1716–1740), minister at Paul's Meeting, Taunton; William May (1706–1755), Minister at Bartholomew's Close, London; Edward Godwin (1695–1764), minister at Little St Helens, London; David Jennings (1691–1762), Congregationalist or Independent, tutor at David Jennings Academy, and minister at Wellclose Square and at old Gravel Lane, Wapping; Samuel Bourn (1689–1754), dissenting minister (Presbyterian); Samuel Chandler (1693–1766), dissenting minister and theologian; John Brekell (1697–1769), dissenting minister of Kaye Street Chapel, Liverpool; Nathaniel Lardner (1684–1768), minister and patristic scholar; Henry Grove (1684–1738), minister and tutor at Taunton Academy; Amos Harrison (unconfirmed *b.* before 1723, *d.* after 1742), from Croydon; Obadiah Hughes (1695–1751), Presbyterian minister; Richard Bentley (1662–1742), chaplain to Edward, Lord Bishop of Worcester; Robert Blair (1699–1746), poet, and author of *The Grave*; Joseph Carpenter (1690 or 1691–1758), dissenting minister at Warwick and Worcester; John Taylor (1694–1761), minister and tutor at Warrington, Hebraist; John Mason (1706–1763), Congregationalist minister and author; John Milner (1718–1779), grammarian; James Hancox (1702–1769), Independent minister at Dudley.

²⁸⁸ Whitehouse, 'The Family Expositor, the Doddridge Circle and the Booksellers', p. 322.

²⁸⁹ Data for quantitative comparisons have been collected from the ESTC. These data sets were collected between February 2015 and March 2016

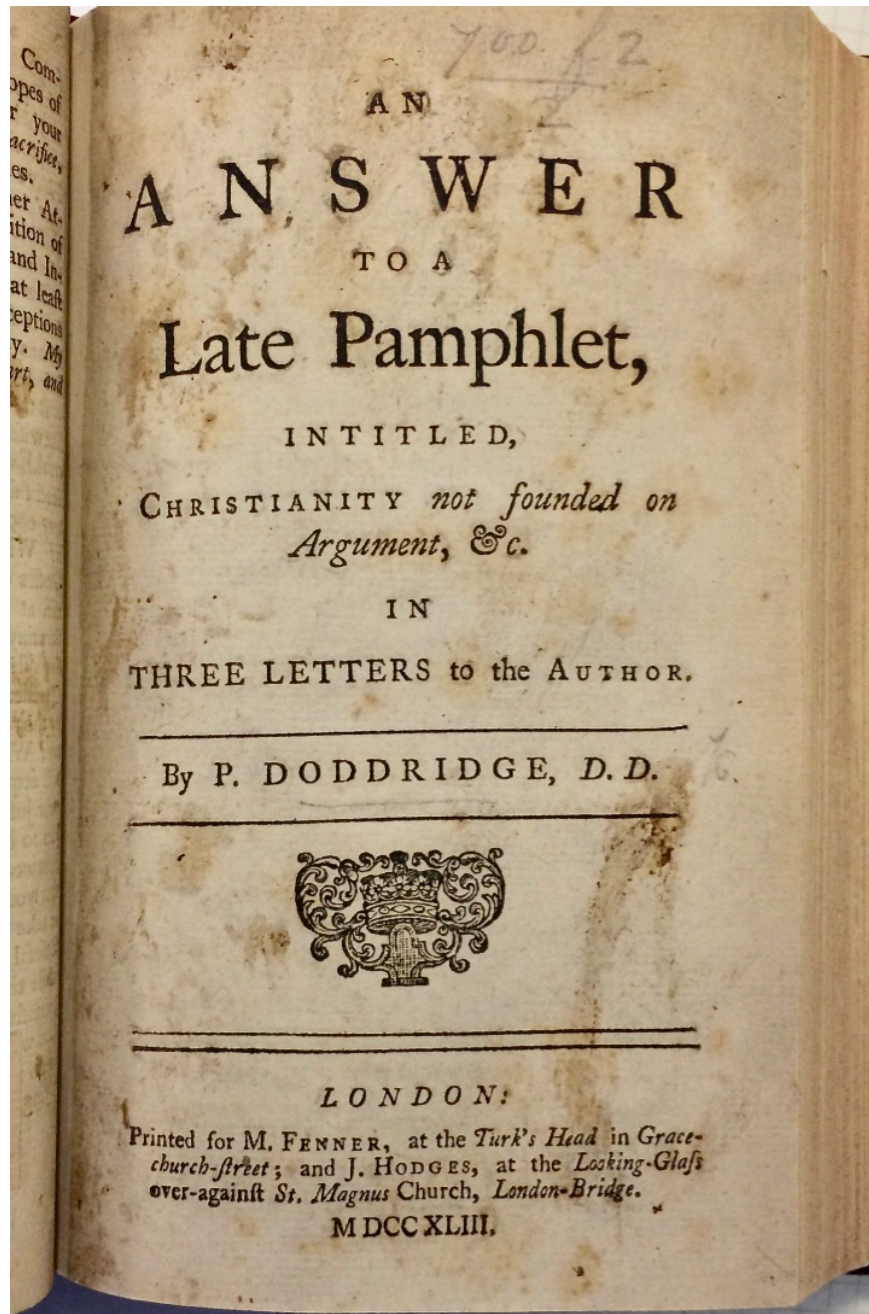
Figure 15: Philip Doddridge's titles produced before 1757 from the Bible and Crown and The Turk's Head.



Doddridge's correspondence reveals a long-term regard for, and affectionate relationship with, Mary Fenner (Figure 16). He describes her as 'excellent'. His affection for her mirrors that of John Wilson, who described Mary Fenner as 'his most dearest and most kind friend'. These descriptions of Mary Fenner challenge the view of her as a 'base woman', the insult hurled by Thomas James in 1735. They reinforce the notion that close ties within communities of religion and kinship were productive forces within Protestant dissent and the book trade. It is probable that, through Philip Doddridge, Mary gained access to the texts of other prominent nonconformist authors, since many of those whose work she printed and sold are amongst Doddridge's correspondents. A supply of texts offered through personal recommendation negated the need to compete for manuscripts in an open commercial marketplace or public auction. Mary Fenner's work for nonconformists, in contrast to her experience of Anglicans,

indicates supportive relationships based upon friendship, hospitality, trade, and common religious sympathies.

Figure 16: Title page of Philip Doddridge's *An Answer to a Late Pamphlet: Intituled, Christianity Not Founded on Argument, In Three Letters to the Author*, published by Mary Fenner and J. Hodges in 1743.



Titles, genre and readership.

During the years 1741–1744, Mary Fenner did not publish any text that was not associated with religious dissent. This remained the case, for the most part, after James Waugh took over the imprint, strongly suggesting that the status quo remained because of her influence. Under the ‘J. Waugh’ or the ‘J. Waugh & W. Fenner’ imprint, after Waugh had gone into partnership with his stepson, the family published over four hundred religious titles. These numbers underscore that Fenner/Waugh were publishers at the forefront of the literary marketplace for nonconformist texts.

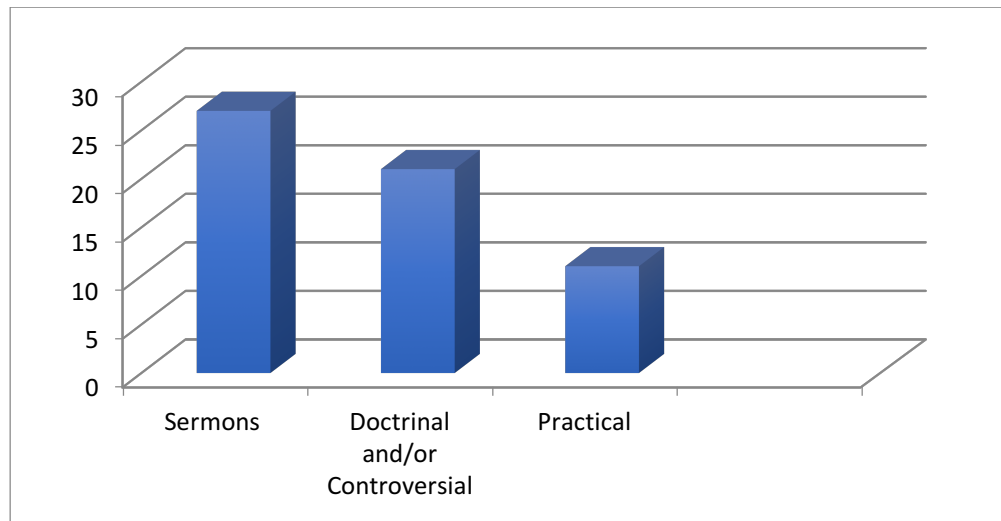
Eighteenth-century readers were familiar with controversial religious debate, biblical criticism, and other religious discourse. The texts Mary Fenner published occupied all three categories of ‘doctrinal or speculative’, ‘controversial’, and ‘practical’.²⁹⁰ For example, Doddridge’s *The Perspicuity and Solidity of Those Evidences of Christianity*, in which he refutes Deist views, could be classed as doctrinal, speculative and controversial; John Taylor’s arguments put forward in *The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin* could be viewed as controversial; while Doddridge’s *The Family Prayer Book* represents the category of a practical text. Figure 17 shows the proportion of titles produced in these genres, although it departs slightly from Rivers’s threefold categorisation.

A major component of Mary Fenner’s published catalogue was the sermons she printed and sold. William Gibson notes that ‘many sermons were published as single items and issued as pamphlets’.²⁹¹ Indeed, much of Fenner’s everyday work was

²⁹⁰ Isabel Rivers, ‘Dissenting and Methodist Books of Practical Divinity’, in *Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. by Isabel Rivers, pp. 127–164 (p.127).

²⁹¹ William Gibson, ‘The British Sermon 1689–1901: Quantities, Performance and Culture’, in *The Oxford Handbook of the British Sermon 1689–1901*, ed. by William Gibson and Keith A. Francis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 3–30 (p. 9).

Figure 17: Comparison of Mary Fenner’s publication by genre 1741–1744 shows the number published by subject matter.



involved in producing pamphlets which sold cheaply, between 4d and 8d, although collections of sermons stitched and bound, such as those by Philip Doddridge and Henry Grove, were priced between five and ten shillings. Gibson maintains, however, that sermons were ‘always disproportionately weighted towards the occasional sermon and its authors tended to be the clerical and political elite’.²⁹² Henry Grove and Philip Doddridge were typical of the clerical elite to whom Gibson refers. Mary’s association with these elite authors indicate that her own status and reputation had recovered since the events in Cambridge.

Commercial business practices: Sales and dissemination.

The readers of the nonconformist texts that Fenner produced almost certainly included the ‘clerical elite’ of the dissenting community because of her connection to Philip Doddridge and other prominent nonconformists. Having printed and produced her titles, it was necessary for Fenner to sell or disseminate them. Fenner’s marketing, sales and

²⁹² Ibid., p. 9.

business techniques were much like those of other booksellers, whether male or female, nonconformist or otherwise. While Tace Sowle relied less on commercial activities, since she had access to well-established distribution outlets organised with her Quaker denomination, Mary Fenner employed commercial sales techniques to reach a wide readership in London and the provinces, including regular advertisements in town and countrywide editions of London daily and evening newspapers. A detailed study of the business practices of a women bookseller after 1730 has not previously been undertaken.

Focusing on the years when she worked alone as a widow, Mary Fenner's business and sales practices could be grouped into the following five activities: 1. Retail sales and printing and setts ready for binding; 2. Advertising; 3. Collaboration with other printers and booksellers and sharing imprints; 4. Subscription publishing; and 5. Hospitality and personal recommendation (after her marriage to James Waugh in 1744).

1. Retail sales, printing and setts ready for binding.

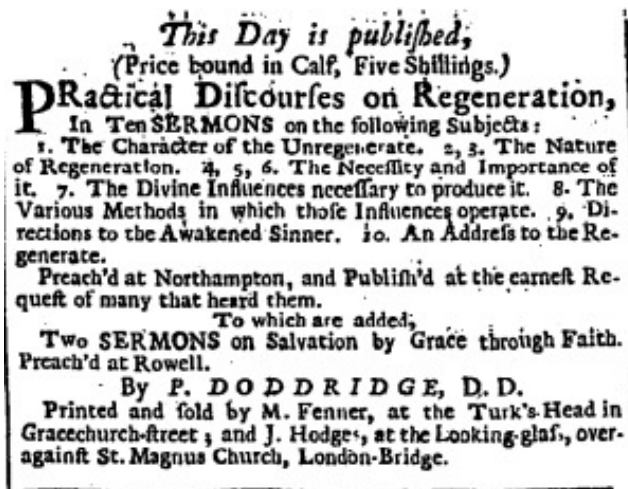
Mary Fenner undertook retail sales in addition to supplying wholesale booksellers. Passing trade from retail sales would have supplemented her income from printing. She often published sermons as pamphlets. She was also responsible for producing finished 'setts' ready to be bound to the customer's particular requirements. Mary produced mostly unbound setts in the form of printed and folded sheets. Small books would be stitched in paper. Binding was an extra cost and dependent on the quality and type of material that each customer required. Thus, prices did not appear on all prestigious works.

2. Advertising.

There is no evidence of Mary having produced stand-alone catalogues as such, but she published lists of works by the same author within the final pages of their titles to promote reader interest and maintain regular sales. Text in her advertisements promoting the title to be published also promoted retail sales, since it informed the reader that a copy of the new title could be obtained from her premises. In attempting to reach a wide readership in London and the provinces, like most other booksellers, Mary Fenner regularly advertised to promote sales of her publications in town and country editions of London daily and evening newspapers. An analysis of Mary Fenner's advertisements shows that, in common with most other booksellers, with Sowle being an exception to this rule, she used the burgeoning London press frequently. Mary Fenner advertised approximately three hundred and seventy times in the years 1741–1744.²⁹³ These advertisements were generally modest in size, ranging from just five or six lines for repeat advertisements to twelve to fifteen lines for the largest advertisements promoting new publications. The newspapers that Mary Fenner used were: *The Daily Gazetteer* (London edition and country editions), the *London Evening Post* and *General Advertiser*, the *General Evening Post*, the *London Daily Post*, and the *Daily Advertiser*. The largest advertisements were for the collected works of Philip Doddridge and Henry Grove. The advertising copy that appeared in her advertisements and their frequency tells us more about her business practice. The words, 'This Day is Publish'd', announced a new work for sale (Figure 18).

²⁹³ All advertisements are taken from the 17th and 18th Century Burney Newspapers database. <http://gdc.gale.com/products/17th-and-18th-century-burney-collection-newspapers> [accessed February–April 2021].

Figure 18: Mary Fenner’s advertisement for Philip Doddridge’s *Practical Discourses on Regeneration* in the *Daily Gazetteer* (London Edition), Tuesday, 12 January 1742.



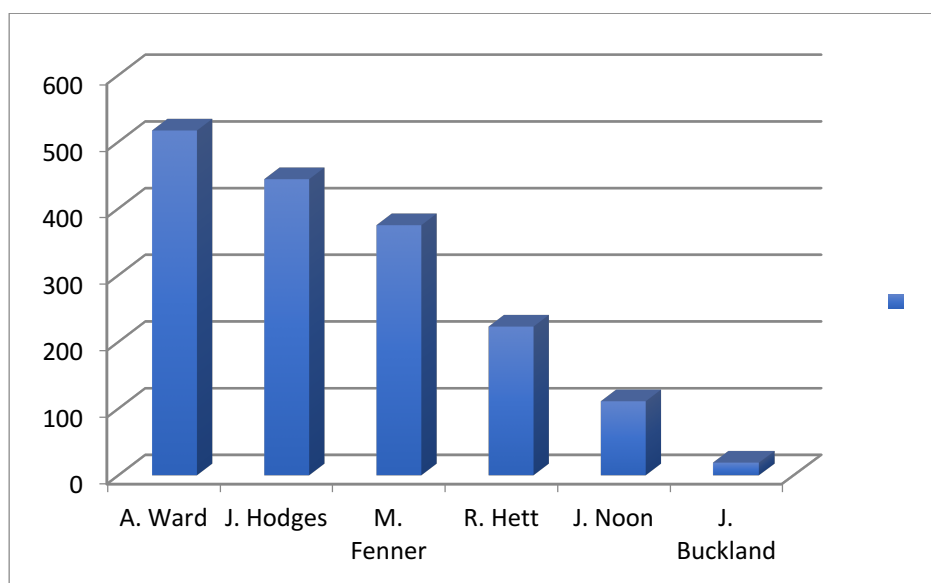
Fenner maximised the paid for space by offering ‘extras’. In August 1742, she advertised a collection of sermons by Henry Grove. She included her name and address, and then added: ‘Where may be had by the same author, A discourse on Secret Prayer, price 1s stich’d’. This extra copy enabled her to maximise her expenditure on limited advertising space. It also demonstrates that she was reliant on selling books retail as well as wholesale.

Evidence in her advertisements show further examples of added or adding value to the cost of advertising by promoting more work by the same author, for example, *Practical Discourses on Regeneration in Ten Sermons* by Doddridge was bound in calf and sold for five shillings, to which she ‘added’ *Two Sermons on Salvation through Grace Preached at Rowell*.²⁹⁴

²⁹⁴ ‘Advertisement for Philip Doddridge’s *Practical Discourses on Regeneration*, *Daily Gazetteer* (London Edition), Tuesday, 12 January 1742, 17th and 18th Century Burney Newspapers <<http://gdc.gale.com/products/17th-and-18th-century-burney-collection-newspapers>> [accessed 16 September 2021].

Figure 19 shows the number of advertisements Mary Fenner bought compared to her contemporaries during the years 1741–1744. It demonstrates that she was a major promoter of her publications through this medium and that others utilised similar methods.

Figure 19: Comparison in the quantity of advertisements bought by Mary Fenner and other nonconformist booksellers.



The first titles that Mary Fenner produced were significant works. The first she advertised was the third edition of Henry Grove’s *A Discourse Concerning the Nature and Design of the Lord’s Supper*, published in September 1741 in 124 pages octavo, which was priced at 1s and 6d. Its imprint refers to John Wilson as its printer and Mary Fenner as its seller, which suggests that Wilson had prepared the earlier editions of the book before his death.²⁹⁵ The advertisement placed in the *Daily Gazetteer* mentions that the content had been ‘transcribed from Mr Groves manuscript’, stressing its

²⁹⁵ The first two editions were published in 1732 and 1738 respectively for Richard Ford and Richard Hett. John Wilson is not credited as the printer but he had previously printed for Richard Hett. The fourth edition was printed and sold by M. Fenner in 1742.

authenticity, and that there were also two further volumes of sermons available from the Turk's Head. The first edition of John Taylor's *The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin* was priced at two shillings and first advertised on 6 October 1741. Six weeks later, 26 November 1741, her third title, Philip Doddridge's *Practical Discourses on Regeneration in Ten Sermons*, was advertised, bound in calf, priced at five shillings. From February 1742 until July 1742, Fenner advertised a series of publications: George Benson's *A Paraphrase and Notes on the First Epistle of St. Peter*, in collaboration with John Noon and James Hodges; Philip Doddridge's *The Evil and Danger of Neglecting the Souls of Men*; two additional volumes of sermons by Henry Grove; and the second edition of Taylor's *The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin*; and *Sermons on Several Subjects Preached by the Late Rev. Mr Thomas Steffe of Taunton*, 'published at the desire of several of his Friends', by Philip Doddridge. Promotion of these titles in quick succession indicates how active Mary Fenner's press was in these first few months of her solo career.

Three publications by Philip Doddridge, *The Perspicuity and Solidity of Those Evidences of Christianity*; *a Second Letter to the Author of a pamphlet entitles Christianity not Founded on Argument*, and *A Third letter to the author of Christianity Not founded on Argument*, contributed to the debate around Deism and the reasonableness of Christianity. Doddridge challenged the writings of Henry Dodwell, the author of *Christianity not Founded on Argument*, calling Dodwell's work, 'A most artful attempt, in the person of a Methodist, but made indeed by a very sagacious Deist'. Doddridge was not the only writer published by Mary Fenner to challenge Dodwell's work. She also collaborated with John Noon, Richard King and Mary Cooper to publish and sell George Benson's *The Reasonableness of the Christian Religion* in 1743 and Samuel Bourn's *The Christian Catechism Wherein the Principal Truths of Natural*

Religion and the Truth of the Divine Authority of the Christian Religion are Asserted in 1744, which both condemned Dodwell's scepticism regarding the legitimacy of Christian revelation. In the material production of these works, Mary Fenner contributed to religious debate.

In the first year of working as a printer and bookseller alone, Mary Fenner produced fifteen new titles or second or third editions of publications. In her second year of business, she produced a further seventeen titles. This rate of production continued until she married James Waugh. Thereafter his name appears in place of hers on titles that she had previously produced and advertised. Between 1744–1746, the Waugh imprint appeared on a further twenty-six titles from the Turks Head.

Fenner's advertisements indicate active engagement with her authors, customers and readers. Many of the sermons she published were produced 'at the request of the congregation' and some sermons show their author's concern with undertaking good works. For example, Doddridge's sermon *Compassion to the Sick*, preached at Northampton in September 1743, promoted the 'design [...] to erect a county infirmary [...] for the relief of the poor, sick and lame'. This sermon was published, according to its author, 'at the request of several who heard it'. This claim could be a fabrication, what modern-day parlance refers to as 'virtue signalling'. Nevertheless, philanthropy and good works were a major preoccupation of nonconformists and evangelicals.

3. *Subscription Publishing.*

In August 1742, Mary Fenner called for names of people interested in subscribing to *Twelve Sermons Preach'd in the Parish of St John's, Southwark* by L. Howard M.A. In April 1744, she advertised 'Proposals for Printing by Subscription in Two Volumes',

featuring *A Critical and Chronological History of the Rise, Progress and Declension and Revival of Knowledge, Chiefly Religious*, for Henry Winder.

Subscription publishing was a means of ensuring production costs were met prior to publication. It meant signing up interested parties for donations who then guaranteed to take one or more copies or ‘setts’ following publication, which were paid for prior to publication. From his correspondence, we are able to trace how Philip Doddridge subsidised his expenditure to produce *The Family Expositor* (first and second editions published by Richard Hett) by employing this route to publication, which was often used in specialist non-religious publishing. This assurance of take-up reduced the financial risk for the author and bookseller. Whereas for Tace Sowle, manuscripts had already been edited by the Second Day Morning committee, Doddridge was dependent upon his own resources as an independent nonconformist. Doddridge’s initial idea for his multi-volume *Family Expositor* had begun some years before. He wrote to his mentor Samuel Clark in 1735:

The intended Work at which I hinted when I wrote last, is what I shall call *The Family Expositor*: a fresh translation (of the New Testament) with paraphrase interwoven, and references to the most considerable writers, to be published in octavo.²⁹⁶

From this we can see that Doddridge had a clear vision of the purpose, format and style for his text, although the final version was published in quarto. Doddridge’s motivation in producing this work was to explain and improve scriptural understanding for his readers. He depended on himself, his friends, and his associates to help him with proof-reading and indexing and was personally responsible for meeting production costs himself. This sometimes led to hold-ups in production: Doddridge commented to his

²⁹⁶ Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *Calendar of Correspondence of Philip Doddridge DD, 1702–1751* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1979), Doddridge to Samuel Clark, 24 March 1735, entry 443, p. 80.

wife on Edward Godwin's lateness in providing an index. He mentions that the delay 'occasioned great financial loss to Mrs Waugh'.²⁹⁷ While Doddridge consulted with personal contacts for editorial guidance, full responsibility was ultimately his. There was no central body funding or editing his texts, as there was for the Quaker press. Doddridge had been offered 400 guineas by his first bookseller, Richard Hett, for the first volume of his *Family Expositor*, which John Wilson printed.²⁹⁸ With no established distribution network guaranteeing sales, using the subscription method allowed him to promote the work prior to publication, hold on to the copyright and editorial control, and benefit from the sums paid by his bookseller and his subscribers. Subscriptions were generated by both the bookseller and the author but were managed by the bookseller. The first edition of the *Family Expositor* lists 1167 subscribers who ordered 1535 'setts' between them. There are many references in Doddridge's correspondence which show that contributions came from friends who lobbied their friends, in turn, for further subscriptions, evidencing a close network of sympathetic readers. The *Family Expositor* became one of Doddridge's major works. The first volume was printed by John Wilson and sold by Richard Hett in 1739; the second volume, with a further list of subscribers, in 1740; and the third volume, with the imprint 'printed and sold by J. Waugh', in 1748, contained appendices and an index; and the fourth volume, 'printed for the benefit of the family and sold by J. Waugh and J. Buckland', in 1753, was published posthumously, as Doddridge died in 1751. This volume, too, included a list of subscribers. The fifth volume, published in 1756, bears the imprint 'J. Waugh, W. Fenner and J. Buckland' and also shows a list of subscribers.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁷ Nuttall, *Calendar*, Philip Doddridge to Mercy Doddridge, 21 July 1747, entry 1252, p. 254.

²⁹⁸ Nuttall, *Calendar*, Philip Doddridge to Mercy Doddridge, 18 February 1737, entry, 492, p.93.

²⁹⁹ Details of volumes and publication dates taken from 'General note', *ESTC*, Citation No. T94410, *The Family Expositor*.

In addition to personal contacts the author and bookseller also generated subscribers by advertising for them. Figure 20 shows a copy of the advertisement for proposing the first volume of the *Family Expositor*, which appeared in the *Old Whig or Constant Protestant* in October 1735. The key selling points offered or included for each subscriber were:

1. A paraphrase of all the books of the New Testament
2. A proposal for two books of about 400 pages each to be printed on good paper
3. A price for the two volumes of sixteen shillings
4. Half to be paid at the time of subscribing
5. The remainder on delivery of the second volume
6. The subscriber's name to be printed unless otherwise forbidden
7. None were to be sold under the subscription price
8. Those who subscribe for six would have a seventh.

These benefits for the subscriber show that Doddridge tempted his early buyers with benefits not available to later readers. He intended to keep control over costs and prices for his work, since he offered an assurance that the book would not be sold for an amount less than the subscription cost. The list of subscribers indicates a wider readership than nonconformists alone. His subscribers for the first edition were mostly men, but included ninety women, and over 270 clergymen, in addition to members of the nobility and military subscribers. This subscription list signifies a substantial and, in part, elite community of readers from both Anglican and nonconformist denominations.

Figure 20: A call for subscriptions for *The Family Expositor*, which appeared in the *Old Whig* or *Constant Protestant*, October 1735.

According to an Advertisement of the Author's, annex'd to his Sermon on Persecution, published about eighteen Months since,

This Day are published,

PROPOSALS for Printing by Subscription;

The FAMILY EXPOSITOR, consisting of a large Paraphrase on all the Books of the New Testament; in which the Sacred Text will be inserted at large in a distinct Character. Done from the Original, with the Practical Improvement of each Section, and Critical Notes on such Passages as require them. By P. DODDRIDGE, D.D.

C O N D I T I O N S.

I. What is at present proposed to be published of this Work is the books of the Four Evangelists, which will consist of two Volumes in Quarto, containing, according to the best Computation, about 400 Pages each. To be printed on a good Paper, and in a fair Character.

II. The Price of the two Volumes to the Subscribers will be sixteen Shillings (sew'd in blue Paper) of which half is to be paid down at the Time of Subscribing, the Remainder on the Delivery of the Second Volume; and considering the Variety of the Characters which must be used, and the Accuracy with which the Work must be corrected, it is hoped this will be thought no unreasonable Demand for a Book of such a Size and Form.

III. If necessary Encouragement be given to the Design, the Work shall be put into the Press in a few Weeks, and wrought off with as much Dispatch as may consist with the Author's Purpose of correcting himself.

IV. The Subscribers Names will be printed, unless forbid.

V. Those who subscribe for six, will, as usual, have a seventh allowed

VI. If any are printed more than are subscribed for, the Author will keep them in his own Hands, and take all possible Care that they shall never be sold below the Subscription Price.

PROPOSALS are deliver'd gratis, and Subscriptions taken in by the Author at Northampton, and for his Benefit by Mr. Richard Hett, at the Bible and Crown in the Poultry; Mess. Dicey and Fowler at Northampton; Mr. Tozer, jun. at Exeter, and by the Booksellers of Great Britain and Ireland.

4. *Collaboration with other printers and booksellers and sharing imprints.*

Mary collaborated regularly with a number of other nonconformist booksellers, sharing fourteen imprints with John Noon, twelve with James Hodges, six with Richard King,

three with James Brackstone, and two with Mary Cooper. In addition to these booksellers and printers, the imprints of volumes five and six of *The Family Expositor* show that James Waugh collaborated with his stepson, William Fenner. These names indicate a small selection of trusted printers and booksellers with whom she enjoyed close business or family ties and friendships. By collaborating or sharing imprints with other printers or booksellers, Mary Fenner was able to defer the cost and risk of printing by sharing some copyrights and titles with other printers.

5. *Hospitality and personal recommendation.*

Hospitality was also an important component that Mary Fenner utilised during her professional printing and bookselling career. Anne Stott notes that hospitality was a common practice undertaken by women in support of their nonconformist denominations within their family homes. The Quakers in particular, she suggests, ‘opened their homes to travelling ministers and maintained family networks which were so vital to Quakerism [in] a pattern of specifically female service that can also be seen in early Methodism’.³⁰⁰ Early in Mary’s career, hospitality had been offered to William Ged, who had stayed in the Fenners’ home at their expense, until he moved to Cambridge.³⁰¹ Evidence from Doddridge’s letters show that he also stayed at the Turk’s Head, sometimes for several weeks at a time, and used the address for his own correspondence, consistent with the practices of other booksellers whose premises were hubs for sociability, intellectual discussion and commerce. His correspondence records Mary’s professional role at the Turk’s Head after her marriage to James Waugh and shows that he often used his booksellers at the Turk’s Head to distribute his work to

³⁰⁰ Stott, ‘Women and Religion’, in *Women’s History, Britain, 1700–1850*, ed. by Barker and Chalus, pp. 100–23 (p. 104).

³⁰¹ CUL, MS Invention of Stereotyping 1/5/5/2/1, fol. 69, The Case of Mary Fenner.

fellow clerical or elite dissenters by post.³⁰² Later, his correspondence indicates that James Waugh dealt with the financial side of the business: ‘I have sold Dr Watt’s copies to Mr Waugh for six hundred pounds’.³⁰³ Doddridge’s relationship with Mary Fenner was based on a warm friendship. In June 1751, he wrote to his wife, Mercy: ‘I have slept like a top for the two last nights [...] Mrs Waugh has made me some excellent Barley Water for my Common Drink with sugar and lemon and a very little wine. Oh excellent Mrs Waugh’.³⁰⁴ This tender reference to Mary Fenner’s hospitality offers a glimpse of a business contribution that crossed from the public to the domestic sphere. As a married woman, Mary was able to build a close and loyal friendship with her major author through the hospitality she offered, in a way that was at once respectable, business-like and warm.

By recognising the skills needed, and the day-to-day responsibilities of women printers and booksellers, it is possible to understand how they negotiated with the public sphere through utilising both their skills and personal relationships. In addition to compositing, presswork, Mary Fenner understood and utilised complex sales and marketing practices while enjoying a supportive and personal relationship with her authors. These personal relationships and the loyalty of her authors like Philip Doddridge supported her career and helped maintain its longevity. His support remained loyal not only because of his friendship with her and the hospitality she offered him, but also because her work was satisfactory. Only after his death did his widow look

³⁰² For example, in a letter of October 1748 to Philip Doddridge, the sender, M. Crisp, writes that he ‘is grateful for *Christ’s Invitation* received from Mrs Waugh’. See Nuttall, *Calendar*, entry 1403, p. 287.

³⁰³ Nuttall, *Calendar*, To Nathaniel Neal from Philip Doddridge, 3 November 1749, entry 1549, p. 316.

³⁰⁴ Nuttall, *Calendar*, Philip Doddridge to Mercy Doddridge, 15 June 1751, entry 1744, p. 357.

elsewhere to employ other booksellers, but then Mercy Doddridge had not enjoyed Mary Fenner's hospitality.

Mary Fenner's work was typical of booksellers operating within the commercial literary marketplace. The scale and frequency of these promotional practices confirms her status as a prominent nonconformist printer and bookseller. Her advertising techniques and other business practices were unlike those used by Tace Sowle who published for a 'closed' religion with established distribution networks. Fenner's reliance on a community of nonconformist authors, her knowledge of how sales could be generated, and her competence in applying promotion and pricing strategies that were designed to maximise the dissemination of the texts that she was involved with producing and advertising, demonstrate a level of business acumen that marks her as experienced and knowledgeable with regard to her bookselling work. In producing Doddridge's titles, she clearly demonstrated her ability to complete prestigious and extensive projects and to market them effectively.

Conclusion.

Mary Fenner was a major contributor to the literary marketplace through the quality and number of texts that she produced. These were mainly confined to a readership preoccupied with religion. It is arguable whether this is enough to suggest that Mary Fenner contributed to the public sphere by way of influencing private individuals. Nevertheless, she engaged with the public sphere within a commercial literary marketplace on the same terms as men. Early in her career, this marketplace was hostile, as she attempted to negotiate an all-male environment. By operating within a network of dissenters, however, she was able to make a major contribution to nonconformist publishing for over forty years. Her relationship with members of that community was a

major factor in her success. This influence, however, would have been ineffectual without the professional and commercial skills and loyalty that she applied to it. While her business benefitted from her relationship with prominent nonconformists like Philip Doddridge, equally her authors benefitted from her professional skills, hospitality and business endeavours on their behalf. Unfortunately, she was refused the opportunity to demonstrate these skills for the University of Cambridge. Had circumstances and the attitudes of the Anglican men she dealt with there been more accommodating, she might well have supported them just as effectively.

Since previous commentators have recognised Mary Fenner as a publisher only in her role as the widow of William Fenner her, contribution has remained largely unrecognised. Yet, as shown in this research, she was a substantial figure. Norton, in his study of John Wilson's printing for David Hume, suggested that a 'study of the personal, cultural and economic ties within this particular literary community could well be of interest'.³⁰⁵ Mary Fenner should, therefore, be included in any such study, since she demonstrates personal, cultural and economic ties with a close community of dissenters. While this alone would not necessarily make her work significant, what does make her contribution noteworthy is the longevity of her influence. Throughout periods of widowhood and marriage, between 1735, when her first title appeared with a Cambridge imprint, and 1773, when her name 'M. Waugh' appeared for the last time, she established herself as a leading printer and publisher of a significant catalogue of nonconformist religious titles. It is this record and her longevity that mark Mary Fenner as an exceptional nonconformist woman bookseller.

³⁰⁵ Norton 'John Wilson', p. 134.

Case Study Three:

Mary Lewis (1703–1791) and Martha Trapp (1745–1828)

‘I feel such a Sole ship when I am with you & so much coldness wen I am from you that I want to be closer to you’.³⁰⁶

This case study examines the careers of Mary Lewis, her daughter, Martha Trapp, and their connection with the United Brethren (Moravians). Their professional lives were interwoven with the Moravians, who recorded some of the most personal details of the women’s spiritual and private lives. Like Tace Sowle and Mary Fenner, whose occupations as printers and booksellers also functioned as an expression of faith and loyalty to their Protestant religion, Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp closely aligned their careers as printers and booksellers with their own religious denomination. The Moravians were an eighteenth-century Protestant sect which had originated from the fifteenth-century United Brethren of Bohemia and Moravia. During the late seventeenth century, they had fled from Bohemia to Germany. In 1728, their representatives came to London to seek royal approval to set up a mission in Georgia. Mary Lewis’s association with the ‘the Brethren’ began around 1742, when the Moravians had recently established their place of worship in Fetter Lane. During this period, the Moravians and their friends and supporters in London, such as John Wesley and George Whitefield, were at the forefront of the Evangelical Revival in England.

This case study traces in some detail the extent of this family’s association with this religious group and the nature of their day-to-day dealings with it. The personal link between the Moravians and the Lewis family appears to have begun at the same time as the lay preacher John Cennick, hitherto George Whitefield’s deputy, joined the

³⁰⁶ London, Moravian Archive, (MA) MS C/36/2/208, Letters of Application: Mary Lewis to Mrs Martha Claggett’, 8 July 1745.

Moravians. Although a protégé of Whitefield's, John Cennick left Whitefield's societies, which he had led in the South West of England, to join the Moravians in 1743, 'turning many of his congregations over to the Moravians at the same time'.³⁰⁷ It was in the same year that Mary Lewis applied to join the Brethren: 'Mary Lewis wants to come in Bands. She comes constantly to the Bands after an hours Meetings at Br Bowe's. She hath left Mr Whitfield this year while nobody hath anything against her coming into Bands'.³⁰⁸ This entry suggests that Mary Lewis was proactive in her desire to join the Brethren and that they did not oppose her membership.

The first part of this chapter highlights how Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp's position amongst the English Moravians provided both women with a spiritual community, pastoral support, professional respect, identity and friendship. It also reveals how the relationship with the elders of the Moravian organisation often infringed on their personal lives. Despite occasional behaviour that conflicted with Brethren rules, both women enjoyed pastoral support from the Moravians in addition to publishing opportunities.

The second part of this chapter evaluates how the Moravian and the cross-denominational character of evangelical publishing called for the utilisation of professional publishing sales and marketing practices. It evaluates the contribution that each of these women made to this distinct literary marketplace. Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp published texts that supported the Evangelical Revival and promoted and defended Moravian practices and beliefs. Their work contributed to religious debate

³⁰⁷ Colin Podmore, *The Moravian Church in England 1728–1760* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 91.

³⁰⁸ MA MS C/36/10/1, Elders Conference Minutes VOL. 1A, 26 January 1743–1 May 1744, 5 October 1743.

and, on occasion, to public criticism or defence of certain individuals, including other evangelicals.

The Lewis family were at the forefront of printing and bookselling from Bartholomew Close before John Lewis, Mary's husband, moved his business to No 1 Paternoster Row in 1754. This was a renowned area for bookselling in London during the second quarter of the eighteenth century. John Lewis, Mary Lewis, their daughters Catherine, who married John's apprentice William Immyns, and Martha, who married his apprentice Henry Trapp, and finally Martha's son-in-law, Vaughan Griffiths, all printed and sold literature for evangelicals and Moravians from No. 1 Paternoster Row. Between them, they produced approximately 650 texts between 1739 and 1800. The popularity of literature written for Moravians and evangelicals during such an extended period reflects the demand for texts that provided spiritual guidance and advised on the means to personal salvation. Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp's participation in, and contribution to, this genre has recently been highlighted by Timothy Whelan, who rightly calls them 'among the leaders within London's dissenting book trade, especially among printers and sellers aligned with evangelical Calvinism'.³⁰⁹ This study looks specifically at their personal and professional relationship with their denomination and how the Moravians supported their professional careers.

³⁰⁹ Whelan, *Nonconformist Women Writers, 1650–1850*
<<https://sites.google.com/a/georgiasouthern.edu/nonconformist-women-writers-1650-1850/dissenting-women-printers-booksellers-1650-1825/trapp-priestley-martha-lewis-1745-1828>> [accessed 27 October 2021].

Biographies.

Mary Lewis was born in Wollaston, Northamptonshire, in 1703.³¹⁰ Her maiden name was Thorogood.³¹¹ Moravian records show that she was born into the Church of England. It is unclear if she was connected to the book trade before her marriage. McKenzie notes that she was at work from Paternoster Row from 1759 until 1761.³¹² However, she was at work from these premises even before her husband's death in 1755. Plomer does not recognise her as a woman publisher, although his entry for 'Lewis (M.)' notes that this publisher 'was Printer to the Moravians' and that 'the type and ornaments in these pamphlets was quite ordinary, and the press was probably what would be called a "jobbing" one'.³¹³ The term 'jobbing' is used to describe small-item printing. However, while Mary Lewis produced many pamphlets and sermons of between four and ninety-six pages, she also produced longer works of up to 400 pages. Most of her output was religious publishing.

Mary Lewis came under the influence of George Whitefield, the Calvinist Methodist, through her husband, who was Whitefield's printer. John Lewis had been apprenticed as a printer to Joseph Downing and worked from Bartholomew Close from 1741 until 1754. In moving to Paternoster Row, he followed a popular trend since, by the middle years of the eighteenth century, Paternoster Row had become 'a more important district for the book trades'.³¹⁴

John Lewis had most likely been converted, or 'awakened', by Whitefield. Whelan states that both Mary and John Lewis demonstrated an 'ardent faith first as

³¹⁰ MA MS C/36/5/1, Fetter Lane Church Membership Book, 1742-c 19th century, p. 29.

³¹¹ Timothy Whelan, 'Mary Lewis and her Family of Printers and Booksellers, 1 Paternoster Row, 1749–1812', *Publishing History* (2022 – forthcoming).

³¹² McKenzie, *Stationers' Company Apprentices 1701–1800*, p. 214.

³¹³ Plomer, p. 155.

³¹⁴ Raven, *Bookscape*, p. 96.

followers of George Whitefield and then of John Cennick and the Moravians'.³¹⁵

Cennick may have been the evangelical preacher responsible for converting Catherine and Mary Lewis to the Moravian Brethren when he first preached in London.

John Lewis printed several publications including the evangelical periodical, *The Christian's Amusement*. This publication had been 'taken over by Whitefield in 1741 and rechristened *The Weekly History or An Account of the Most Remarkable Particulars relating to the Present Progress of the Gospel*'.³¹⁶ According to its frontispiece, it was 'established to record the labours of George Whitefield and those who — among others John Cennick, Joseph Humphreys, Thomas Adams, Howel Harris — were associated with him in the religious revival of the eighteenth century'.³¹⁷

The Lewises married in 1726 and their first daughter, Catherine, was born in 1727.³¹⁸ It was Catherine, in 1742, who became the first member of the Lewis family to apply to join the Moravians. Her request is recorded in a set of minutes: 'Catherine Lewis, the printers daughter is desirous of coming into bands'.³¹⁹ She was not received into the congregation, however, until 1750. This was five years after her younger sister, Martha, had been baptized into the faith in 1745, and two years after her mother had finally become a member of the congregation.³²⁰

³¹⁵ Whelan, <<https://sites.google.com/a/georgiasouthern.edu/nonconformist-women-writers-1650-1850/dissenting-women-printers-booksellers-1650-1825/lewis-mary-1703-91>> [accessed 27 October 2021].

³¹⁶ Bruce D. Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative: Spiritual Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 68.

³¹⁷ Roland Austin, *Notes and Queries: The Weekly History* (Oswestry: Quinta Press, 2006), p. 3.

³¹⁸ MA MS C/36/5/1, Fetter Lane Church Membership Book, 1742-c 19th century, p. 29.

³¹⁹ MA MS C/36/14/2, Society of Labourers' Conference Minutes, 18 Sept 1744–23 Jan 1757, p. 41.

³²⁰ MA MS C/36/5/1, Fetter Lane Church Membership Book, 1742-c 19th century, p. 29.

Mary Lewis took over officially as the Moravian printer and bookseller following the death of her husband in 1755. Although Mary's imprint does not appear on titles until that date, she is referred to as the printer for some years before his death. John Lewis's behaviour had been concerning: he had been 'involved in making inappropriate advances towards a young female member of the Tabernacle, George Whitfield's chapel, and engaging in illicit behaviour with a prostitute'. Whelan speculates that this may also have played a role in his wife's decision to join the Moravians.³²¹ Certainly, his productivity reduced in the years leading up to his death, which left Mary in control of the family business.

Of the 337 titles that Mary Lewis sold, 227 were printed and sold by her alone; they do not show another bookseller or printer's name on the imprint. In 1766, Henry Trapp, Mary Lewis's apprentice, married her daughter, Martha. Mary Lewis continued in the bookselling business in Paternoster Row until 1776, when she handed it over to her son-in-law and daughter. Henry Trapp was often absent from his business as a consequence of long periods of alcohol addiction. Consequently, Martha's contribution as printer and bookseller, like that of her mother, began long before the death of her husband. Henry died in 1791, the same year as Mary Lewis. Martha Trapp published 117 further titles from 1791 to 1796 under either her 'M Trapp' imprint or that of 'M Priestley', following her second marriage to Timothy Priestley (1734–1814) in 1794.³²² In 1792, William Immyns, Martha's surviving brother-in-law and another of her mother's apprentices, who had married Catherine Lewis in 1762, excluded himself from

³²¹ Whelan, 'Mary Lewis and her Family'.

³²² Timothy Priestley was Joseph Priestley's brother, although they did not share the same theology. Timothy Priestley is described as 'an evangelical Calvinist minister' by Robert E. Schofield in *The Enlightenment of Joseph Priestley: A Study of His Life and Work from 1733–1773* (Pennsylvania : Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), p. 142.

the Moravians and the Lewis/Trapp association with them came to an end.³²³ Martha Priestley died in 1828. In 1796 Martha's son-in-law, Vaughan Griffiths, had taken over the business. His imprint appears as 'V. Griffiths (son-in-law and successor to M. Trapp) No 1 Paternoster Row' until 1800.

Moravian theology and its influence on the careers of Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp.

To appreciate the full effect of Moravian and evangelical religion on both women's careers, it is necessary to understand the beliefs and practices of the Moravians.

Geoffrey and Margaret Stead's extensive work on the history of the Moravians in England describes how their purpose in sending emissaries to London in 1728 from their base in Herrnhut was twofold. Initially, it aimed to acquire royal permission to instigate a mission in Georgia. Secondly, it sought to gain approval and recognition from the Church of England that the Moravian brotherhood was descended from an ancient European Protestant Church. As Stead and Stead describe, 'In both these intentions they were successful. In 1749 an Act of Parliament was passed that recognised the Brotherhood as an Ancient Protestant Church and granted it freedom to build itself up as it wished'.³²⁴ This had implications not only as to how the Moravians viewed themselves but also how wider society considered them in terms of dissent or orthodoxy. As Episcopalians, the Moravians did not view themselves as nonconformists. However, others considered that 'their missionary and philanthropic

³²³ MA MS C/36/5/1, Fetter Lane Church Membership Book, 1742-c 19th century, 24 October 1767, p. 42.

³²⁴ Geoffrey Stead and Margaret Stead, *The Exotic Plant: A History of the Moravian Church in Great Britain 1742–2000* (Peterborough: Epworth Press, 2003), p. 15.

fervour, their hymns and emphasis on a personal relationship with Christ the Saviour locate[d] them firmly within the Evangelical camp'.³²⁵

In 1746, their leader, Count Nicolas Zinzendorf (1700–1760), had written that '[t]he Moravian Brethren shall never receive any member of the Church of England in their Body [...] because it would favour schism'. Mary Lewis had been a member of the Church of England, then a follower of George Whitefield, and finally a Moravian. Zinzendorf stated that he wanted 'a Place of public worship in London known to be a Moravian Episcopal Chappel'.³²⁶ Despite his reluctance to proselytise, clearly his intention was that a permanent congregation of Moravians should remain in London and that they would require their own place of worship. According to J. E. Hutton,

The Brethren [...] were not sectarians. Instead of trying to extend the Moravian Church at the expense of other denominations, they consistently endeavoured, wherever they went, to preach a broad and comprehensive Gospel, to avoid theological disputes, to make peace between the sects, and to unite Christians of all shades of belief in common devotion to a common Lord.³²⁷

The Moravians' reluctance to take converts from other Protestant denominations in Britain was, after 1749, conditioned by the active support of individual Methodists and denominations whose beliefs coincided with their own evangelical views, amongst them the Lewis family. Moravian musical culture is believed to have drawn some people to the Brethren. Hymn singing was a central element to their worship and hymns were written and published for German and English congregations. John Cennick had published one of the first hymn books of the revival, *Sacred Hymns for the Children of*

³²⁵ Madge Dresser, 'Sisters and Brethren: Power, Propriety and Gender among the Bristol Moravians, 1746–1833', *Social History*, 21 (1996), 304–29 (p. 307).

³²⁶ Quoted from 'Letter of Zinzendorf, headed Marienborn', 23 December 1746, MA Box A3, cited in Stead and Stead, p. 4.

³²⁷ J. E. Hutton, *A History of the Moravian Church*, 2nd edn (London: Moravian Publication Office, 1909), p. 681.

God, which was printed by John Lewis in 1741 before the family had officially been accepted into the Moravian congregation.

Missionary work to spread the gospel abroad was a core objective of the Moravians. They sought to convert peoples in the West Indies, in parts of America, and in Africa. Moravian theology strongly emphasised that all men are sinners, that God accepts believers, and that faith in Jesus Christ is their route to salvation. They believed that, ‘one should not struggle to achieve holiness through one’s own efforts (that would be unnecessary and impossible), but “become a sinner”, that is, accept one’s sinfulness, simply believe and await salvation which is the gift of God’s grace and cannot be earned by works or merit’.³²⁸ Opposing and complementary theologies characterised the Evangelical Revival. Thus, Moravian theology contrasted with John Wesley’s Arminian doctrine, which inculcated striving for perfection in order to attain salvation. This theological difference was a reason behind Wesley’s later disassociation from the Brethren.

The Moravians’ reputation was damaged during the period 1749–1767, when a ‘dark side’ to their theology and practice was revealed.³²⁹ Following this period, they sought to defend and repair their reputation in the style and content of the literature that they produced. This period has been labelled the ‘Sifting Time’. Paul Peucker describes this as ‘a period of crisis when things got out of hand, during which the use of bizarre and repulsive language alienated previous sympathisers’.³³⁰ Geoffrey and Margaret Stead, present-day Moravians, refer to the ‘Sifting Time’ non-specifically as ‘a series of setbacks for the Unity [...] initially centred on revelations about congregational

³²⁸ Podmore, p. 31.

³²⁹ Paul Peucker, *A Time of Sifting: Mystical Marriage and the Crisis of Moravian Piety in the Eighteenth Century* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015), locations 1582, 1647, 1965, 3117, Kindle ebook.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, location 252.

activities in the large and influential Unity settlement of Herrnhag’,³³¹ This vague reference to ‘revelations’ tells us little; however, Peucker’s more detailed investigation reveals that the ‘Sifting Time’ was a period when members of its male choir, i.e. congregation, in Herrnhag, under the leadership of Zinzendorf’s son, Christian, rejected orthodox pietism and hypothesised that men have female souls. This interpretation, combined with beliefs surrounding the significance of Christ’s side wound, resulted in homosexual acts by men who considered that they were partaking in a sacramental act. The resulting scandal harmed the Moravians reputation and a financial crisis ensued. Wesley and Whitefield, amongst others, criticised their practices. Although news of this practice became public in England during the 1750s, the damage to the reputation of the Brethren does not appear to have affected the loyalty of the Lewis family. This was possibly because they remained unaware of any transgressions, although in view of Whitefield’s and Wesley’s condemnation, this seems unlikely, or because they were already immersed in Moravian spirituality and remained loyal to them. Mary Lewis often demonstrated considerable toleration towards controversial behaviour. For example, in 1756, she published an autobiography that defended its author, the Rev. Charles Bradbury, who was not a Moravian, who had been accused, though acquitted, of sodomy the year before. This was the first text Mary Lewis advertised and published under her own imprint. It is impossible to know whether a tolerant attitude in her decision to print was in keeping with her own beliefs, personal loyalty or simply an act of pragmatic, economic necessity.

Moravian theology emphasised salvation through Jesus Christ, thus differing from Calvinist theology, which stressed that God was responsible for salvation. The Lewis family’s most-published author was John Cennick, although he died in 1755, the

³³¹ Stead and Stead, p. 70.

same year as John Lewis (Figure 21). As an early supporter of the Moravians, John Cennick's empathy with Moravian religious practice may well have been inspired by 'Moravian piety [that] was joyful and sentimental', stressing 'love rather than terror, gospel more than law, a loving and human Christ rather than an awesome God, [and] a religion of feeling rather than of rational understanding'.³³² Cennick's writing can be seen to embrace these ideals. He preached for the first time in the Moravian Chapel in December 1745. His hymns would have found an audience appreciative of music. The work of John Cennick was published exclusively by the Lewis family following his

Figure 21: John Cennick (1718–1755) by Robert Purcell, after Thomas Jenkins mezzotint, 1754 (National Gallery).



move from Whitefield. Regular reprints of his sermons published after his death sustained the Lewis/Trapp publishing enterprise throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries.

³³² J. D. Walsh, 'The Cambridge Methodists', in *Christian Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Gordon Rupp*, ed. by P. N. Brooks (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1975), pp. 249–83 (p. 264).

Both John Lewis and Mary Lewis had applied to become members of the Moravian ‘choir’, i.e. congregation, following Cennick’s move to Fetter Lane. The Moravians referred to Mary as the printer long before John Lewis’s death. Mary Lewis demonstrated a tenacious desire to not only attend the Moravian services but also be accepted into their communion, to have her daughter baptized into the Brethren, and to send one of her children to a Moravian school. She applied to them officially for membership in 1745 and was still actively lobbying for membership two years later: ‘Mrs Lewis the Printer is desirous that her child should go to Mile End. Br Bell to speake to them about it’.³³³ A school had recently been founded in Mile End in the countryside close to the city.

Acceptance into a Moravian congregation was not straightforward. The process of joining was dependent on a decision-making system known as ‘the lot’.³³⁴ For the Brethren, ‘the use of the lot was closely connected with their supposition that Jesus Christ had agreed to lead the unity personally’.³³⁵ The lot was considered an important method of determining Jesus’s will in many matters, including who should be allowed to join the congregation and take communion:

Frequent reference to ‘The lot’ for making decisions was a practice used by Christian Groups since apostolic times, characterized by Unity organisations both at provincial and congregational level. It was held that Jesus Christ used this device to guide various Elder’s Conferences which sometimes felt it necessary to consult him.³³⁶

³³³ MA MS C/36/14/2, Society of Labourers Conference Minutes, 18 September 1744–23 Jan 1757, 23 January 1757 (final entry). To send a child to a Moravian school was not as straightforward as it may first appear. Geoffrey and Margaret Stead found evidence that ‘parents who sent their children to these early schools handed over responsibility for their care to the Brethren’. The Steads discovered an undated manuscript draft application for parents requesting a school place for their child which demanded that they resigned the care of their child over to them forever, while the Brethren reserved the right to send the child back without obligation to give a reason. See Stead and Stead, pp. 347–9.

³³⁴ For details and a full history and explanation of ‘the lot’, see Stead and Stead, pp. 39–41.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

Indeed, the lot was also used to decide whether a member of the congregation should marry at all and, if so, whether they could marry their choice of partner. The proposed partner had to be another Moravian, as marriage outside of the Brethren was not permitted. To become a member of a 'choir' or congregation, the applicant had first to write to the elders requesting membership. Then, after meeting certain criteria, and following prayer, they were invited to participate in the lot. The mechanics of the lot were that three pieces of paper — a blank, a 'no' or a 'yes' — were offered to the applicant. The applicant would choose blindly one of the three. A 'yes' would mean the applicant was accepted into the congregation immediately, a blank would require that the applicant ask the question in another form on the same day, but a 'no' meant that the applicant would have to wait until time had passed and his or her behaviour or faith had improved before they could apply again.

Refusal of membership of the congregation did not prevent the applicant from attending the Moravian society and services, 'bands'. It did, however, prevent him or her from being accepted into the 'choir', or congregation, and taking communion. The honorifics brother, 'Br', and sister, 'Sr', were applied to those members of the congregation who had been accepted. This method for selection had some significant consequences for the Lewis family and the constancy of their membership of the Moravians. John Lewis applied several times. He was never successful despite his association with, and support of, John Cennick and his role as Moravian printer. One might speculate that Lewis had sought membership to help prevent his wayward thoughts and behaviour referenced earlier. The Moravian minutes for July 1746 record that, 'Lewis the printer has spoke with Brother Bower he confesses frankly his experience and that he is slave to every evil thing that is contrary to the conviction of

his mind'.³³⁷ One year later, on 15 May 1747, he was again recommended as a candidate for the congregation but was again unsuccessful. It is worth noting that, during the year 1753, Lewis printed and sold two anonymous publications seemingly uncharacteristic with respect to his usual, mainly religious, titles. One was a satire called *Rules for Being a Wit* and the other was *Bum-Fodder for the Ladies: A Poem*. Did these publications reflect an aspect of his character that the Moravians considered inappropriate?

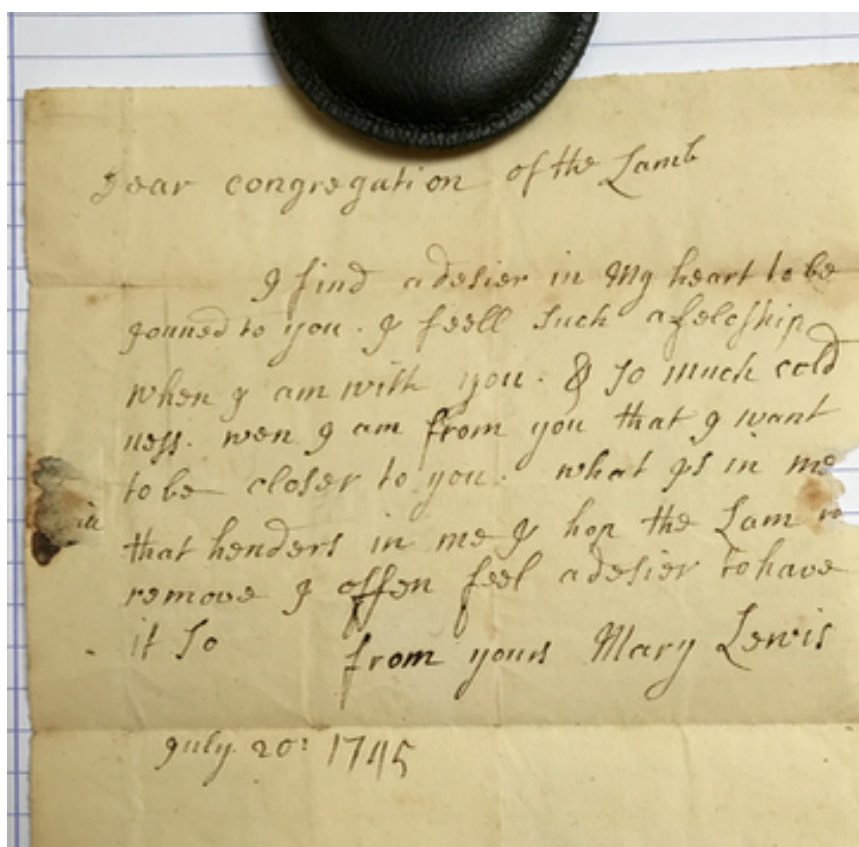
Throughout, Moravian records refer to John Lewis as 'Mr', not 'Br', including the record of his death in 1755. He was not buried at the Moravian burial site, Sharon in Chelsea, but in St George's Churchyard in Bloomsbury, the nonconformist burial ground.³³⁸ This is firm evidence that he was never accepted into the Moravian congregation.

Mary Lewis, however, was more fortunate. She wrote her application to the society on 20 July 1745, just before her daughter Martha was born (Figure 22). The letter, sent to the Moravian Elder, Mrs Martha Claggett, appears heartfelt and sincere.

³³⁷ MA MS C/36/14/2, Society of Labourers Conference Minutes, 18 September 1744–23 January 1757, 8 July 1746.

³³⁸ MA MS Fetter Lane Register of Deaths and Burials, 1742-1857, 13 May 1755.

Figure 22: Mary Lewis's application to the Moravians, 20 July 1745.



Dear Congregation of the Lamb,

I find a desier in my heart to be joined to you. I feel such a Sole ship when I am with you & so much coldness wen I am from you that I want to be closer to you. What is in me that hinders in me I hop the Lamb to remove I offen feel a desier to have it so.

From yours Mary Lewis

July 20th 1745.³³⁹

Mary Lewis's approach was consistent and proactive in her pursuit of membership of the Moravian choir. A record from November 1743 shows her constancy and spiritual longing for a community that could provide her with spiritual solace: 'Mrs Lewes [*sic*] wants very much to come into bands. She hath wanted it a good while ago'.³⁴⁰

Following more prompting, she was finally accepted into the congregation on 11 April

³³⁹ MA, MS C/36/2/208, Letters of Application: Mary Lewis to Martha Claggett', 20 July 1745.

³⁴⁰ MA, C/36/10/1, Elders Conference Minutes vol 1A, 26 January 1743–1 May 1744, 5 October 1743.

1748. She was confirmed the following 22 January and was ‘first admitted to the sacrament’ on 29 February 1749.³⁴¹

Mary Lewis had successfully applied to the Society to baptize Martha on 17 September 1745. Martha was baptized by John Gambold (1711–1771), who became the first English Moravian bishop (Figure 23), and she was confirmed in 1763.³⁴² The Moravians had by then become central to Mary Lewis’s and her daughters’ lives. Moravian records show that at times of childbirth, illness and misfortune, senior members of the Moravian congregation visited their fellow Brethren to support them (Figure 24). For example, in 1744: ‘Mrs Lewis had a fall and hurt herself pretty much. Br Hulock to go and visit her’.³⁴³ Then in 1747, just two years after the birth of Martha: ‘Sr Lewis was brought to bed with a boy which, being weak, Br Gambold baptized at once in the house and named him John. A doctor had to be fetched for the child came the wrong way and had to be turned round’.³⁴⁴ This entry shows how far the Brethren

³⁴¹ MA MS C/36/5/1, Fetter Lane Church Membership Book, 1742-c 19th century, 29 February 1749.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 17 January 1763.

³⁴³ MA MS C/36/11/4, Daily Helpers Conference Minutes, 27 February 1744.

³⁴⁴ MS Pilgrim House Diary, 27 Jul 1743-30 October 1748, 6 September 1748.

Figure 23: Martha Lewis’s baptism record (MA C/36/1/1), Register of Births and Marriages, Book of Births and Baptisms.

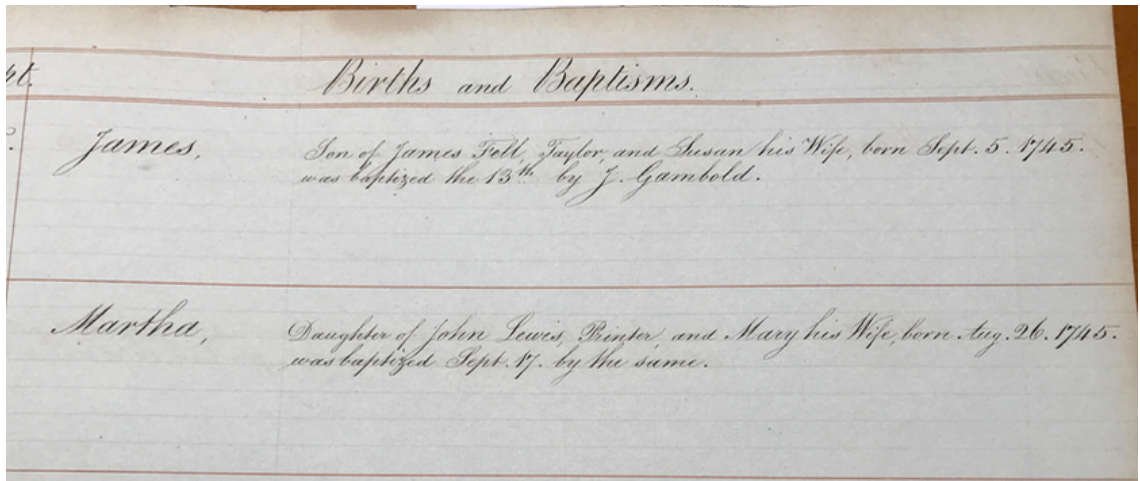


Figure 24: Mary Lewis’s membership record, Fetter Lane Church Membership Book 1742-c19th century.

Name, Religion & Profession	Born where & when	Received	Confirmed	First admitted to the Sacrament	Office
Ann Loans Ch. of Engl. S. J.	London, Oct. 16. 1732.	1748. Apr. 11.	1749 Apr. 14.	1749 May 12.	went to Bedford & married Rich ^d Chapman came to London dep ^d Jan ^y 17. 1781.
Mary Lewis (Printer's Wife) Ch. of E. M. J.	Wollaston in Northamp ^{sh} - her home June or July 1703.	1748. Apr. 11.	174 ⁸ / ₉ Jan. 22.	174 ⁸ / ₉ Feb. 19.	became a widow, May 13. 1755. departed Sept ^r . 16 th . 1791.

concerned themselves with the intimacies of their members’ lives. For Mary Lewis, membership of the Moravian Brethren was heart-felt and the Moravians response to her provided practical and pastoral support important to her spiritual well-being. As such, her work for them held more significance than a purely business arrangement.

This strong connection to the Brethren did not, however, prevent members of the Lewis family from being excluded or excluding themselves from the congregation at certain times when their lives conflicted with the Moravian rules of ‘the lot’ or when their behaviour was deemed unacceptable to the rules of the denomination, and they did

not always attend services. By October 1766, Elders Conference minutes reveal that, ‘Widow Lewis, who has staid from the Communion for some Time, says she is now clear, & will go again’.³⁴⁵ The reference to being ‘now clear’ suggests that she was going through some spiritual doubt or family crisis which was not immediately resolved. By 1767, records show that ‘Sr Lewis also stays away again’ and, by October, they indicate that,

The Widdow Lewis intends to go this Time again to Communion with her Daughter Kitty now on account of Illness will not be able to go out. Sr Lewis having staid away for some Time of her own Accord on Acct of some uneasiness in her Family.³⁴⁶

The daughter ‘Kitty’ refers to is Catherine, her eldest daughter, who died in 1767. A further record from the Elders minutes of March 1768 suggests another reason behind this uneasiness:

‘Once again Mary Lewis does not go with the rest of the widows Choir to communion being much distressed about her family in Relation to her Son in Law [...] Br. Wheeler to be desired to advise Sr Lewis under her present Circumstances lest she might come in difficulties’.³⁴⁷

The son-in-law who is referenced was most likely Henry Trapp. Henry had been apprenticed to Mary Lewis in 1759 and was received into the Moravian congregation on 7 April 1760. It is probable that it was Mary herself who had insisted that her future sons-in-law should become members of the Moravians, while an alternative possibility is that her daughters, Martha and Catherine, had wished this to be the case so that they would not have to leave the society. In 1766, Henry and Martha were married, but following this, they were both excluded from the congregation, because of their

³⁴⁵ MA MS C/36/10/5, Elders Conference Minutes, vol. 4, 28 November 1761–30 December 1769, 11 October 1766.,

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 10 October 1766.

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 11 October 1766.

‘clandestine engagement and marriage’.³⁴⁸ Either they had not used the lot protocol for permission to marry, or they had married despite a negative result, which had prompted their exclusion. They married in the Church of England church, St Dunstan in the West, in the City of London, where William Romaine was incumbent.³⁴⁹ Later, Mary Lewis attended William Romaine’s church whenever her relationship with the Moravians faltered. Her daughter, Martha, was married to Henry Trapp by him and her granddaughter was christened by Romaine at the Church of St Vedast, Foster Lane.

As noted above, Henry suffered from alcoholism. Following a period of sobriety, on 16 March 1771, Elders minutes record that, ‘[A] letter was read from Henry Trapp who desires to be admitted again to the congregation privileges, as also for his wife he desires it too’.³⁵⁰ Henry’s alcohol abuse resulted in him spending time in an asylum and, although he recovered, it appears that he was not able to work again. Thus, Martha, his wife, was left to carry on the business. During these periods, the Lewis publishing activity continued.

Intervention by the Moravian elders was a regular occurrence. They were conscientious in recording reasons for a member’s non-attendance. Pastoral support was part of the duties of elders, so as to maintain attendance. Moravian elders felt entitled to intrude into family matters. This can be inferred from a minute of 1775: ‘The Situation of Sr Lewis & her children, with whom she lives, has of late been made rather disagreeable thro’ some differences in the family concerns. It will be thought on further & endeavoured to be remedied’.³⁵¹ Their solution was recorded, too: ‘The differences

³⁴⁸ MA MS C/36/5/1, p. 44.

³⁴⁹ MS Guildhall, St Dunstan in the West, Register of Marriages, 1762–1779, Henry and Martha Trapp Marriage, 22 June 1766 <<http://search.ancestry.co.uk/>> [accessed 21 October 2021].

³⁵⁰ MA MS C/36/10/6, Elders Conference Minutes vol. 5, 6 January 1770–26 March 1773, 16 March 1771.

³⁵¹ MA MS C36/10/8, Elders Conference Minutes vol. 6, 2 April 1773–29 June 1776, 25 November 1775.

between Sr Lewis & her Children still subsisting, it is resolved that they should be told by their Labourers that they cannot go to the Commⁿ, unless they come to an Understanding and hearty love & Peace with one another'.³⁵² It is not clear if these differences were resolved. Mary Lewis handed over the business the following year to Henry and Martha, although she remained a member of the English Moravian congregation until her death. Her obituary notes her longevity:

Today the widow Sister Mary Lewis, the oldest member of this congregation as to age departed this life gently and happily 88 years old. Our late sister having found grace in the blood of Jesus, and being joined to the brethren, had to go through many troubles and difficulties, but maintained her character as a child of God and follower of Jesus. The latter days of her life she was like one that has entered already into rest, quite separated from all worldly things, and always contented and happy; and when she could speak no more, her serene and cheerful countenance testified to the Peace of God that was ruling in her heart. She departed quite gently and is now at home with the Lord Almighty. Brother Lewis West preached with feeling on Matt 9.6.³⁵³

This shows that, despite some differences with the Brethren, Mary Lewis remained loyal to them. By the time of Mary's death, Martha was operating the business. She had several children, though only one, Mary, survived her. In 1767, John Lewis Trapp had been born to Martha and Henry and, in 1769, their daughter Mary Simmons Trapp was born.³⁵⁴ Mary Trapp was baptized into the Church of England, presumably because Martha and Henry were still excluded from the Moravians. They were both readmitted to the Brethren in 1771. In 1773, Elizabeth Trapp was born, but died in 1777. A minute

³⁵² Ibid., 23 December 1775.

³⁵³ MA MS C/36/8/27, Congregation Diary vol.27 I January 1789 – 28 June 1792, 14 September 1791.

³⁵⁴ London, England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975, birth and baptism record of Mary Simmonds Trapp, 18 January 1769 <<http://search.ancestry.co.uk>> [accessed 23 September 2021].

from the Elders Conference of 22 November 1777 records that Henry Trapp was again excluded:

Henry Trapp has been excluded from the Brotherley association for the support of widows on account of continuing Drunkenness, after much patience and forbearance. The question now is, how we shall proceed in respect to him? It is to be taken into consideration in the course of business of the E. Conference and Committee.³⁵⁵

In 1779, twins were born to Martha and Henry. A description of the family circumstances at the time was recorded movingly in the Congregation minutes for 18 November 1778:

At the meeting in the evening, our sister Martha Trapp's twins, Elizabeth Martha and Martha Elizabeth, born last Sunday were baptized into the death of Jesus. A very peaceful and comfortable feeling attended both the discourse and the transaction. The blessed promise of our Lord in the D.W. that he will love sinners freely & will heal them, was very suitable on the occasion. These poor babes, born not only into this world, considered in general as a vale of misery and woe, but in particular in very distressing and trying family circumstances, owing to their father's unfaithfulness, were, as helpless infants, laid upon the heart of their merciful maker and Redeemer and commended to the interception of all the brothers and sisters.³⁵⁶

The account of the twins' baptism suggests that, while the Moravians were critical of Henry's behaviour, it was their intention to offer support and protection to Martha and her twins. This pastoral support would most likely have been welcomed, since previous records show that Martha had fallen out with her mother. The twins, however, did not survive into adulthood. Martha Elizabeth died in March 1781 and Elizabeth Martha died in January 1784.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁵ MA MS Elders Conference Minutes, vol. 7, 6 July 1776–26 December 1778, 18 November 1777.

³⁵⁶ MA MS C/36/8/22, Congregation Records Diary vol. 22, 18 November 1779. I am unable to discover to what 'D.W' refers.

³⁵⁷ NA MS England & Wales, Non-conformist and Non-Parochial Registers, 1567–1790 <<http://search.ancestry.co.uk>> [accessed 23 September 2021].

Martha Trapp operated the business under great personal strain while Henry was ill. In 1780, it was reported that,

Our poor Sr Mary Trapp's painful and deplorable circumstances were mentioned with deep concern of heart; her husband being very often drunk, and, in consequence of it, mad, & obliged to be confined to a mad-house. We do not see what can be done in that case: but will consult the committee about it.³⁵⁸

Martha Trapp, like her mother before her, worked under extreme personal difficulties. Her position as a woman in business was not questioned by her denomination until the quality of her work was affected, at which point pastoral support was conditioned by business expediency. In 1789, the Elders discussed her and the quality of some work she had undertaken:

Some conversation took place about our Hymnbook which is very indifferently printed. Sr Trapp is almost inconsolable about it but tho' we pity her much yet it seems to be the general sense of our Brn & Srs that we should try another printer.³⁵⁹

This conversation took place two years before Henry Trapp was reported as 'so ill that his departure is expected'.³⁶⁰ By this time, Martha Trapp had been publishing for the Moravians for some twenty years. There appears to have been no question of her being replaced by another printer until the quality of her work was affected. Henry was excluded again for drunkenness in 1791.³⁶¹ He died later that year, a few months before Mary Lewis. Martha was left to operate the business alone.

³⁵⁸ MA MS C/36/10/8, 'Elders Conference Minutes vol. 8, January 1779–July 1781, 8 April, 1780.

³⁵⁹ MA MS C/46/10/13, Elders Conference Minutes vol 7, 5 January 1788–30 October 1790, 4 July 1789.

³⁶⁰ MA MS C/46/10/14, Elders Conference Minutes', November 1790–December 1793, 13 November 1790.

³⁶¹ MS C/36/5/1/ Fetter Lane Church Membership Book, 1742-c. 19th century, p.44.

Catherine Lewis, John and Mary Lewis's eldest daughter and Martha's sister, had also married an apprentice of her parents, William Immyns, in 1762.³⁶² Immyns had been accepted into the Moravian congregation in 1757. He left sometime after 1762. Catherine died in 1767. In 1785, William was readmitted, but excluded himself from the society in 1792. Catherine was the first member of the Lewis family to have applied for membership of the Moravians. The family connection to the Moravians was, therefore, not restricted to Mary, Martha and Henry; Catherine and William were also amongst the Brethren. While Mary and Catherine's Lewis's affiliation remained more or less constant, John Lewis had never been accepted into the choir and Henry Trapp was excluded for drunkenness and readmitted. William Immyns joined, left, was re-admitted, and then left for good. Martha's membership followed a similar pattern: she was baptized and confirmed into the Brethren, then left twice, both times following her marriages, the first to Henry Trapp and the second to the Rev. Timothy Priestley, after which she never re-joined.

Timothy Priestley had attended James Scott's Dissenting Academy in Heckmondwicke (1775–1760).³⁶³ Existing research regarding Timothy Priestley does not refer to him having married Martha Trapp.³⁶⁴ The image of the marriage certificate (Figure 25) confirms that they were married in May 1794 and Martha Lewis's record in the Moravian Archive reads: 'Excluded on account of her marriage with Henry Trapp, & readmitted on Apr 28th 1771. Became a widow in May 1794 & left soon after'.³⁶⁵

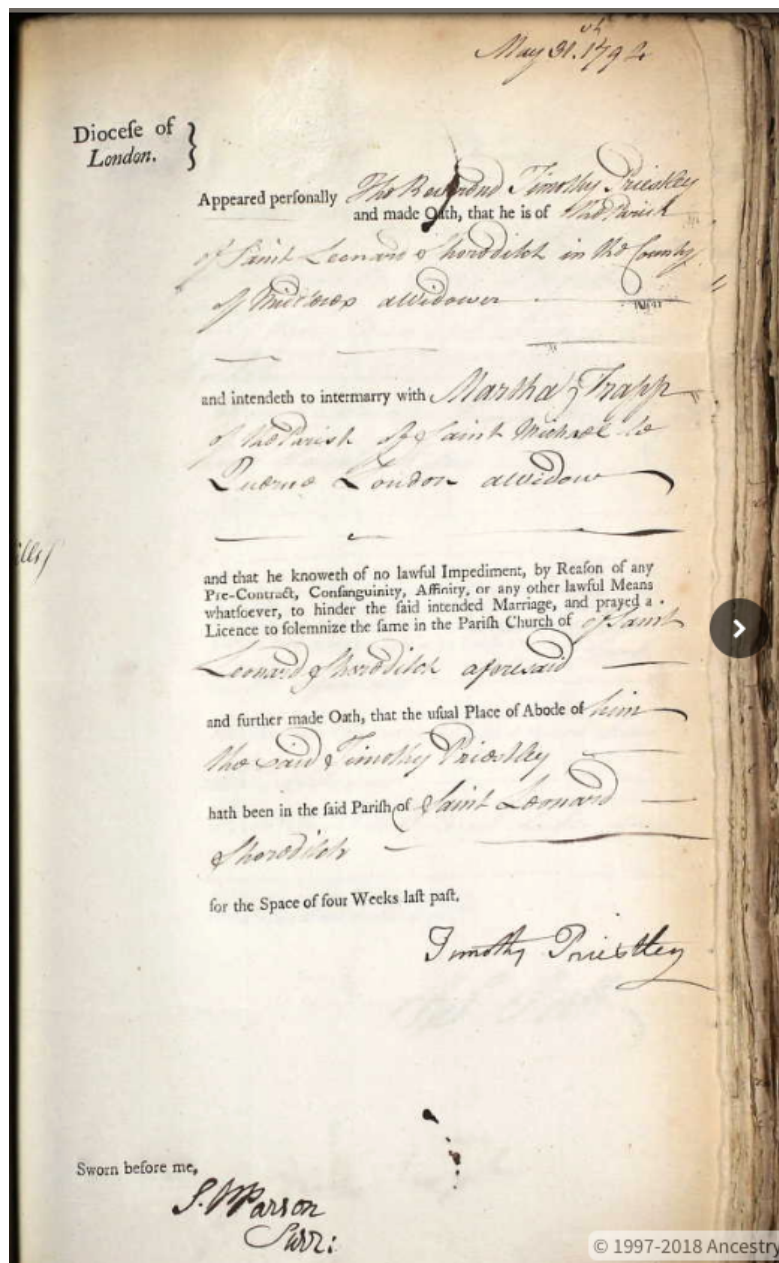
³⁶² McKenzie, *Stationers' Company Apprentices*, p. 458.

³⁶³ Dissenting Academies Online <<https://dissacad.english.qmul.ac.uk>>.

• ³⁶⁴ John A. Hargreaves, 'Priestley, Timothy', in *ODNB* <<https://oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 23 September 2021]. This biography does not refer to Priestley's second marriage to Martha Trapp.

³⁶⁵ MS C/36/5/1/ Fetter Lane Church Membership Book, 1742-c. 19th century, p. 55.

Figure 25: Record of marriage of Reverend Timothy Priestley of the parish of Shoreditch, St Leonard, to Martha Trapp of St Michael Le Querne, *Marriage Bonds and Allegations, 1597–1921*, MS 10091/171, 31 May 1794.



All the women printers and booksellers depicted in these case studies demonstrate substantial sympathy with, and loyalty to, the beliefs of the nonconformist denominations whose work they produced, and none more so than Martha and Mary Lewis. Their professional lives were interwoven with their spiritual relationships. The

Moravians were involved in even the most private details of their lives. Their personal lives were regularly recorded and discussed by elders at their conference meetings. While these women often found solace within their faith, their commitment to it was often tested. Sometimes they stayed away from communion for considerable periods. Nevertheless, records reveal their immersion in their religious denomination, which had a significant impact on their bookselling careers, as demonstrated primarily through the authors and texts that they published.

Moravian and evangelical authors and texts.

A detailed examination of the religious leanings of Mary and Martha's authors demonstrates a cross-denominational but primarily evangelical pattern. Some authors were indeed Moravians, but others were Church of England lay preachers or ministers. They included Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Independents, and Calvinist followers of Whitefield, as well as universalists and Christian mystics. Some of their authors were criticised as Antinomian. One of Mary's authors, James Rely, was considered as such by many because of his belief in universal salvation.³⁶⁶ Mary Lewis sold texts by the mystic Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), translated into English by John Marchant, and works by Francis Okely (1719–1794), a Moravian minister who translated the writings of Nonjuror, William Law, and the pietist theologian Johanna Eleanora Petersen née von Merlau.³⁶⁷ Some secular texts also contributed to her output. Collectively, as publishers of over 650 titles, the Lewis/Trapp family made a major

³⁶⁶ Andrew Hill, 'James Rely (1721/2–1778), Universalist Preacher', *ODNB* 2004 <<http://oxforddnb.com>> [accessed September 2021].

³⁶⁷ John C. S. Mason, 'Okely, Francis (1719–1794)', *ODNB* 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 27 July 2021].

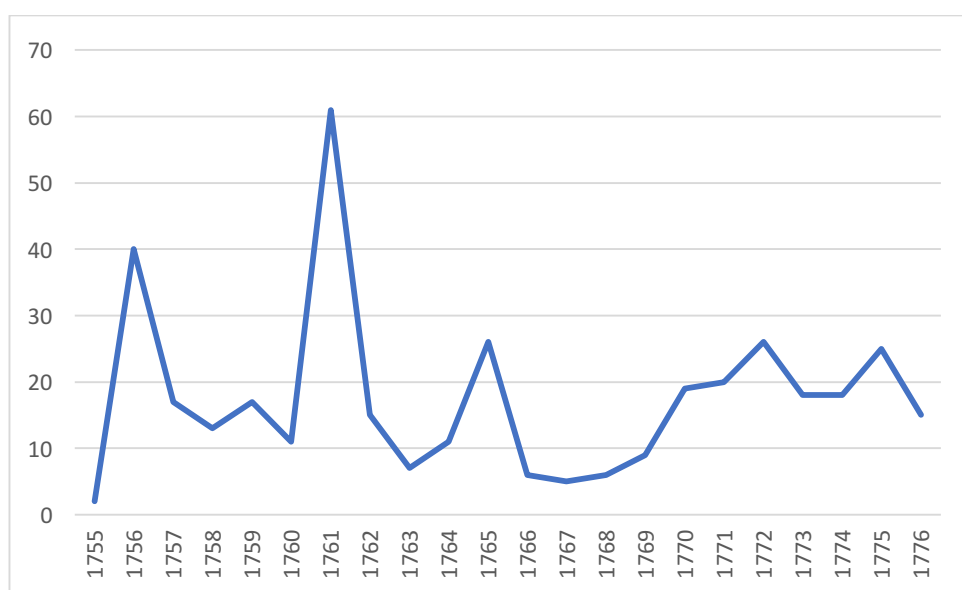
contribution to evangelical publishing, which reflected the pluralistic and developing theological beliefs representative of the Evangelical Revival.

The Moravian authors that Mary Lewis published were: John Cennick (1718–1755); Benjamin La Trobe (1728–1786); Francis Okely (1719–94); John Gambold (1711–1771), originally an Oxford Methodist who became the first English Moravian Bishop; and August Gottlieb Spangenburg (1704–1794), the senior Moravian who set up their mission in Georgia and became leader of the Moravians after Count Zinzendorf’s death.³⁶⁸ Categorising the denominational allegiances of the authors Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp published is complex, not only because they produced work from many nonconformists and indeed Anglican evangelicals, but also because the authors themselves often changed denominational allegiance. Many Moravian authors in England, in particular, had previously been affiliated to other Protestant religious denominations, including the Church of England.

Figure 26 outlines the peaks and troughs of Mary Lewis’s publishing output each year between 1755 and 1776. After Mary Lewis took over as a widow, the number of imprints from No. 1 Paternoster Row expanded exponentially, with 39 appearing in 1756 alone. The number of texts Mary and her daughter produced, and the popularity of evangelical titles, points to them being major contributors to evangelical publishing throughout a prolonged period of the eighteenth century. The years between 1766 and 1769 show a considerable drop in output. This was the period of Martha and Henry’s marriage, Catherine’s death, and Mary’s self-exclusion from the Brethren congregation, which suggests that these occasions had a negative impact on their production of titles.

³⁶⁸ C. J. Podmore, ‘Gambold John (1711–1771)’, *ODNB* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 12 July 2021].

Figure 26: Mary Lewis output by year, compiled from entries on ESTC database.



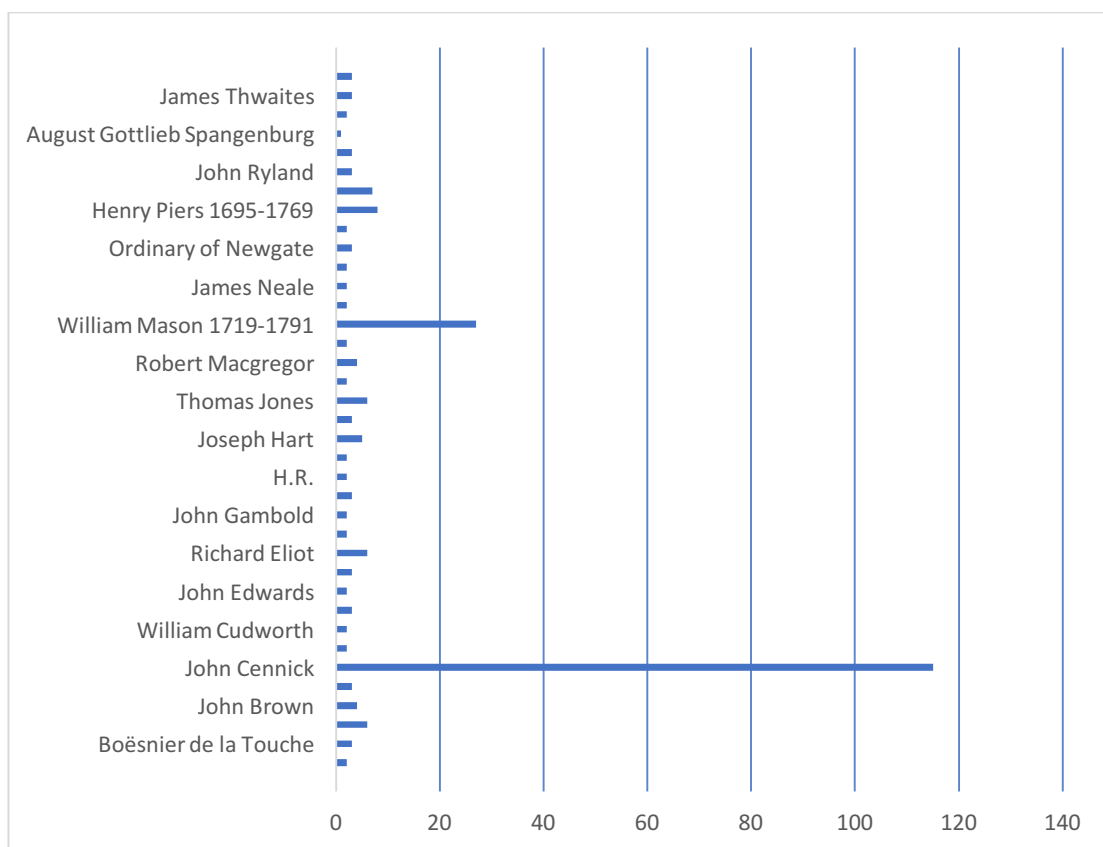
Like Mary Fenner, Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp often collaborated with their male contemporaries and worked in cooperation with other nonconformist printers and booksellers. Nevertheless, both Mary and Martha produced a substantial number of works under their own imprints. The following section explores the authors and texts which Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp published throughout their publishing careers.³⁶⁹ For the purposes of this chapter I have divided their output into three categories: 1. Texts by Moravian authors; 2. Texts by evangelical authors; and 3. Secular texts.

1. Moravian authors and texts.

John Cennick was the author most frequently published by Mary Lewis, with over one hundred titles (Figure 27).

³⁶⁹ Information has been extracted from not only the ECCO, ESTC and EEBO databases but also from advertisements that appear in 17th and 18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers Online.

Figure 27: Comparison of the number of titles of Mary Lewis’s authors.



The first Cennick title printed in 1741 by John Lewis was *A Treatise of the Holy Ghost*. This was produced before Cennick or Lewis had joined the Moravians. Although Cennick died in 1755 from 1756 Mary Lewis republished Cennick’s sermons every year as single publications or in collections. This practice was continued by Henry and then by Martha Trapp. Cennick’s texts were mainly discourses usually printed as sixteen to twenty-four pages in octavo. Mary Lewis’s name appears on 109 of his imprints. Although Cennick referred to these texts as discourses, they were sermons, most of which had been preached originally to congregations in Ireland before Cennick’s move to the Moravians. These texts were presented without prefaces or an introduction, and each provided an analysis of a selected Biblical passage. Following the main body of the text, a hymn was often included, which completed the discourse. They were cheap

to produce. Peter Lineham describes Cennick's 'extensive literary output of fifty-seven works' as 'vivid, gentle, and homely sermons'. In Lineham's words, Cennick was, 'One of the greatest evangelists of the revival, stirring up dramatic conversions and fierce opposition wherever he preached. His responsiveness to the language of religious experience [...] drew him towards the Moravians, but his theology was more Calvinist than Moravian'.³⁷⁰ This style of 'felt' or 'heart' religion is often reflected in the content of other texts that the Lewis/Trapp women produced, particularly collections of hymns for congregational singing. Moravians had brought with them a tradition of 'mature musical and poetical style into which more localised forms, such as hymns of Methodism could easily be incorporated'.³⁷¹

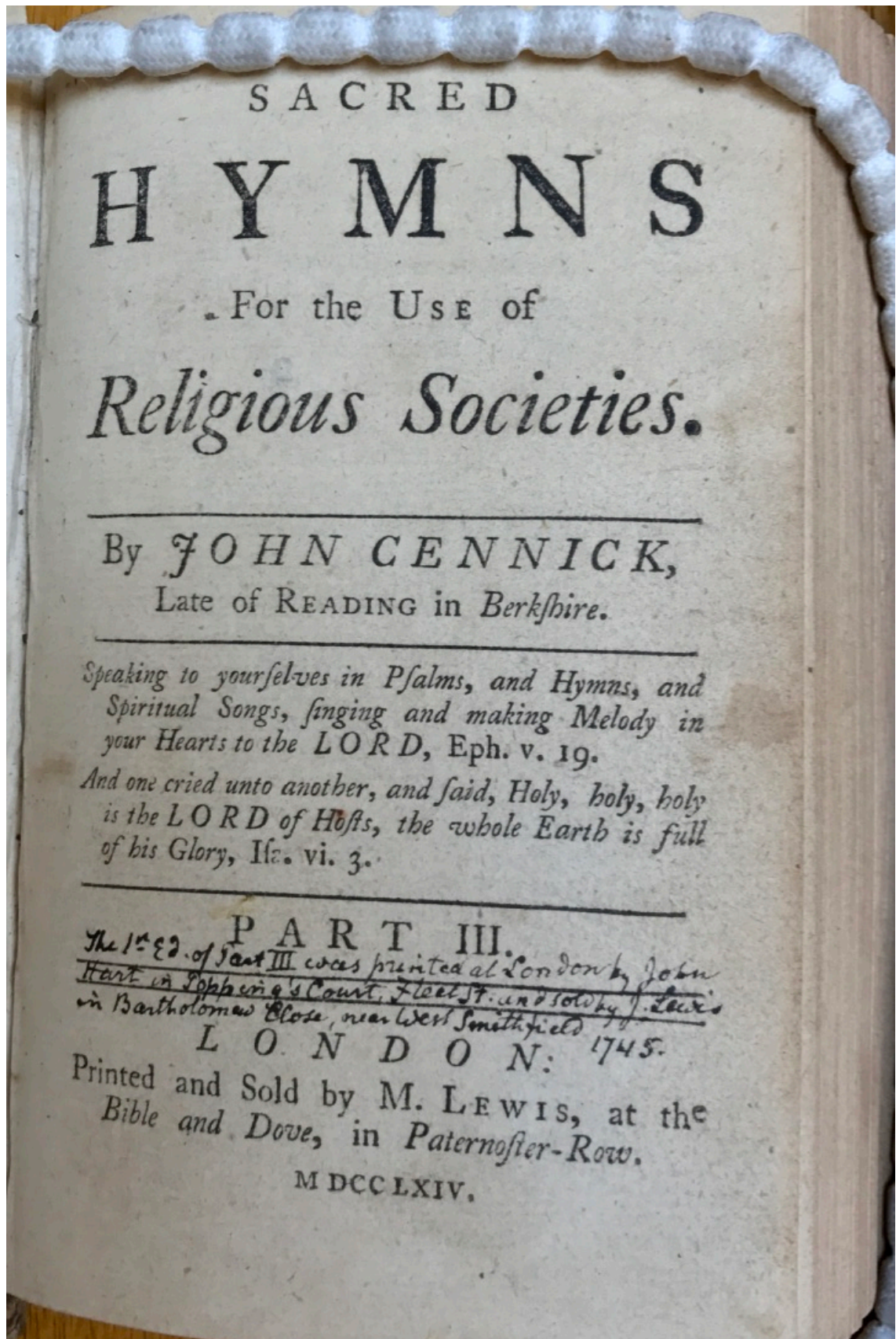
In addition to Cennick's sermons Mary Lewis published the writings and translations of other Moravian theologians and leaders. In 1775/6, she reprinted Spangenburg's *A Concise Historical Account of the Present Constitution of the Unitas Fratrum*, which explained Moravian theology and beliefs, and she also produced John Gambold's *The Reasonableness and Extent of Religious Reverence: A Sermon Preached at the Brethren's Chapel in Fetter Lane*. John Gambold was the preacher, and Moravian bishop from 1751, who had baptized the Lewis's daughter, Martha, back in 1745. Gambold was connected with other Methodists and had originally been a friend of Charles Wesley and member of the Oxford Methodists.³⁷² This is further evidence of the connection between evangelicals of different beliefs and the Moravians. In 1771,

³⁷⁰ Peter Lineham, 'Cennick, John (1718–1755)', *ODNB* 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 18 May 2021].

³⁷¹ Stead and Stead, p. 39.

³⁷² Podmore, 'John Gambold (1711–1791)', *ODNB* 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 12 July 2021].

Figure 28: Title page of John Cennick's *Sacred Hymns: For the Use of Religious Societies*, printed and sold by Mary Lewis, 1764; John Cennick died in 1755.



Mary Lewis published Benjamin La Trobe's *A Succinct View of the Missions Established among the Heathen by the Church of the Brethren: Or, Unitas Fratrum*. The publication of this text coincided with the 'Sifting Time' scandal and may have been written as a means of repositioning the Moravian's reputation. In 1772, she published *Liturgic Hymns of the Brethren's Congregations*, which was translated from a German edition. She also sold Dorothy Turner's *Some Account of the Life and Death of Miss Susanna Turner*, one of four women whose work she published, which also included: Dorcas Master's *A Full and True Account of the Proceedings Relating to the New Meeting-House in Redcross-Street: Partly in Answer to the False Account Lately Published by Mr. John Dolman*; Mary Bayley's *An Elegy on the Much Lamented Death of the Great Duke of Cumberland*; and Johanna Eleanora de Merlau's (Petersen's) *The Nature and Necessity of the New Creature in Christ*, translated by Francis Okely.³⁷³ The religious career of Francis Okely is typical of the fluctuating nature of religious affiliation during this period of the Evangelical Revival. He had become an evangelical as a young man and, in 1736, he formed a small religious society at St John's Cambridge. As a student at Cambridge, he would most likely have been an Anglican. In 1740, he became a Baptist minister, 'but was expelled from them two years later'.³⁷⁴ He joined the Moravians in 1743 and was ordained in 1747. Like others, including John Cennick, he 'came to rest among the Brethren', attracted by their spirituality.³⁷⁵ This is attested to by J. D. Walsh, who explains: 'Though luscious, gruesome and sensuous, this intense passion-piety seemed to provide seekers with an ingredient missing from

³⁷³ Joanna Eleanora Von Merlau (1644–1720) married Johann Willhelm Petersen in 1680.

³⁷⁴ Mason, 'Okely, Francis'.

³⁷⁵ Walsh, p. 251.

their spiritual lives'.³⁷⁶ August Gottlieb Spangenberg's *A Concise Historical Account of the Present Constitution of the Unitas Fratrum* was translated from the German by Rev. Benjamin La Trobe, whose first account of the Moravian missions Mary Lewis had produced in 1771. In 1746, La Trobe had also come under the influence of John Cennick. In 1748, he had been ordained into the Moravian Church in Germany. In 1768, he took on the role as leader of the Moravian Church in Britain, having been principal minister of their Fulneck settlement in Yorkshire from 1756. Following the 'Sifting Time', which had left the organisation bankrupt, La Trobe became an important figure for the restoration of the Brethren.³⁷⁷ He 'did much to restore the church's standing' by 'promoting the cause of Moravian foreign missions'.³⁷⁸

Although the number of Moravian authors that Mary Lewis published appear few in number, they are significant because they were the most prominent leaders of the Moravian Brethren in England and in Germany. As their English publisher, Mary Lewis must have been considered capable and competent to publish their most important literature.

2. *Evangelical and mystical authors and texts.*

It would be reasonable to surmise that the Moravians' central position to other evangelicals in London, was likely to have afforded the Lewis family a source of authors and texts from evangelicals to whom they were connected. John Lewis has been identified as the printer of works by Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), the Swedish

³⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 265.

³⁷⁷ See Peucher, *A Time of Sifting: Mystical Marriage and the Crisis of Moravian Piety in the Eighteenth Century* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015).

³⁷⁸ John C. S. Mason, 'La Trobe, Benjamin (1728–1786)', *ODNB* <<https://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 21 September 2021].

scientist and mystic who published *Arcana Cœlestia* in Latin.³⁷⁹ These eight volumes, which explain Swedenborg's theology, were published between 1749 and 1756. Swedenborg published them anonymously and Lewis's name does not appear as printer. Each volume, however, displays a distinct house style consistent with some of Lewis's other publications and utilise decorative ornaments that can be identified in earlier works printed by Lewis. John Lewis's name *does* appear on *De Coelo et Ejus Mirabilibus, Et en Inferno, Ex Auditibus et Visibus*, published in Latin in 1758, although he had died in 1755. It is probable that his widow printed and sold this work, since she published Swedenborg's subsequent works in English: *A Theosophic Lucubration on the Nature of Influx* in 1769 and *A Brief Exposition of the Doctrine of the New Church* in 1770. These titles conform to the typographic style that Mary Lewis used in many of her titles.

James Raven observes that printers and publishers' offices 'assumed further importance as nodes in the information network [...] acting as postmen and conduits for intelligence'.³⁸⁰ An example of this practice is demonstrated by Mary Lewis in personal and business dealings with her authors. For example, an extract from a letter written by Francis Okely to his brother, John, in 1771, explains that Mary Lewis facilitated a meeting between Okely and the author Emanuel Swedenborg whom she referred to as 'the Latin author'.³⁸¹ The letter reveals that Okely had visited her premises to look at a

³⁷⁹ JISC Historical Texts database identifies John Lewis as the printer of these volumes which were published anonymously. No printer is shown on the imprints. All are published in Latin.

³⁸⁰ Raven, *Publishing Business in Eighteenth-Century England*, p. 152.

³⁸¹ Keri Davis, "'The Swedishman at Brother Brockner's': Moravians and Swedenborgians in Eighteenth-Century London', in *Philosophy, Literature, Mysticism: An Anthology of Essays in the Thought and Influence of Emanuel Swedenborg* (London: Swedenborg Society, 2013), pp. 407–32 (p. 415). Quotes from a letter from Francis Okely to his brother, John, in 1771, citing Document 1465.11 from Book 9 of the Green Books in the Digital Collection of Swedenborg Library in Bryn Athyn.

title of Swedenborg's that Mary Lewis sold, and that he was introduced to Swedenborg himself because she arranged a time and place for them both to meet on the same day. This action demonstrates the interest that Mary Lewis took in connecting her authors and readers with each other.

In 1756, Mary Lewis published thirty of John Cennick's sermons as well as *Repentance and Reconciliation with God, Recommended and Enforced* by Thomas Jones (c. 1729–1762), a nonconformist minister of St Saviours, Southwark. In the same year, she produced texts by William Romaine, Martin Madan, James Relly, and Charles Bradbury. Relly, a controversial figure, was criticised by Mason in *Antinomian Heresy Exploded*. He was a convert of George Whitefield. However, he was unpopular with other Methodists, who, like Mason, accused him of antinomianism. Following Relly's separation from the Methodists in Wales, he formed his own sect. In 1764, he moved to Bartholomew Close, the same area that John Lewis began his printing career. Mary Lewis printed seven of James Relly's titles between 1756 and 1770. How far did she sympathise with his belief in universal salvation or was her decision to publish purely business pragmatism? Given that this was only the second year of her working alone, it is not possible to answer this question. It is possible that Mary adopted Moravian theology, which displayed a tolerance towards sin, teaching its followers to 'accept one's sinfulness, simply believe and await salvation' as 'the gift of God's grace [that] cannot be earned by works or merit'.³⁸² This tolerance was demonstrated during the 'Sifting Time' controversy, when no action was taken against Zinzendorf's son, Christian, the instigator of the inappropriate behaviour of his followers that so damaged the Brethren's reputation and the Lewis family remained loyal to them.

³⁸² Podmore, p. 31.

William Mason (1719–1791), a lay Church of England evangelical, was the second largest contributor to Mary Lewis’s publishing works. The first of William Mason’s texts produced by her was *Remarks and Observations in the Morality and Divinity Contained in Dr. Free’s Certain Articles* in 1758. She printed and sold over twenty-five of his works in new or further editions. Mason had first followed John Wesley and then George Whitefield. ‘He was long known as a Justice of the Peace, and, in 1783, was appointed an acting Magistrate. He attended church at a Wesleyan church but being dissatisfied attended a Whitefield church. His gift for writing soon became apparent and he wrote different publications and books.’³⁸³ A common theme in Mason’s writing, as in most evangelical texts, was his advice to readers regarding the ways and means to be assured of salvation. This is most evident in Mason’s fourth edition of a text printed for Mary Lewis and E. Dilly in 1759, *Methodism Displayed, and Enthusiasm Detected*. Here, Mason analyses each of the thirty-nine articles in order to guide readers to the true meaning behind each one. In 1760, Mason published his invective against James Rely, *Antinomian Heresy Exploded*. This text denounced Rely’s ‘loose, unscriptural and licentious principles’ and argues that ‘every Christian knows that the only sure way to salvation is through a belief in the redeeming sacrifice of Jesus Christ and that the forgiveness of their sins is available only through Him’.³⁸⁴ In 1765, Mason published his principal work, *A Spiritual Treasury for the Children of God*. This was a collection of meditations and hymns written by Mason himself. This work appears with a preface written by the Rev. William Romaine and comprised a substantial publication, printed in 365 pages, in octavo. Mary Lewis’s name appears

³⁸³ Edwin F. Hatfield, ‘William Mason 1719–1791’, in *The Poets of the Church: A Series of Biographical Sketches of Hymn Writers* (New York: Randolph, c. 1884), pp. 412–3.

³⁸⁴ William Mason, *Antinomianism Heresy Exploded in an Appeal to the Christian World* (London: Mary Lewis, 1760), p. 2.

before E. and C. Dilly's on the imprint page, suggesting that she was the main copyright holder as well as the printer. In 1775, Mason's *The Absolute and Indispensable Duty of Christians* offered a guide for staying loyal to the King and God during the first year of the American War of Independence. Mason's evangelical credentials are further endorsed by his succession as editor of Whitefield's *Gospel Magazine*, in which he first published his *Notes on Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress* in 1777. Mary Lewis was Mason's printer for almost twenty years, an example of the consistent relationships she maintained with her authors.

Mary Lewis's publishing record reflects Moravian evangelical beliefs. Her personal dedication to Moravian and evangelical publishing is reflected in the variety of titles that she produced and the broad spectrum of evangelical beliefs that their authors' titles represent.

3. *Secular titles.*

A smaller element to Mary Lewis's published list of titles were the few secular texts that she produced. In 1757, she published some non-religious medical texts for Henry Boësnier de la Touche, together with *Some Observations of the Power and Efficacy of a Medicine* by Dr. William Cockburn, which included an introduction by de la Touche. These were advertised on 7 April 1758 in the *Public Advertiser*. Mary Lewis also published the confessional accounts of 'malefactors' supplied to her by 'The Ordinary of Newgate', which were recorded by Joseph Gurney, the Old Bailey's shorthand taker. Joseph Gurney was brother to Martha Gurney, whose work is discussed in the final case study below. These confessions were produced as broadsheets.

According to the order in which Mary Lewis placed her advertisements, the first text that she published, following her husband's death, was Charles Bradbury's *The*

True State of the Case of the Rev Mr Charles Bradbury. This was an autobiographical explanation of events leading to the prosecution and subsequent acquittal of Bradbury, a ‘minister of the Gospel’. In 1755, he ‘was tried for Sodomy, but honourably acquitted in September Sessions at the Old Bailey’.³⁸⁵ The first account of the trial was published as a broadsheet by Mary Cooper, the foremost woman printer and bookseller based at The Globe, also in Paternoster Row. *The Tryal of Charles Bradbury for the Destestable Crime of Sodomy* offers a full transcription of the trial and was sold at four pence from 11 September 1755.³⁸⁶ The first advertisement for Charles Bradbury’s account appeared on Saturday, 8 November 1755, in the *Public Advertiser*. The titles both imply controversy and scandal. Charles Bradbury’s first publication, *A Sermon Shewing that the Christian Religion is not a Sect, And Yet that it is Everywhere Spoken Against* had been produced by the Lewis press the year before. Bradbury claimed that *The True State of the Case of the Rev Mr Charles Bradbury* was, ‘[A] genuine Narration of the whole affair, the cause and origin of the prosecution minutely traced, and the schemes laid to destroy his life and character manifestly detected’. It contained remarks and observations showing ‘the many falsehoods, inconsistencies and contradictions of the Evidences given in court’. The text served to exonerate the author from further accusations from commentators dissatisfied with the court’s verdict of innocence. In

³⁸⁵ Accounts of this trial are reproduced in *The Tryal of Charles Bradbury for the Detestable Crime of Sodomy, Said to be Committed on the Body of James Hearne at Justice Hall in the Old Bailey* (London: Mary Cooper, 1755), also *Mr Bradbury’s Case Truly Stated 1755, Remarks on Mr Bradbury’s Case (1755)* and *The Cobler Undone by the Loss of His Awl* are reproduced in *Sexual Outcasts 1750–1850*, ed. by Ian McCormick (London: Routledge, 2000), pp 27–164. An account of the trial is available at <https://OldBaileyProceedingsOnline> <<https://oldbaileyonline.org, version 8.0, 27 October 2021>>, [September 1755, trial of Charles Bradbury \(t17550910-42\)](https://oldbaileyonline.org, version 8.0, 27 October 2021) [accessed 27 October 2021].

³⁸⁶ Interestingly, this broadsheet carries a large advertisement for *Brachygraphy*, the shorthand primer written by Thomas Gurney and sold by his son and successor, Joseph, and his sister, Martha, the subject of the final case study in this thesis.

addition, it presented ‘several letters, recantations, and other Papers produced in court, written, signed, and acknowledged by James Hearne the Prosecutor’.³⁸⁷ Charles Bradbury published to clear his name. A second pamphlet, *The Cobler Undone by the Loss of His Awl and His Ends*, was published on 15 January 1756. It served as a reply to criticism of him by John Taylor, a cordwainer, published in *Remarks on Mr Bradbury’s State*, a forty-page pamphlet challenging Bradbury’s account and actions together with those of his associates. An advertisement for this also reveals that a second edition of *The True State of the Case of the Rev Mr Charles Bradbury* had been published between 8 November 1755 and 15 Jan 1756. Bradbury’s defence was printed and sold by Mary Lewis from Paternoster Row and the pamphlet shops, while Taylor’s pamphlet, published with no printer’s name, was, according to its imprint, also available from the pamphlet shops.

Whatever the truth of the affair, sodomy was a serious allegation that could have resulted in the execution of Bradbury had he been found guilty. This was the first publication that Mary Lewis had published under her own imprint after her husband’s death. She continued to publish Charles Bradbury. In 1757, she advertised two further works by him: *A Cabinet of Jewels Opened to the Curious by a Key of Real Knowledge* and *A Collection of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual songs*.³⁸⁸ She shared these imprints with booksellers, E. Gardiner, Mrs Winbush and T Langford. Mary Lewis’s work demonstrates a capacity to embrace, ignore or withstand public criticism or religious

³⁸⁷ ‘Advertisement for Charles Bradbury’s *The True State of the Case of the Rev Mr Charles Bradbury*’, *the Public Advertiser*, Saturday, 8 November 1755, <<https://www.gale.com/intl/c/17th-and-18th-century-burney-newspapers-collection>> [last accessed September 2021]

³⁸⁸ Full title: *A Cabinet of Jewels Opened to the Curious, By a Key of Real Knowledge, Containing a Great Number of Sayings and Sentences, Collected from Heathen Authors and Others, Applied and Adapted in the Various States of Mankind*.

controversy. She maintained productive relationships with authors James Rely and Charles Bradbury for some years.

Mary Lewis's advertisements show that, for the most part, she published alone, but sold through other pamphlet outlets. One example is *The Evening's Walk: A Poem Proper for the Present Time*. The poem was available from her own premises and the pamphlet shops in London and Westminster and advertised in January 1757 in the *Public Advertiser*. The author offers his or her initials only: H.B.L.³⁸⁹

Mary Lewis advertised her titles available as sheets and/or bound. *The Homilies of the Church of England*, published in April 1756, was 'printed for the editor', although the editor's name is not given. Like Mary Fenner, she made full use of the advertising space she bought by including other titles within the limited space. Within an advertisement for *The Homilies* that appeared in the *Public Advertiser* on Monday, 10 May 1756, she also promoted the third edition of the Rev. Jones' *Visitation Sermon* and the second edition of *Macauley's Short-hand*, a combination of religious and secular works; she offered *The Homilies* for seven shillings for printed sheets and nine shillings bound.

In July 1756, in the *Public Advertiser*, the first advertisement for John Cennick's *Six Sermons of Mr John Cennick's* appeared. John Cennick had died the previous year. While John Lewis had produced Cennick's autobiographical work, *The Life of Mr J Cennick* in 1745, this advertisement explains that the sermons Mary was publishing had never before been printed. Mary Lewis referred to each title in the advertisement and reassured the reader that she could prove, 'These sermons are faithfully printed from manuscripts in the Author's own Hand-Writing; which may be seen by anyone who desires that satisfaction, at Mrs Lewis's'. Included in the advertisement was a reminder

³⁸⁹ I have been unable to identify the writer from the initial H. B. L.

to the reader that *Twenty-two Sermons on Various Subjects*, printed in Dublin, had ‘never before published here, with all other of the Author’s Works’ and were available from her premises in Paternoster Row.³⁹⁰ No prices were offered in this advertisement. They show us that Mary Lewis was operating as a retail bookseller in addition to printing for the wholesale trade.

Her advertisement in the *Public Advertiser* on Friday, 16 December 1757, promoted *A Christmas-Box*, a pamphlet advising how the head of a family should deal with ‘the dissolute manner in which the ensuing season is spent by the far greater part of journeymen, apprentices or servants’. It was written to offer ‘a few lines of fit and wholesome counsel’ when employees applied for their ‘Annual Bounty’. The advertisement shows that these pamphlets were ‘sold in bulk at two shillings and sixpence per hundred by Mary Lewis and E. Dilly in the Poultry’.³⁹¹ This practice of selling pamphlets in bulk cheaply suggests that the seller considered the message the most important element in distribution rather than the profit. This philanthropic gesture was a regular practice also used by other nonconformist and evangelical booksellers, including Tace Sowle, Mary Lewis and Martha Gurney. Gurney’s nephew described this as ‘a means for achieving a benevolent design’.³⁹²

The texts referred to above are not an exhaustive account of the entire publishing record of Mary Lewis; rather, they indicate the many types of religious and some secular texts that she produced and sold from her premises in Paternoster Row during the years 1755–1779. We can infer from her record of advertising that, while Mary

³⁹⁰ ‘Advertisement for Six Sermons of Mr John Cennick’s’, *the Public Advertiser*, Thursday, 15 July 1756, *17th and 18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers Online*.

³⁹¹ ‘Advertisement for A Christmas-Box’, *The Public Advertiser*, Friday, 16 September 1757, *17th and 18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers Online*.

³⁹² William Brodie Gurney, *Some Particulars of the Lives of William Brodie Gurney and His Immediate Ancestors* (London: Unwin Brothers, 1902), P.35.

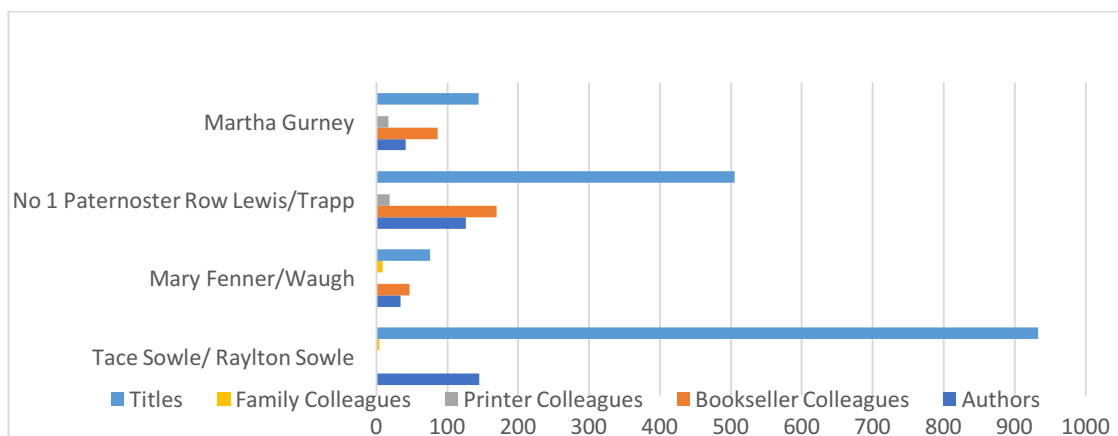
Lewis's output was mostly restricted to Moravian or evangelical texts, she also produced and promoted secular titles, such as the medical writings of Boësner de la Touche. She also participated in the production and dissemination of some titles that could be considered controversial. Nevertheless, almost all the titles she produced were in some way connected to Moravians or evangelicals and represent a significant contribution to nonconformist and evangelical publishing.

Mary Lewis's collaborations with her community of booksellers and printers

Mary Lewis collaborated with over eighty other booksellers and printers in London. Sixty-four different names appear alongside hers on imprints. Those that she shared imprints with most frequently were: E and C Dilly in the Poultry (28 titles); George Keith in Gracechurch Street (28 titles); J. Mathews in the Strand (15 titles); Joseph Johnson (8 titles); Joseph Gurney (7 titles); his sister Martha Gurney (1 title); W Heard (5 titles); and James Buckland (4 titles). All these booksellers were also sellers of Protestant nonconformist texts.

Figure 29 shows that, of the women who are the subjects of this study, Mary Lewis worked with the largest number of other booksellers and printers.

Figure 29: Comparison of titles, authors, trade and family connections of women booksellers of dissenting texts during the long eighteenth century.



The women at No. 1 Paternoster Row, Mary Lewis and her daughter Martha Trapp, produced the second largest number of published titles after Tace Sowle, who published with the fewest number of other printers and booksellers. Mary Lewis was a committed Moravian and the longevity of Mary Lewis’s career suggests a strong idealistic motivation behind her work. The Evangelical Revival contributed to a religious literary sphere that provided a platform for nonconformist, Methodist and Anglican evangelicals in which to participate and this is reflected in the titles Mary Lewis produced. Many of these titles continued to be reprinted by her daughter, Martha.

Martha Trapp’s tenure at No 1 Paternoster Row.

Henry and Martha Trapp continued with the family business of publishing Moravian and evangelical texts. As outlined above, Henry’s membership of the Moravians was tenuous from 1780 because of his alcohol addiction. Martha continued to operate the business during his frequent absences. She was unable to use her own imprint until he died, however, because of the customs and rules of the Stationers’ Company. Henry Trapp’s imprint appeared on works of John Cennick and other Moravian authors up

until his death in 1791, although we know that he was too ill to work by then and Martha was in control of the business. In 1791, his name appeared, with others, on a second edition of Timothy Priestley's *The Christian's Looking Glass: Or, The Timorous Soul's Guide*. It is likely that Priestley's text came directly to Martha for production and may have been how Martha Trapp came to meet Priestley, before he became her husband.

Henry Trapp's imprint throughout his tenure reads as 'printed and sold by H. Trapp successor and son-in-law to M. Lewis No 1 Paternoster Row', which implies that it was not only the location that was valuable to him and his customers, but also his mother-in-law's reputation. Following Henry Trapp's death, however, Martha Trapp does not refer to her mother's or her husband's tenure; her imprint reads simply 'M Trapp No 1 Paternoster Row, Cheapside'. This may have been because her husband's drunkenness had required her to disassociate herself from his poor reputation. Following Martha's marriage to Timothy Priestley, however, she used her previous married name to endorse her bookselling. From 1794 until 1796, her imprint shows 'M Priestley (late Trapp) No. 1. Paternoster-Row'. From 1796, Martha's son-in-law, Vaughan Griffiths, who had married her surviving daughter, Mary, and moved from 169 the Strand, used the same device during his tenure of Paternoster Row; his imprint reads 'Printed and sold by V. Griffiths, (son-in-law and successor to M. Trapp, now Priestley) No. 1, Paternoster-Row'. His move to her premises and use of the name suggest that No 1 Paternoster Row was a more prestigious address and the Trapp name by this time was well established and offered an indication of the titles available, their quality and the service offered to customers. This extensive use of predecessor's names indicates the role that succession played in maintaining business success and longevity.

Martha Trapp, although not officially apprenticed herself, worked with her mother and sister, Catherine, before marriage and operated the business alone during Henry's periods of absence. Henry's will reveal that he left all his stock and household effects at Paternoster Row to 'his dear wife, Martha Trapp'.³⁹³ Like her mother and husband, Martha reprinted John Cennick titles from the start of her independent tenure, possibly as fast turn-around publications to help finance her business. Martha Trapp published 75 further titles between 1791–1796 under either her 'M Trapp' imprint or 'M Priestley' imprint. These titles include works by John Cennick, John Bunyan, Maria de Fleury, and William Romaine. Of the seventy-five titles bearing an 'M Trapp' or an 'M Priestley' imprint, twenty were produced solely by Martha Trapp. However, she worked with over sixty other printers or booksellers. Those whose names appeared most frequently with hers were printers J. Mathews (31 titles) and J Chalmers (15 titles), and booksellers Button (12 titles), Murgatroyd (8 titles), and Martha Gurney (7 titles).³⁹⁴ Many titles were sold by multiple booksellers.

Martha, like her mother before her, published texts that engaged with religious controversy. An example of Martha Trapp's willingness to participate in this is apparent through her association with Martha Gurney. Martha Gurney, another nonconformist bookseller and subject of the next case study, became embroiled in a pamphlet war between Maria de Fleury and William Huntingdon.³⁹⁵ The Trapps had associated with Martha Gurney from as early as 1787 when they shared an imprint, along with J. Johnson and J. Marsom, on Rev. Richard Eliot's work *Dipping Not Baptising*. Previously, Mary Lewis had shared an imprint with Joseph Gurney, Martha's brother, in

³⁹³ NA MS PROB 11/1206, Last Will and Testament, Henry Trapp, 6 June 1791.

³⁹⁴ Other names have not been listed since they appear fewer than five times.

³⁹⁵ Timothy Whelan, "'For the Hand of a Woman has Levell'd the Blow': Maria de Fleury's Pamphlet War with William Huntingdon, 1787–1791", *Women's Studies*, 36 (2007), 431–54 (p. 432).

1788, and the Trapp and Gurney imprint appears on the title page of *A Dialogue between Old Mr Pious and Madam Finic His Wife*. Then in 1791, Henry Trapp's imprint appeared on Maria De Fleury's controversial work *The Barber's Mirror: Or, A Portrait of the Rev. William Huntingdon, Drawn from Real Life*. Given that Henry Trapp was not working during the period leading up to his death, it can safely be assumed that it was Martha Trapp who had published this work with Martha Gurney. In the same year, Martha Trapp's name, together with Martha Gurney's, appeared on the imprint of *Divine Poems and Essays on Various Subjects* by Maria de Fleury. This was followed by the last in Fleury's criticism of Huntingdon, *Falsehood Examined at the Bar of Truth: Or, A Farewell to Mr Wm Huntingdon*. Timothy Priestley, whose work was published by the Trapps, was also the subject of William Huntingdon's reproach. Priestley, editor of the *Christian's Magazine* and the *Christian's Looking Glass*, had criticised Huntingdon's ministry; this De Fleury/Huntingdon debate will be discussed further in the following case study examining the career of Martha Gurney.

Both Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp demonstrated personal qualities that helped them overcome adversity. They showed resilience and resourcefulness in continuing to work through periods of immense personal difficulties. Both produced new work before, and soon after, the deaths of their husbands and children. While Mary Lewis did not marry again, subsequent imprints following her hand-over to her son-in-law in 1776 indicate that her reputation was one to be proud of, as his imprints constantly refer to his link to her. The longevity of her career suggests a strong idealistic impulse behind her work. Their professional lives were interwoven with their spiritual relationships with the Moravians, who advised them and recorded the most personal details of their private lives. The Evangelical Revival contributed to a religious literary sphere that provided a platform for nonconformist, Methodist and Anglican evangelicals, and this is reflected

in the titles Mary Lewis produced, many of which continued to be reprinted by her daughter, Martha.

As Freewomen of the Stationers Company with professional skills and experience of the processes and intricacies of producing printed pamphlets, broadsheets and books, they were equipped for professional careers. Mary Lewis bound six apprentices between the years 1759–1769. Their status as freeholders allowed them security of tenure at No 1 Paternoster Row, a prestigious and prominent address in an area associated with the sale of books and luxury goods. Both Mary and Martha were able to operate immediately on the death or absence of their husbands because they were already in situ and were skilled and experienced professionals. The longevity of the family's occupancy meant the Lewis's business was firmly established in the central area for bookselling for nearly half a century.

The location and religious connection to the main influences of the Evangelical Revival in London supported Mary and Martha's publishing careers. It could be argued, however, that, since these women benefitted from a prestigious address in the most prominent area for bookselling in London and were equipped with the necessary experience and skills of their profession, they may have survived the societal pressures that forced other women to return or remain in the private sphere without the support of their denomination. Their immersion in the Moravian denomination at the centre of the Evangelical Revival was, without doubt, of utmost significance in supporting and sustaining their careers as trade and retail booksellers. Although these women's names have often been obscured because of their married status within their guild and their names have been mistaken for men's because of the use of initials only on imprints, this case study demonstrates that Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp were significant

contributors to Protestant nonconformist and evangelical publishing and hence the literary and public spheres throughout the last half of the eighteenth century.

Case Study Four:

Martha Gurney (1733–1816)

‘She honoured her Christian profession [and] was deeply interested in the Abolition of the Slave Trade’.³⁹⁶

Martha Gurney was a bookseller and publisher, a Calvinist Baptist, and a campaigner for the abolition of the slave trade. She established an independent career as a producer and seller of books related to a number of subjects during the late eighteenth century. She sold works on theology, reports of Old Bailey trials, a system of shorthand developed by family members, pamphlets in support of abolition of the slave trade, and other radical political literature, in addition to sermons and other religious discourse.

Although her involvement with the abolition of the slave trade and political publishing has been examined by Timothy Whelan, this study is concerned with recognising and understanding the impetus behind Martha Gurney’s unique contribution to publishing, particularly the influence of her nonconformist community on her work during the last quarter of the eighteenth century.³⁹⁷ Her nephew, William Brodie Gurney, describes how, ‘her particular line of business brought her into acquaintance with a great many of the leading ministers and private Christians of different denominations, who were frequently surprised, in conversing with her, at her intimate acquaintance with the best works which she sold’.³⁹⁸ His recollection implies that she was a well-read and well-connected woman bookseller.

³⁹⁶ Gurney, *Some Particulars*, p. 34.

³⁹⁷ See Timothy Whelan, ‘Martha Gurney (1733–1816)’ <<http://brycchancarey.com>> [accessed 2 November 2021]; ‘Martha Gurney and the Anti-Slave Trade Movement 1788–1794’, *Women, Dissent, and Anti-Slavery in Britain and America, 1790–1865*, ed. by Clapp and Jeffrey, pp. 55–76; ‘William Fox, Martha Gurney and Radical Discourse’. See also Michele Levy, ‘Martha Gurney: Abolitionist Bookseller of Holborn Hill’, *The Women’s Print History Project*, April 2019 <<https://womensprinthistoryproject.com>> [accessed 2 November 2021].

³⁹⁸ Gurney, *Some Particulars*, p. 34.

This case study argues that Communitarianism, defined as ‘a collection of interactions, among a community of people in a given place among a community who share an interest or who share a history’, is a particularly useful concept through which to grasp Martha’s commitment to publishing and distributing political and abolitionist texts. The term ‘communitarian’ was first used in 1847, however, the theory of communitarianism was formulated in the twentieth century. Nonetheless, it is remarkably relevant in this eighteenth-century context, since it holds that ‘shared conceptions of the good (or values) can act as a motivating force for good’.³⁹⁹ Martha Gurney’s identity as a Baptist, a bookseller, and an abolitionist is closely aligned to membership of her book trade community which included family members, her Baptist minister and congregation, other nonconformist booksellers, and Quaker abolitionists. This case study examines Martha’s working practices to evaluate the extent to which her relationships with her community were also responsible for her participation in, and contribution to, the abolition of the slave trade and the literary, public and political spheres. It establishes how far this community supported her attitudes and her publishing output. It also considers other attributes that help explain how a middle-aged, unmarried, middle-class woman was able to combine her skills, her religious beliefs and her moral principles to contribute to political and moral causes at a time when ‘alarm surrounded the idea of middle-class women using their skills or property to establish independent careers’.⁴⁰⁰ Martha Gurney’s work places her firmly within the revolutionary culture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

From 1791, Martha Gurney was responsible for publishing the most widely distributed political pamphlet of the late eighteenth century, *An Address to the People of*

³⁹⁹ Etzioni, ‘Communitarianism’, p. 80.

⁴⁰⁰ Davidoff and Hall, p. 275.

Great Britain, On the Propriety of Abstaining from West Indian Sugar and Rum, written by her business partner, William Fox (fl. 1773–c. 1796). Fox was the author of fifteen other political pamphlets, also published by Gurney. *An Address to the People of Great Britain* called for a sympathetic public to boycott buying West Indian goods in an attempt to disrupt the Atlantic slave trade depriving the plantation owners of their profits and thus hasten an end to slavery. The dissemination of this text called for bulk production and distribution methods. Thomas Clarkson recalls that this pamphlet ‘laid before the reader a truth which was obvious, that if each would abstain, the people would have a complete remedy for this enormous evil in their own power’.⁴⁰¹ Supporters of abolition were prompted to take direct action in April 1791, after proposed legislation to prohibit the slave trade failed to be passed by parliament. William Fox, Martha Gurney, and their community of abolitionists used the power of print to disseminate their ideas and amass support for the cause. Although she was not the only woman to participate in the campaign for abolition, Martha Gurney was the only woman who was actively involved in the cause as a trade bookseller. Despite this, she has only recently been recognised for her work in the abolitionist debate of the 1790s. Whelan rightly claims, however, that ‘no British woman played a more prominent role in raising the consciousness of the people against the slave trade than Martha Gurney’.⁴⁰²

Martha became an exceptional independent Protestant nonconformist woman bookseller, representative of the growing number of eighteenth-century evangelicals and Protestant dissenters — male and female — whose religious beliefs inspired them

⁴⁰¹ Thomas Clarkson, *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade by the British Parliament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1808), p. 976.

⁴⁰² Whelan, ‘Martha Gurney (1733–1816)’ <<http://brycchancarey.com>> [accessed 19 December 2021].

to work for what Taylor describes as ‘moral sources’ or ‘notions of universal justice, benevolence and equality’.⁴⁰³ Taylor highlights that the inspiration and driving force for the ‘anti-slavery crusade’ originated in part in a ‘revival movement’.⁴⁰⁴ While Taylor’s overall concern is with ‘modern identity’ and the twentieth-century search for meaning, these same ideals of universal justice, benevolence and equality motivated late eighteenth-century supporters of abolition and other political causes. This study posits that Martha Gurney’s moral principles were the result of her religious convictions, which were formed within her religious community and led to her political activities in the literary and public realms. While noting Martha Gurney’s intellectual abilities, it is important too to recognise that her work at the forefront of a major political issue of her age benefitted from her being born into a respectable, affluent Calvinist Baptist family. Her family, religious community, and knowledge of works of divinity were the sources of the extensive theological knowledge which supported her idealism.

She enjoyed a close working relationship with her brother, Joseph, who, though ten years younger than Martha, supported her bookselling and publishing career. The siblings published many court and parliamentary titles together. Printed transcripts of Old Bailey trials, court sessions and parliamentary debates on the slave trade, together with evidence given at the House of Lords on slavery, were the direct result of her brother’s occupation as official shorthand recorder or stenographer for the Old Bailey and parliament. These licensed transcripts, alongside the income from her family’s copyrighted *Brachygraphy: or Swift Writing made Easy to the Meanest Capacity*, a manual that taught shorthand, first published by her father, Thomas, in 1750, provided a regular income for Martha and Joseph. This income most likely helped sustain her

⁴⁰³ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, p. 64.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 399.

independent career as a bookseller and publisher and also supported the production and nationwide distribution of abolition texts written by Fox.

Biography.

Martha Gurney was a bookseller from 1770 to 1816, based first at 34 Bell Yard, Temple Bar, then at 128 High Holborn in London. She remained unmarried. She could be described as from the middle tier of society, since she was the daughter of Thomas Gurney (1705–1770), also a Calvinist Baptist, who became the first official shorthand writer for the Old Bailey. Her mother was Martha Marsom (*d.* 1757). Martha Gurney's connection with nonconformists was substantial, since her father was a prominent Baptist and her maternal grandfather, Thomas Marsom, had at one time been in prison with John Bunyan and was reputed to have persuaded Bunyan to publish *A Pilgrim's Progress*.⁴⁰⁵ Martha Gurney was the eldest of five children, only three of whom, Martha, Thomas (1736–1775) and Joseph (1744–1815), survived into adulthood. Joseph succeeded his father to become shorthand writer in the law courts and then parliament. Martha and Joseph became members of the congregation of Maze Pond, under the minister James Dore (1764–1825).

Thomas Gurney had come to London from Bedfordshire in 1737. He published *Brachygraphy* in 1750, a book based upon William Mason's system of shorthand, having bought the latter's work by chance in an auction lot. This action was to positively influence the Gurney family's occupation, business and 'the history of legal and government reporting in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries'.⁴⁰⁶ In mastering its contents, Thomas and his son, Joseph, learned sufficient skills to become official court

⁴⁰⁵ Page Life, 'Gurney Thomas (1705–1770)', *ODNB* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 4 November 2021].

⁴⁰⁶ Life, 'Gurney', *ODNB*.

shorthand stenographers of trials at the Old Bailey and parliamentary state trials. In addition, the book's copyright provided a regular source of income first to Thomas, then to Joseph, and finally to Martha. Thomas had rewritten parts of the system acknowledging its originator, Mason, but renamed his shorthand system *Brachygraphy*.⁴⁰⁷ The title was republished multiple times by Thomas, Joseph and Martha from 1750 until 1805. Martha Gurney left its copyright along with a portrait of her father to her nephew, John Gurney, in her will.⁴⁰⁸

Before taking over from his father, Joseph Gurney had been apprenticed to the Stationers' Company in 1757.⁴⁰⁹ He is recorded as a bookseller in Holborn, opposite Hatton Garden, at the Tabernacle in Moorfields, and at the Chapel in Tottenham Court Road. Thomas and Joseph's professional standards of stenography transformed the genre of trial literature from popular reading entertainment sold in broadsheets, to that of official records recognised by the legal establishment.⁴¹⁰ Following his appointment as his father's successor, Joseph licensed copyrights of trials and parliamentary debates that were then sold by his sister. Martha had become established as a bookseller in Temple Bar. Figure 30 shows an illustration taken from an advertisement that appeared on the final pages of *The Trial of Richard Patch for the Wilful Murder of Isaac Blight, 23 September 1805*, sold by Martha Gurney in 1806.⁴¹¹ M. Gurney is advertised as the

⁴⁰⁷ The ESTC records eighteen editions of *Brachygraphy* between 1752 and 1799. The second edition of 1752 notes that the first edition was published in 1750.

⁴⁰⁸ NA MS PROB 11/1589, Last will and testament, Martha Gurney, 10 February 1817. Martha Gurney's remaining goods and money were bequeathed to her niece, Elizabeth Gurney.

⁴⁰⁹ Plomer, *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers*, p. 112.

⁴¹⁰ Life, 'Gurney', *ODNB*.

⁴¹¹ *The Trial of Richard Patch for the Wilful Murder of Isaac Blight, at Rotherhithe, on the 23rd of September, 1805* (London: M. Gurney, 1806) <<https://historicaltexts.jisc.ac.uk/>> [accessed 20 June 2021], p. 200.

Figure 30: Advertisement from page 200 of *The Trial of Richard Patch for the Wilful Murder of Isaac Blight*, 23 September 1805, sold by Martha Gurney in 1806.

The following TRIALS published from MR. GURNEY'S Short Hand Notes, (and such others as are not out of Print), may be had of M. GURNEY, Bookseller, Holborn-Hill.—

1. **T**HE Trial of JOHN DONELLAN, Esq. for the Murder of Sir Theodosius Boughton, Bart. Before Mr. Justice Buller, at the Assize at Warwick, March 30, 1781. Price 2s. 6d.
2. The Trial of THOMAS HARDY, for High Treason, at the Session House in the Old Bailey; containing the parol Evidence, authentic Copies of all the Letters, and Arguments verbatim. In Four Volumes, Octavo. Price 1l. 8s. in Boards.
3. The Trial of JOHN HORNE TOOKE, for High Treason, at the Session House in the Old Bailey; containing the parol Evidence, authentic Copies of all the Letters, and the Arguments verbatim. In Two Volumes, Octavo. Price 14s. in Boards.
4. The Trial of WILLIAM STONE, for High Treason, at the Bar of the Court of King's Bench. Price 7s.
5. The Trial of ROBERT THOMAS CROSSFIELD, for High Treason, at the Session House in the Old Bailey. Price 7s.
6. The Trial of JAMES O'COIGLEY, alias JAMES QUIGLEY, alias JAMES JOHN FIVEY, ARTHUR O'CONNOR, ESQ. JOHN BINNS, JOHN ALLEN, and JEREMIAH LEARY, for High Treason. Price 9s.
7. The Trial of WILLIAM CODLING, JOHN REID, WILLIAM MACFARLANE, and GEORGE EASTERBY, for feloniously destroying the Brig Adventure on the High Seas, at the Sessions House in the Old Bailey, October 26, 1802. Price 5s.
8. The Trial of COLONEL DESPARD for High Treason, at the Session House, Newington, Surry, February 7th, 1803. Price 5s.

This Day is published,
 DEDICATED WITH PERMISSION,
 TO THE KING,
 Price HALF-A-GUINEA,
 THE THIRTEENTH EDITION, OF
BRACHYGRAPHY,
OR AN
 EASY AND COMPENDIOUS SYSTEM OF SHORT-HAND,
 Adapted to the various Arts, Sciences, and Professions.
 BY JOSEPH GURNEY.

Note. The Book is a sufficient Instruction of itself; but if any difficulties occur, they shall be removed upon application to the Author, either personally or by letter, without any additional expence.

H. Bryer, Printer, Bridge-Street Blackfriars.

bookseller of the trials listed.⁴¹² The advertisement boasts verbatim accounts published from ‘Mr Gurney’s short-hand notes’ each commands a considerable price, ranging from two shillings and sixpence to one pound eight shillings. The advertisement also promotes the thirteenth edition of *Brachygraphy* priced at half a guinea, or ten shillings and sixpence.

Like the other women booksellers in this research, it is not possible to ascertain where Martha received her education. She most likely became literate within her family. Her ability to operate as a bookseller suggests that she was also numerate and confident in book trade procedures.

Following Martha’s mother’s death in 1757, Thomas remarried and, according to his nephew, ‘his children were glad to find another home since the marriage was unhappy’.⁴¹³ Following her father’s death in 1770, Martha set up as a bookseller in Temple Bar, at the centre of the legal profession. Her name does not appear on any imprint until 1772, by which time she was forty. She was then able to pursue an independent life free from any family obligations, since she had not married and had no parent dependent on her care. Throughout her career, Martha published 130 titles and shared imprints with eighty-six other booksellers, nineteen different printers, and forty-two authors.⁴¹⁴ Martha’s brother, Joseph, a member of her Baptist community at Maze Pond and her book trade community, was also active as an abolitionist, providing transcripts of parliamentary abolition debates to the abolitionist committee. The siblings remained closely allied throughout their lives.

⁴¹² During the 1790s, there were 100 prosecutions for sedition. Thomas Hardy and John Horne Tooke were acquitted.

⁴¹³ Gurney, *Some Particulars*, p. 33.

⁴¹⁴ Compiled using ESTC data.

In 1783, she moved her business from 34 Bell-yard and entered into a new business arrangement with William Fox, bookseller at No 128 Holborn Hill. This move marked a new period in her life. William Brodie Gurney, Joseph's son, describes Martha's place in the family and her situation at work during this later period as follows:

The eldest was Martha, who lived to the extreme age of 84, during which she honoured her Christian profession and endeared herself to all the family. She continued single and earned a comfortable subsistence, and, ultimately, a small independence by carrying on the business of a bookseller, first in Bell Yard and afterwards in Holborn. Her dealings were principally in old Divinity and Bibles. She had at one time the best collection of old and curious Bibles of any one in the trade. Her particular line of business brought her into acquaintance with a great many of the leading ministers and private Christians of different denominations, who were frequently surprised, in conversing with her, at her intimate acquaintance with the best works which she sold. But she had great leisure, and great enjoyment in reading. She was deeply interested in the Abolition of the Slave Trade, displayed openly in her shop the section of a slave ship, with its living cargo stowed for the voyage, and published several pamphlets to assist in the interesting work, particularly Mr Fox's address to the people of England on abstaining from West India produce till that end was accomplished. Of these 250,000 were printed and they had for a time a great effect. Her efforts in this cause, giving away largely as well as selling these publications, brought her to the acquaintance of the most intelligent Quakers, who valued her as a coadjutor, engaging as she did in the circulation of these pamphlets, not so much as objects of trade as means of promoting the benevolent design.⁴¹⁵

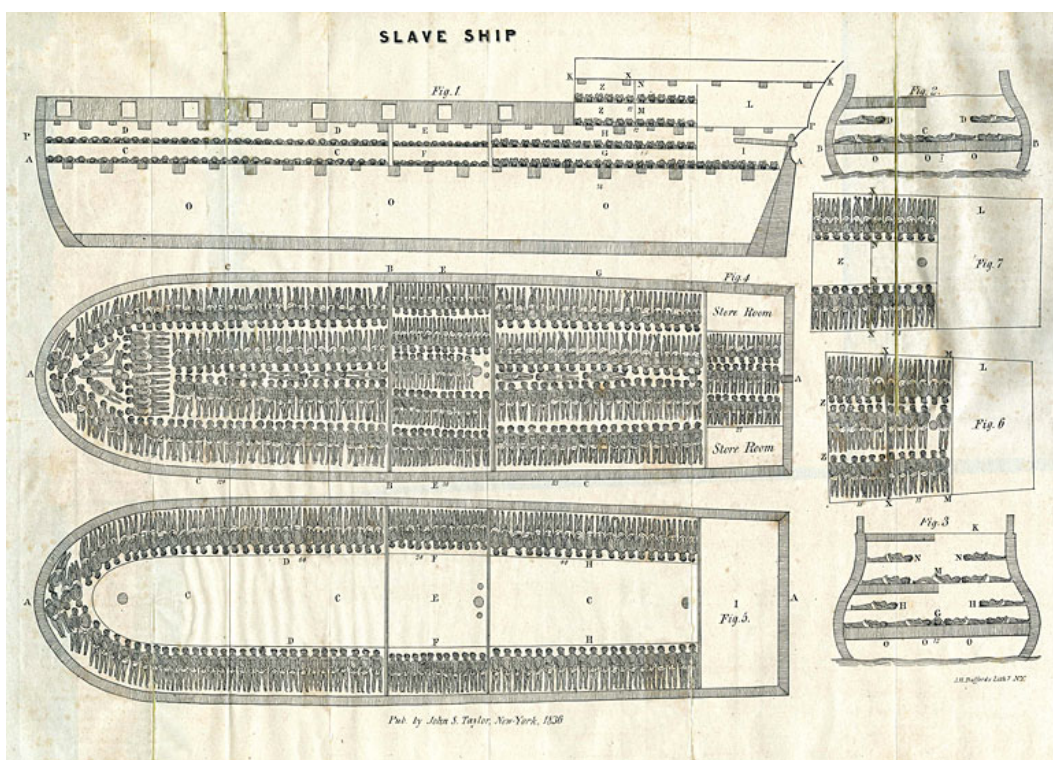
The description William offers us of his aunt reveals several aspects to her life and character. He confirms her popularity and single status, her independence, and her interest in abolition. The slave ship (Figure 31) he references was most likely 'the large fold out drawing of the slave ship Brookes which had been commissioned by the Abolition Committee in 1789'.⁴¹⁶ William points to her intelligence, her knowledge of

⁴¹⁵ Gurney's memoir, although printed and published, was produced for his extended family in a small print run and is not, therefore, widely available. The copy I have cited is in the British Library.

⁴¹⁶ Whelan, 'Martha Gurney 1733–1816'.

theological texts, and her cordial relationships with Quakers; however, he understates the extent of her status as publisher of William Fox's work, since Fox wrote, and Martha sold, fifteen further radical political pamphlets, following his publication of *An Address to the People of Great Britain*, which related to a number of political subjects.

Figure 31: The Slave Ship, Brookes.⁴¹⁷



Far from enjoying plenty of leisure time, her move to Fox's premises at Holborn Hill in 1783 involved her in extensive production and sales of political criticism. The image her nephew portrays of her implies a small-scale, low-key retail shop. Whilst his

⁴¹⁷ The British Library describes the Slave Ship, Brookes, as 'probably the most widely copied and powerful image used by those campaigning to abolish the slave trade in the late 18th century'. Created in 1787, the image shows how enslaved Africans were transported to the Americas and depicts a slave ship loaded to its full capacity, with 454 people crammed into the hold. The Brookes sailed 'the passage from Liverpool via the west coast of Africa to islands in the Caribbean'. <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/diagram-of-the-brookes-slave-ship> [accessed 20 June 2021].

recollection of her is admiring and respectful, this impression underestimates the extent of her contribution to the production and distribution of many thousands of pamphlets promoting the abolition of the slave trade and other political causes.

Martha Gurney's relationship with William Fox.

William Fox was a bookseller in Holborn before becoming a radical pamphleteer. He has been described as 'one of the most brilliant writers of political pamphlets in the 1790s and for a short time the most prolific'.⁴¹⁸ There is no doubt that William Fox and his writings were central in developing Martha's later publishing activity during the years 1791–1794. William Fox himself appeared as bookseller on at least fifty-six titles between 1773 and 1794. Whelan speculates that Martha was introduced to Fox through her brother, Joseph, who knew Fox since they were both 'members of the Humane Society founded in 1774 by Dr William Hawes a close friend of Joseph Gurney'.⁴¹⁹ It seems likely that, with Martha to operate his bookselling business, William Fox was free to concentrate on his writing. His output was prolific during this period. Martha and Fox collaborated on political pamphlets 'ranging from the abolition of the slave trade to the perversion of national fast days, from Pitt's provocative war with France to his administration's selective redefining of the word "Jacobin"'.⁴²⁰ Fox was motivated to campaign against the slave trade when the Slave Trade bill was defeated in the spring of 1791. During 1791, William Fox wrote, and Gurney sold and distributed, the first twenty-one editions of *An Address to the People of Great Britain, On the Propriety of Abstaining from West Indian Sugar and Rum*. These were followed by the pamphlets: *A*

⁴¹⁸ Timothy Whelan, *The Complete Writings of William Fox: Abolitionist, Tory and Friend to the French Revolution*, ed. by John Barrell and Timothy Whelan (Trent Editions, 2011), p. xi.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid, p. 401.

⁴²⁰ See Timothy Whelan, 'William Fox (fl. 1791–1794)', 2008, <<https://brycchancarey.com/abolition/williamfox.htm>> [accessed 21 June 2021].

Summary of the Evidence Produced before a Committee of the House of Commons Relating to the Slave Trade, 1792 (six editions); *A Discourse on National Fasts, Particularly in Reference to that of April 19, 1793, On Occasion of the War against France*, 1793 (three editions); *An Examination of Mr Paine's Writings*, 1793; *The Interest of Great Britain Respecting the French War*, 1793 (five editions); *A Defence of the Decree of the National Convention of France, For Emancipating the Slaves in the West Indies*, 1794; *A Defence of the War against France*, 1794; *On Jacobism*, 1794; *On Peace*, 1794; *On the Renewal of the East India Charter*, 1794; *Poor Richard's Scraps*, 1794; and *Thoughts on the Impending Invasion of England*, 1794.

Daniel White identifies the three main preoccupations amongst political dissidents: 'Parliamentary reform for a more equal representation in the late 1760s; support for Corsican independence and the American Colonies in the 1760s and 1770s; abolition of the slave trade and the boycott on sugar in the 1780s and 1790s; and opposition to war with revolutionary France in the mid 1790s'.⁴²¹ Although Fox's titles do not refer to Corsican independence, Fox and Gurney were prominent campaigners amongst other dissenters who shared their commitment to liberty. Fox and Gurney's publishing activities demonstrate their involvement with multiple reform movements. However, the production, speed and number of editions of *An Address to the People of Great Britain* that were produced and distributed point to their fervent support of the abolition of the slave trade and the boycott on sugar. Figures Figure 32 Figure 33 (the fifth and twenty-fourth editions published in 1791 and 1792 respectively) illustrate differences in the presentation of the title pages.

⁴²¹ White, p. 9.

Figure 32: Title page of the fifth edition of *An Address to the People of Great Britain, On the Utility of Refraining from the Use of West Indian Sugar and Rum*, published in 1791, showing a verse from Cowper's 'The Negro's Complaint'.

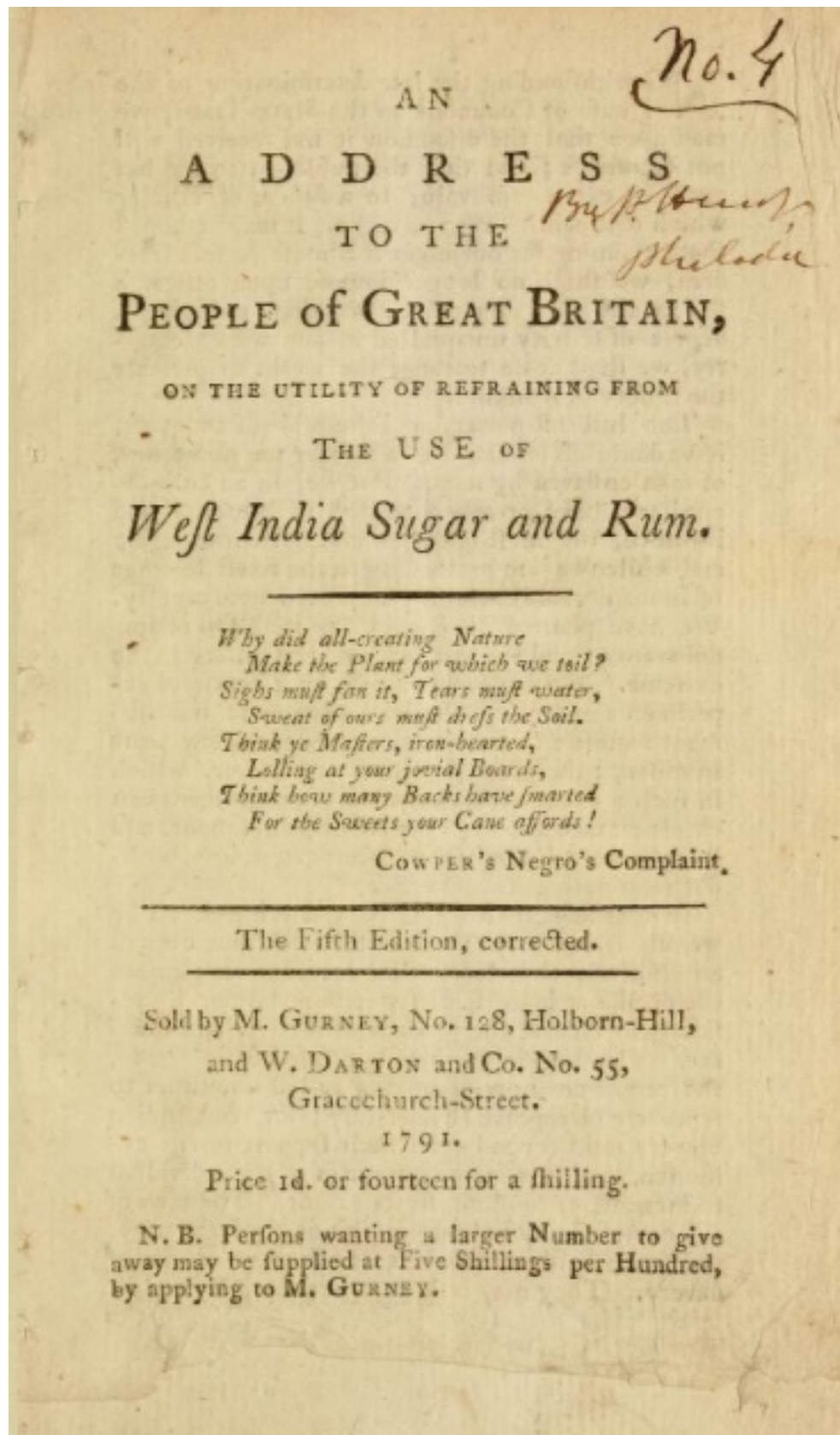
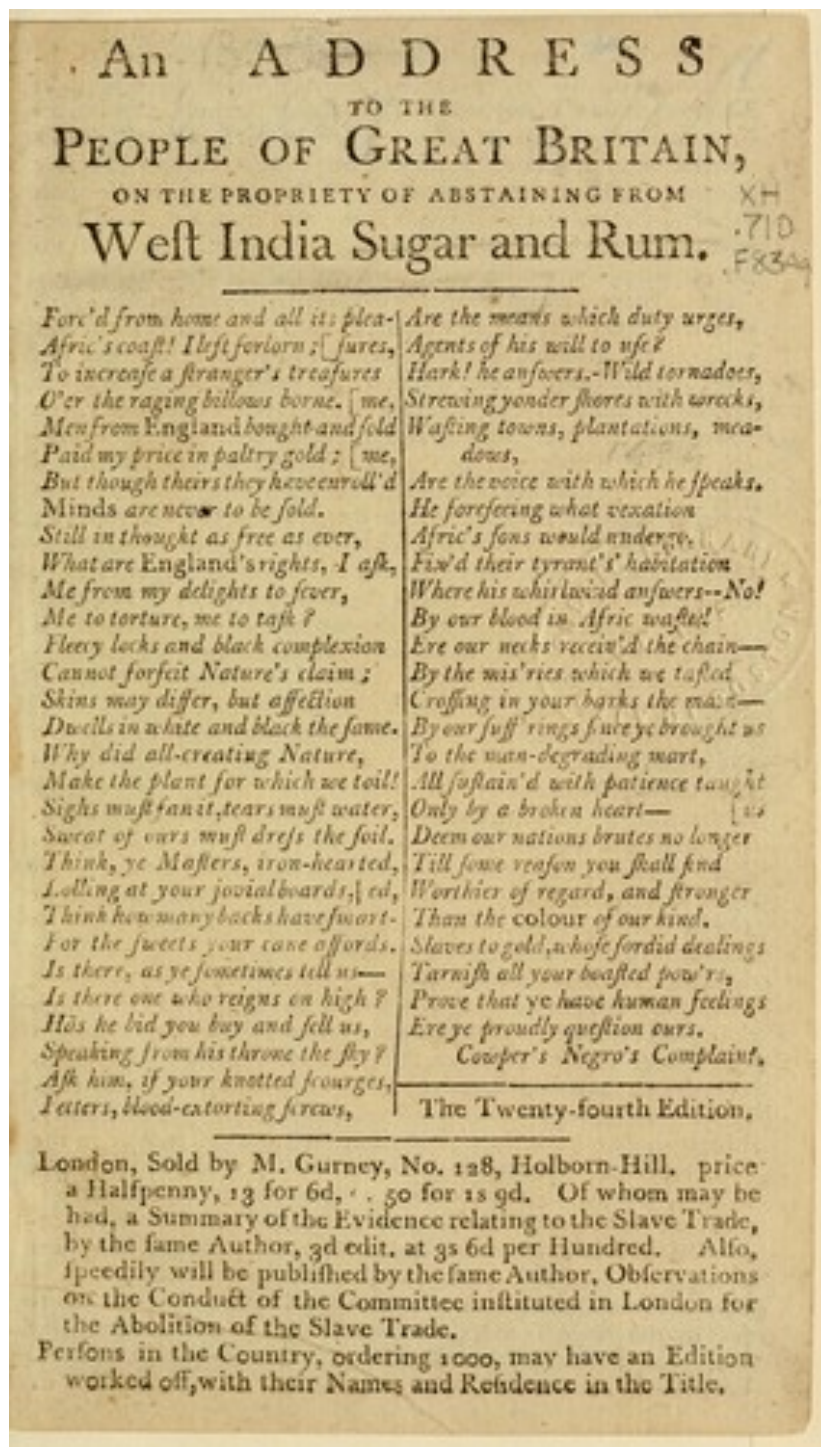


Figure 33: Title page of the twenty-fourth edition of William Fox's *An Address to the People of Great Britain, On the Propriety of Abstaining from West Indian Sugar and Rum*, published in 1792, showing a longer extract from William Cowper's 'The Negro's Complaint'.



Within the text of *An Address to the People of Great Britain*, Fox addresses

Protestant dissenters directly, calling on their consciences:

If the national religion be a mere matter of form, yet surely we may expect that the various denominations of dissenters, will think it at the least as requisite to dissent from the national crimes, as the national religion, unless they mean to exhibit consciences of so peculiar a texture, as to take offence at the religion of their country, while they conform without scruple, to its criminal practices.⁴²²

Fox views the abolition of the slave trade as a moral obligation that dissenters should support in keeping with their religious beliefs.

Nonconformist and evangelical contributions to Abolition.

During the early to middle period of the eighteenth century, a wide spectrum of opinion had existed in Great Britain among Evangelicals and Protestant nonconformists towards the slave trade. Christopher Brown, in *Moral Capital*, which set out to establish the motives behind the Abolition movement, has questioned why British abolitionists were only prompted to act in the late 1780s when ‘the morality of the slave system had troubled men and women for decades but no one in Britain had attempted to overthrow it’.⁴²³ Brown maintains that the timing of the abolition movement was not a natural outcome of late eighteenth-century trends but was rather the result of four elements: enslavement had to be considered a moral wrong; that moral wrong had to attain political significance, sustain interest, and become a cause for concern; those concerned needed a way to act or address their concerns; and abolition had to be a collective mission and a priority that lasted beyond initial protests.⁴²⁴ He concludes that the

⁴²² William Fox, *An Address to the People of Great Britain, On the Propriety of Abstaining from West Indian Sugar and Rum*, 4th edn (London: M Gurney, 1791), p. 11.

⁴²³ Christopher Leslie Brown, ‘Introduction’, in *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), pp. 1–30 (p. 24).

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

American Revolution was a key factor in the timing and character of the abolition campaign in the 1780s because it ‘touched off a transformation in the public perception of antislavery action in the British Isles’ and helped develop a marginal interest into public concern.⁴²⁵ Furthermore, he maintains that a ‘challenge to the Atlantic slave-trade offered an opportunity for various individuals and groups to establish new identities, new self-conceptions’, to ‘create a new place for themselves within society and a new role in public life’.⁴²⁶ Indeed, Martha Gurney, in producing and distributing abolitionist literature, created a role for herself as a contributor to political causes in response to her belief that slavery was a moral wrong.

In general, attitudes to slavery and the slave trade before the 1780s were diverse. Before the late 1780s, evangelical anti-slavery activists ‘often aimed to make slavery more humane or more Christian, not to liberate the enslaved’.⁴²⁷ The Quakers were the first to petition parliament in 1783, the year that Martha moved to William Fox’s Holborn bookshop. The Quaker petition demanded ‘restraint from exporting negroes’.⁴²⁸ Along with Thomas Tryon, Thomas Clarkson identifies the Quaker leader, George Fox, as amongst the earliest objectors to slavery.⁴²⁹ Tryon’s writing on slavery was discussed in the Tace Sowle case study of this investigation. Clarkson notes that, ‘[Tryon] inveighs both against the commerce and the slavery of the Africans and in a striking manner [and] examines each by the touchstone of reason, humanity, justice and religion’.⁴³⁰ Following Tryon’s condemnation of colonial slavery in 1705, it took

⁴²⁵ Ibid., p. 461.

⁴²⁶ Ibid., p. 2.

⁴²⁷ Ibid., p. 28.

⁴²⁸ Thomas Clarkson, *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade by the British Parliament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1808), p. 176.

⁴²⁹ Tryon’s memoirs were published by the Quaker bookseller, Tace Sowle, in 1705.

⁴³⁰ Clarkson, p. 56.

another 78 years before the Quakers actually petitioned parliament. Clarkson credits the Quakers first in America, then in Britain, as having been the first group to actively oppose slavery and the slave trade. Brown maintains that, in opposing slavery, Friends underwent a ‘substantial reorientation in values’ that changed their quietist approach in society, as discussed in first case study, to one of political activism in order to support abolition.⁴³¹ Brown accepts that, once moved to act, the Quakers more than any other denomination supported the abolitionist cause and were the first religious denomination to advocate for, financially support, and organise the antislavery movement in Britain.

Other denominations, too, contributed to the abolitionist cause. Young Hwi Yoon claims that it was the Moravians who, in their role as early missionaries to the West Indies, were responsible for establishing the ‘Moravian message of universal fellowship [that] had a “compelling power” to weaken racial prejudice against enslaved Africans’.⁴³² Methodists condemned the institution of slavery officially for the first time in 1784, while American Baptists embraced enslaved Africans into their religious communities. Anthony Page claims that Rational Dissenters were amongst the leading advocates for religious and political reform in late eighteenth-century Britain, and that they ‘helped abolitionism to spread rapidly between 1787–1792’.⁴³³ However, while these denominations contributed to a change of attitude, Brown concludes, the ‘British Antislavery movement emerged from a religious reaction against what its Evangelical and Quaker founders derided as nominal Christianity’.⁴³⁴ Abolition was a cause that many evangelicals and nonconformist denominations felt compelled to support, because

⁴³¹ Brown, p. 392.

⁴³² Young Hwi Yoon, ‘The Spread of Antislavery Sentiment through Proslavery Tracts in the Transatlantic Evangelical Community, 1740s–1770s’, *Church History*, 81 (2012), 348–77 (p. 353).

⁴³³ Anthony Page, ‘Rational Dissent, Enlightenment, and Abolition of the British Slave Trade’, *The Historical Journal*, 54 (2011), 741–72 (p. 742).

⁴³⁴ Brown, p. 28.

it reflected their ideals of universal justice, benevolence and equality and their heartfelt objection to the inhumane treatment of African slaves. These ideals motivated Martha Gurney's work.

Phyllis Mack explains that Quaker commitment to abolition was based on their 'belief in universal human rights derived from their commitment to both Enlightenment values and Christian tradition'.⁴³⁵ Furthermore, Mack concludes that this theology surrounding the 'inner light', the doctrine that God is present in all individuals, prompted Quaker women in particular to move 'into a life of social activism'.⁴³⁶ More broadly, Taylor notes with reference to this period that agapé, or 'selfless love', 'lays a moral obligation' on rational human beings to behave benevolently.⁴³⁷

Martha Gurney was not a Quaker, yet she demonstrates equal if not greater commitment to, and support for, abolition as the Quaker women identified by Mack. This is consistent with the trajectory traced by Brown: the antislavery movement 'forged a new identity for the Religious Society of Friends in England' that would 'provide a model for others who hoped to contribute to the effort and to redefine themselves, to promote slave trade abolition and embody virtue in practice'.⁴³⁸ Gurney was a woman whose professional skills and independence as a woman bookseller were crucial in enabling her to support abolition. Her status as a single woman enabled her to participate fully with the cause, unaffected by social mores that might otherwise have restricted her actions. Martha's activities were concerned with directly influencing the buying behaviour of the general public, which would indirectly result in a common

⁴³⁵ Phyllis Mack, 'Religion, Feminism and the Problem of Agency: Reflections on Eighteenth-Century Quakerism', *Signs*, 29 (2003), 149–77 (p. 174).

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

⁴³⁷ Charles Taylor, *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), location 1162. Kindle ebook

⁴³⁸ Brown, p. 394.

good. During a period when women booksellers were retiring from the literary marketplace, except as retail sellers, Martha Gurney's career was impervious to this trend and flourished. She used her abilities to actively participate in reform through her publishing work. Her brother, her business partner, her pastor, her Baptist congregation, and fellow Quaker abolitionists provided a community to support Martha's work.

Eventually, many women from all levels of society supported the abolitionist cause. They were thus involved, as Clare Midgely writes, in 'one of the key mass movements for political reform of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries'.⁴³⁹ Although Midgely's work centres mainly on the later campaign that supported the abolition of slavery itself, her investigations reveal women's involvement in the abolitionist cause before 1807, particularly with regards to nationwide female membership of the Abolition Society, set up in 1787. She discovered 206 women's names amongst this list of subscribers published in 1788.⁴⁴⁰ She also shows that women of all classes played a major role in actually abstaining from using or buying West Indian sugar and rum. Their participation in this boycott was a direct response to William Fox's and Martha Gurney's campaigning leaflet. While Midgely identifies many women writers and poets, Unitarians and evangelicals, who wrote in support of the abolitionist cause, she failed to identify that the publisher and seller of Fox's campaigning leaflet was herself a woman, Martha Gurney. Through producing and disseminating this leaflet and other political texts, Martha Gurney contributed directly to the public and political spheres in persuading 'no fewer than three hundred thousand persons to abandon the use of sugar', according to Clarkson's estimation.⁴⁴¹

⁴³⁹ Claire Midgely, 'Anti-slavery and Women: Challenging the Old Picture', in *Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns 1780–1870* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp 1–6, (p. 5).

⁴⁴⁰ Although Martha herself is not listed as a subscriber, her brother, Joseph, is noted as having contributed two guineas.

⁴⁴¹ Clarkson, p. 978.

Martha Gurney demonstrated her commitment to the abolitionist cause by producing and selling other abolition literature in addition to Fox's political texts. The first was a sermon by James Dore, written by her minister at Maze Pond in 1788. Martha Gurney is listed as one of the sellers, along with J. Buckland, C. Dilly and W. Button, all of them nonconformist booksellers. Significantly, on the first page of this sermon the dedication reads:

The following sermon was first preached, and is now printed, to gratify the wishes of an affectionate people, who are zealous friends to the GLORIOUS CAUSE of UNIVERSAL LIBERTY.⁴⁴²

This dedication by a Baptist minister shows that support of abolition in the 'glorious cause of universal liberty' was not an ideal confined to Quaker ideology. By reinforcing these sentiments to his congregation, and in print, his views likely reinforced those of Martha and others. Indeed, Joseph Gurney and his son, John, along with thirteen others of Dore's congregation, went further. In a letter of 1790, addressed to James Dore, they hailed the 'wonderful Revolution [of] a neighbouring Nation' and an 'ardour for liberty' as well as a 'desire to unite our voices in thanksgiving to Almighty God for his power and goodness'. Further, the authors beg their pastor to prepare 'a course of Lectures on the principles of Nonconformity, and of civil and religious Liberty' in order 'to advance the cause of Humanity and Universal Freedom'.⁴⁴³ Martha was not amongst the signatories; however, given her closeness to her brother, it is reasonable to suppose that she endorsed his ideals. The abolitionist movement was active during a period of transatlantic and European revolution. Brown notes that 'the American Revolution was

⁴⁴² James Dore, *A Sermon on the African Slave Trade, Preached at Maze-Pond, Southwark, Lord's Day Afternoon* (London: Printed by L. Wayland and sold by J. Buckland, C. Dilly, M. Gurney and W. Button, 1788), p. 1.

⁴⁴³ Joseph Gurney, John Gurney, and others, 'A Diaconal Epistle, 1790', *Baptist Quarterly*, 8 (1936), 211–216.

a pivotal event in the history of British Slavery’, as it ‘directed unprecedented attention to the moral character of colonial institutions and imperial practices’.⁴⁴⁴ Dore’s sermon was written in 1788, one year after the Constitution of the United States was voted on by the Congress of the United States of America and a year before the French stormed the Bastille in July 1789, marking the start of the French Revolution. The letter from members of Dore’s congregation was sent to him in December of the following year. Martha’s congregation, brother and pastor symbolise a community engaged with and fully supportive of the revolutionary events of the late 1780s and early 1790s.

Martha Gurney’s community included other nonconformist booksellers, including James Phillips, the Quaker printer, the Lewis/Trapp Moravian family, and William Button, a Baptist minister in Dean Street who also ‘conducted a large bookselling business’.⁴⁴⁵ Imprints Martha Gurney shared with them suggest supportive relationships and friendships, despite their different denominational allegiances. The Moravian Fetter Lane meeting house, where the Trapps and Lewises worshipped, was close to Maze Pond, where Martha and Joseph were amongst the congregation. The close links between nonconformist booksellers were often mirrored by close geographical links and friendship. These factors may have had as great an influence on Martha Gurney’s career as her Baptist religion and her relationship with William Fox. The Gurneys’ relationship with the Lewis/Trapp had already been established since Joseph Gurney had previously collaborated with Mary Lewis, along with E. and C. Dilly, when together they printed and sold John Flavel’s *The Ax Laid at the Root of Antinomian Licentiousness* back in 1770. Martha Gurney first collaborated with Mary Lewis in 1775, whilst she was at Bell Yard. Together, they printed and sold the second

⁴⁴⁴ Brown, p. 27.

⁴⁴⁵ See Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists* (London: Sold by Burditt and Button et al., 1811), p. 335.

edition of a pamphlet, *An Old Fox Tarr'd and Feather'd*, written by Augustus Toplady (1740–1788) under the pseudonym, an Hanoverian, and written in response to John Wesley's *Calm Address to Our American Colonys*. Toplady had been a friend of Martha's father. Mary Lewis and Martha Gurney's initials, surnames and addresses, together with a general reference to 'the booksellers at the Royal Exchange', appear on the title page of this pamphlet, which accused John Wesley of plagiarism. This was not without controversy. Toplady declares on the opening page his intentions were: '1. To shew Mr Wesley's honesty as a plagiarist: and 2. To raise a little skin, by giving the Fox a gentle flogging, as a turncoat'.⁴⁴⁶ Toplady compares John Wesley to a 'low and puny tadpole in Divinity' and accuses him of plagiarising whole paragraphs of Samuel Johnson's *Taxation No Tyranny*. To demonstrate, he presents the paragraphs side by side, showing Johnson's original work on the left and Wesley's plagiarism on the right. The pamphlet was priced at 1s.6d per dozen or 10s per hundred, which suggests that it was intended for mass distribution. The content which criticised a prominent religious leader is indicative of the often controversial topics and personal nature of religious literary discourse during the period. Following this publication, Martha's output appears to have been confined to reprinting editions of *Brachygraphy* and publishing trials from her brother's court transcripts for a few years.

Following her move to Fox's Holborn premises, however, Martha collaborated with the Trapp family again, in 1787, to produce and sell Richard Elliot's *Dipping Not Baptizing*, along with the booksellers Joseph Johnson and J. Marsom. Following this, Martha published her late father's poem, in 1788, *A Dialogue between Old Mr Pious*

⁴⁴⁶ Augustus Toplady, *An Old Fox Tarr'd and Feather'd Occasioned by What is Called Mr John Wesley's Calm Address to Our American Colonys, The Second Edition Corrected* (London: Printed for M. Lewis in Pater-Noster Row, M. Gurney in Bell Yard, Temple Bar, and the Booksellers at the Royal Exchange, 1775).

and *Madam Finic His Wife*, ‘from fragments found amongst the papers of Thomas Gurney’. Interestingly, in ‘an address to the reader’ of this poem, an unnamed writer — probably Martha or Joseph — refers to a ‘Board of Ministers, then meeting at Blackwell’s Coffee House’ in 1745.⁴⁴⁷ This detail is significant since it confirms that, like other men, nonconformists frequented coffee houses. Coffee house culture was, for Habermas, a crucial element in the formation of the liberal public sphere, as discussed earlier in the study.⁴⁴⁸ The activities of this board of ministers demonstrate that religious discourse was not excluded from the public sphere. Martha Gurney chose the Lewis/Trapp family to print her father’s poem, implying that their relationship was close. While she continued to sell her brother’s court transcripts and regular editions of *Brachygraphy*, Martha developed a close working relationship further with Martha Trapp. Both their names appear alongside bookseller T. Bennett’s on *John Bunyan’s Divine Emblems, Book for Boys and Girls* published in 1790.

Martha Gurney was then involved in further controversy as one of the sellers of Maria de Fleury’s pamphlets. Maria De Fleury, a highly educated Baptist writer, had invited William Huntingdon, a controversial but popular self-styled minister who preached ‘that believers under the dispensation of Grace were free from the requirements of the law’, to visit her in order to discuss his views.⁴⁴⁹ He refused her invitation and wrote to her in insulting terms, proclaiming that God’s command to her was, ‘To keep silence, guide your house, mind your business and keep at home [...] and not to speak of things that you ought not’.⁴⁵⁰ De Fleury included this letter in a later pamphlet, *A Serious Address to the Rev. Mr. Huntingdon* in 1788. Huntingdon’s words

⁴⁴⁷ Gurney, ‘To the Reader’, p. 2.

⁴⁴⁸ See ‘Historical Context’ chapter of this work.

⁴⁴⁹ For full details of the episode, see Whelan, ‘Maria de Fleury’s Pamphlet War’, pp. 432–5.

⁴⁵⁰ Maria De Fleury, *A Serious Address to Rev. Mr. Huntingdon Containing Some Remarks on His Sermon* (London: Printed and sold by T. Wilkins, 1788), p. 11.

and actions demonstrate male ‘general unease about women’s independence, both sexual and intellectual’.⁴⁵¹ De Fleury was not daunted by this criticism and Martha Trapp and Martha Gurney collaborated with others in selling her *Divine Poems* and *Falsehood Examined at the Bar of Truth*, part of the same pamphlet war. This public argument continued between De Fleury and Huntingdon, as they each published texts which criticised the other. Two of Maria de Fleury’s pamphlets were published in 1791, the same year as Martha printed and sold William Fox’s *An Address to the People of Great Britain*. This was a highly productive year for Martha as she published twenty-two titles, including new or further editions by Maria de Fleury, William Fox and Richard Hillier. In 1792, she published a further nineteen titles and, in 1793, a further twenty titles. This record of publishing demonstrates that Martha Gurney’s participation in controversial causes was not confined to support for the abolition of the slave trade. While her nephew’s description offers us a picture of woman bookseller with ‘much leisure time’, her publishing record suggests the opposite. Other than the recollection of her nephew, there are no further personal documents that record any details of Martha’s private life.⁴⁵² It has nevertheless been possible to construct some further information about her working practices from advertisements and imprint pages that carry her name.

Martha Gurney: Printer, publisher or bookseller?

Martha Gurney’s imprints do not record her as a printer. All the titles listed on the ESTC designate her as a bookseller or sometimes as a publisher. This is consistent with her nephew’s memory of Martha; having remembered the diagram of the Slave Ship, he would almost certainly have remarked on a printing press if one were present. Martha’s

⁴⁵¹ Davidoff and Hall, p. 451.

⁴⁵² Martha Gurney’s will is the only other document that offers details of her family, apart from William Brodie Gurney’s family memoir.

business was in the retail sale of Bibles and divine books that her nephew mentions, twenty-five state trials that were transcribed by her brother from his shorthand notes, and *Brachygraphy* reprints. The ESTC lists twenty-two transcripts of trials or parliamentary business, thirty-five religious discourses or sermons from nonconformist ministers, eight non-religious titles including some by Benjamin Franklin, and seventeen anti-slavery or political texts, authored by William Fox or James Dore and sold by her. Occasionally Martha's name appears exclusively as a solo seller, but more often it appears with other nonconformist booksellers. The names James Phillips (Quaker), Henry or Martha Trapp (Moravian), William Button (Baptist), E. and C. Dilly (dissenting), J. Buckland (dissenting), and Joseph Johnson (dissenting) appear frequently on imprints with hers. In *Brachygraphy* and works published by both siblings, Joseph's name is demarcated as the proprietor, designating sales of the work to his sister, i.e. 'printed for J. Gurney (proprietor) and sold by M. Gurney'.⁴⁵³ *Brachygraphy*, the Court of Quarter Sessions proceedings and Old Bailey trials contributed to the Gurney/Fox finances and most likely helped finance large numbers of campaigning pamphlets, possibly up to 250,000, which were sold at minimum cost to the buyer.⁴⁵⁴ This approach to distribution is explained in the wording that appears on the front page of the fourteenth edition of *An Address to the people of Great Britain*:

Sold by M. Gurney, No. 128, Holborn-Hill
 [Price a Halfpenny]
 Or twenty-five for 1s and 3s and 9d per hundred
 60,000 of this Pamphlet having been printed in about 4 months, affords the most flattering hopes of the plan proposed being extensively adopted and producing very important effects: to further them a trivial price is affixed, that those who approve the Pamphlet may be more generally enabled to promote its circulation; this may be done in the most inconsiderable town or village in the kingdom if

⁴⁵³ Joseph and Martha's names appear like this on the Great Britain Court of Sessions Proceedings for the years 1777–1780 as well as 1781, and also *Brachygraphy*, the ninth edition in 1778.

⁴⁵⁴ William Brodie Gurney, claims '250,000 were printed' in *Some Particulars*, p. 35.

there be in it only one friend to the Cause; who will send a letter to M. Gurney, No. 128, Holborn Hill, directing to whom the parcel is to be delivered, and ordering the Coachman, Waggoner, or other person to pay the money on delivery; the deduction above mentioned will in most cases enable the person to dispose of them at a halfpenny, without any loss, and any person ordering 1000 may have an edition printed off with their name and residence instead of the London Booksellers.⁴⁵⁵

We can infer from this that Gurney and Fox were aiming to distribute these pamphlets widely and cheaply. Indeed, it seems that they were successful in this, since Clarkson recalled that on his tour of Wales and two thirds of England ‘there was no town, through which I passed, in which there was not some individual who had left off the use of sugar’.⁴⁵⁶ Gurney’s distribution strategy was straight-forward and effective.

Not all Martha Gurney’s publications survive today. Some are revealed only in advertisements that appear within other publications. For example, an advertisement appears on page two of *An Authentic Copy of a Petition Praying for a Reform in Parliament Presented to the House of Commons on Monday, 6 May 1793*, listing a number of publications that Martha sold but are not extant today. These include: *The Lives of Four Evangelists: Mathew, Mark, Luke and John*, price 3d; *The Temple of Wealth, A Vision*, price 2d; *A View of the Advantages of the Christian Sabbath: Written in Plain English for the Instruction of Plain People*, price 1d; *A Chapter on Modern Apocrypha*; and *Religious Objections to the Practice of Inoculation Answered*, price 1d. These titles were most likely sold retail from Martha’s premises. They were inexpensive pamphlets, which probably accounts for them have not having survived. They are not recorded on contemporary databases. However, what they demonstrate is that

⁴⁵⁵ Fox, p. 1.

⁴⁵⁶ Clarkson, p. 828.

throughout the process of organising and distributing Fox's work, Martha was also operating a retail bookshop.

Martha's move to William Fox's bookshop suggests that either her previous Bell Yard address was not sufficient to support her continued independence or, perhaps more significantly as an unmarried woman and thus free to make her own choices, she saw this move as an exciting opportunity to become directly involved with political causes of her time.

Conclusion.

Martha Gurney's community was small but her commitment was powerful and her readers were widespread. Her location in Holborn placed her close to her brother and his family, within a community of Baptists and other nonconformist booksellers with whom she collaborated. Although her name does not appear on any imprint until 1772, by which time she had entered middle age free from familial obligations, her work reflects her adoption of reforming ideals that stemmed from a belief in 'Universal Human Rights derived from a commitment to both Enlightenment values and Christian tradition'.⁴⁵⁷ The dedication that refers to the 'Glorious Cause of Universal Liberty', which appeared on James Dore's anti-slave trade sermon of 1788, called for 'universal liberty', an ideal that Martha, her brother, and others within their community embraced.

Her professional activities as a publisher and bookseller supported her activism. Fully engaged in her Baptist community and well connected to Quaker abolitionists, she shared premises with William Fox, who was an ardent political commentator, abolitionist and nonconformist bookseller. She was able to support herself, and possibly Fox's writing career, through income from her and her brother's joint publishing

⁴⁵⁷ Mack, p. 174.

activities. Joseph's occupation offered access to the current abolition views discussed in parliamentary debates regarding slavery and the slave trade. This was an advantage to them both in their publishing work. Both siblings' commitment to the abolitionist cause existed within a wider culture of revolution and radicalism during the period of the American and French revolutions.

While the Quakers were the predominant nonconformist denomination that first opposed the Slave Trade and colonial slavery on religious and moral grounds, Martha Gurney was no less committed and collaborated with other nonconformist printers and booksellers, including James Phillips, the leading Quaker publisher, in pursuit of their goal.

Martha became an experienced seller of popular pamphlets later in her career. While she sold to the public through her retail shop, she also operated as a trade distributor, discounting pamphlets to sellers countrywide prepared to take large quantities. She demonstrates considerable agency and autonomy in publishing abolitionist and political material and successfully distributing thousands of pamphlets nationwide that called upon people, particularly women, to go without sugar in their domestic consumption.

However, the slave trade was not abolished until 1807. William Fox is thought to have died around 1796.⁴⁵⁸ He published no further works after 1794. Yet, Martha Gurney witnessed the Abolition of the Slave Trade, since she lived until 1816, although slavery itself was not outlawed completely until 1833.

⁴⁵⁸ Whelan tells us that there is no record of Fox's writings after 1794 (see *Complete Writings of William Fox*, p. xxxi). It is possible that William Fox died in August 1796 and was buried at St Botolph, Bishopsgate, City of London, see (LMA) Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1812, William Fox, Burial date 27 August 1796. It is not possible to confirm that this was the same William Fox.

Ultimately, Martha Gurney utilised her skills to influence consumer behaviour in support of the abolitionist cause. This case study is a particularly clear example of a woman involved in influencing public action. Although Habermas has accepted that some women participated to a limited extent in the literary sphere, the work that Martha Gurney undertook demonstrates far greater potential for women to have influenced the literary, public and political spheres.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study has been to evaluate women bookseller's contribution to the material production, sales and dissemination of texts produced by Protestant dissenters. This thesis has argued that, following 1730, a small but significant number of women booksellers connected to Protestant dissent overcame, or ignored, economic and societal pressures that confined other middle-class women to the domestic sphere and operated at the same level as their male counterparts in participating in, and contributing to, the commercial literary sphere as trade booksellers. This study has established that women booksellers were amongst the leading publishers of nonconformist texts. Figure 34 shows a simple, approximate comparison between the outputs of nonconformist men and women booksellers.

Figure 34: Approximate comparison of imprints attributed to men and women nonconformist booksellers, 1691–1800, derived from the ESTC.

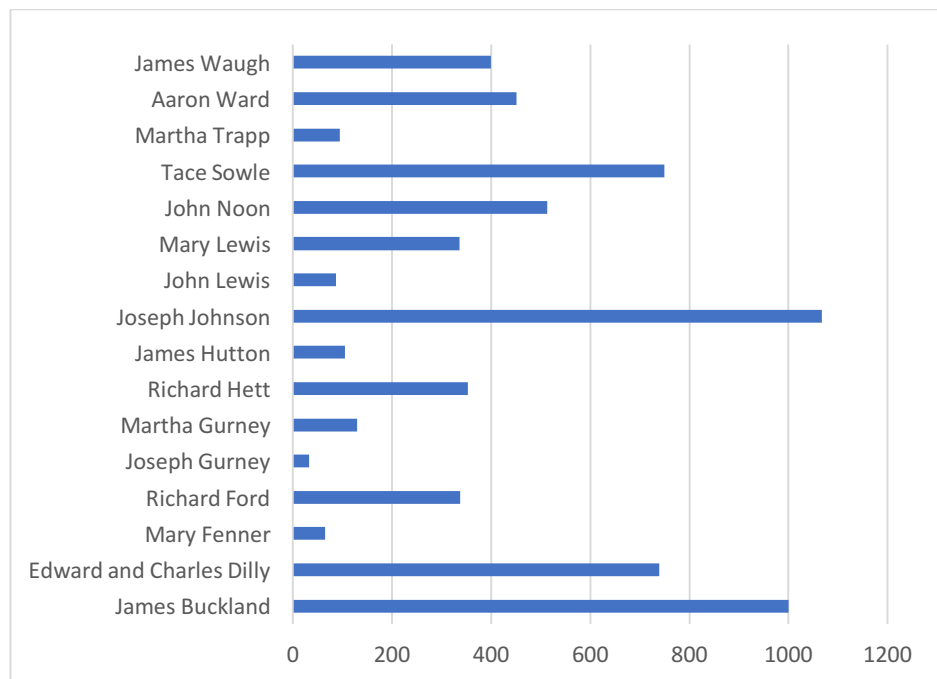


Figure 34 demonstrates that, while Joseph Johnson and James Buckland sold the largest quantity of titles, Tace Sowle was amongst the leading nonconformist booksellers, producing almost seven hundred and fifty titles, more than the brothers, Edward and Charles Dilly's output combined. Richard Hett, Richard Ford and Mary Lewis contributed around three hundred and fifty titles each. Mary Fenner appears to show the smallest number with sixty-four titles, yet she was responsible for printing four hundred titles that show James Waugh's imprint and more as M. Waugh when widowed. Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp produced work while their husbands were absent from their presses for long periods, but published over four hundred and thirty titles between them. Martha Gurney was able to publish one hundred and thirty texts, nearly one hundred more than her brother, Joseph, who contributed thirty-six titles. These men and women were the foremost booksellers of nonconformist titles throughout the century.

This study highlighted that the ESTC category, 'Religion, Philosophy and Ethics', was the most prolific type of publishing during the eighteenth century, second only to that of 'Politics, Government and Law', which overtook religious publishing during the second half of the century. Appendix A; Table 1 offers a summary of over three hundred women who worked in the London book trades during the period. This summary supports the established view that the vast majority of women present in the London book trade after 1730 were restricted to work in retail book sales. It established, however, that, of the thirty-four most productive women after this date, five of the leading eleven were booksellers who specialised in printing, selling and disseminating religious texts for nonconformists and Evangelicals. By focusing on these five women, this thesis has argued that their occupations flourished primarily because of their connection to Protestant dissenting communities in London during the eighteenth century.

Four case studies have been presented that reveal in detail the working practices of Tace Sowle, Mary Fenner/Waugh, Mary Lewis, Martha Trapp/Priestley and Martha Gurney, and their relationships with those nonconformist communities. Reconstructing these women's careers from various archival and book trade sources and databases has demonstrated that their connection to dissent was fundamental to their career success, as well as being central to their religious values. The findings also sought to discover whether nonconformist loyalty towards their women booksellers reflected enlightened attitudes to universal equality. This has been difficult to substantiate, because of the lack of evidence; however, there is sufficient evidence to show that these women enjoyed close friendships with, and loyalty from, individual nonconformist authors and denominations. Likewise, there is no question that, for these women booksellers, their nonconformist communities, comprised as they were of individual family members, book trade colleagues, authors, congregations, and others whose religious beliefs tendentiously aligned with their own, were a substantial force for textual production and career longevity. The roles of individuals in these communities frequently overlapped and were interconnected. Family members were often nonconformist printers and booksellers. Nonconformists were present in most categories identified in the feedback circuit of Robert Darnton's communications theory for textual production, which included authors, publishers, printers, pressmen, compositors, warehousemen, booksellers, and readers. In addition to fulfilling these roles, nonconformists, particularly widows and subscribers, helped finance literary production and printing businesses.

Authors were often close friends of the booksellers, as were ministers or members of their congregations or denominations. The theory of Communitarianism, which emphasises the how the bonds of community could support productive forces

was useful in understanding their contribution to literary production. Often, personal relationships between booksellers and nonconformist individuals were longstanding. Mary Fenner was described as excellent by Philip Doddridge, who enjoyed her hospitality on his extended visits to London. John Wilson, Mary Fenner's business partner, described her as his dearest and most kind friend. Mary Lewis's relationship with the Moravians was the result of heartfelt and consistent requests to join them. Moravian elders took a paternalistic role in the lives of both Mary and Martha, describing Mary, when she died, as the oldest member of their congregation who was a child of God and follower of Jesus. Martha Gurney, like her brother, Joseph, was born into a Calvinist Baptist family and remained a Baptist. She was also held in high regard by Quakers, who valued her as a coadjutor in her support of abolition. Likewise, her relationship with William Fox appears mutually supportive and close, as they shared not only premises but also a common quest to help end the Atlantic slave trade. These women were held in high regard by their authors and enjoyed loyalty from their religious and book trade communities. The nonconformist community developed and supported a textual culture within which these women facilitated dissenters' participation in the literary marketplace.

Collectively, these five women's activities span the period 1691, the date when Tace Sowle took over her father's business, until 1806 when Martha Gurney advertised her last title. Their careers overlapped each generation. There was more than a century between the start of Tace Sowle's career and the end of that of Martha Gurney. The case studies have revealed characteristics and attributes that were common to all five. They possessed professional skills and access to property in locations within the central book trade area of London. They were not formally educated, although they displayed a relatively high standard of literacy. Their affiliation to the Stationers' Company allowed

them status as *feme sole* operators. Their families provided informal apprenticeships, access to property, and succession businesses for their work to continue. Tace Sowle's parents trained her in compositing skills and she inherited the business while her father was still alive. She in turn apprenticed her nephew, who became her business partner, and he inherited the business on her death, thus securing its succession. Likewise, Mary Fenner's skills were learnt in her family's bookselling business in Gracechurch Street before she married. She returned to the business when widowed and supervised the apprenticeship of her son, who worked alongside her. Mary Lewis was most likely trained by her husband and in turn trained her daughter, Martha. Her daughter and son-in-law, who had also been her apprentice, took over the business until Martha inherited it after Henry Trapp's death. This business was located at a prestigious address in Paternoster Row, at the heart of the London book trade. It is unclear where Martha Gurney learned her profession, although it is most likely that her brother, who had been apprenticed to the Stationers' Company and worked as a bookseller himself prior to his occupation as a stenographer, taught her the skills necessary to publish and organise mass distributions of campaigning pamphlets. She was the only woman amongst this cohort who founded her bookselling business independently.

The occupations of Tace Sowle, Mary Fenner, Mary Lewis, Martha Trapp, and Martha Gurney could be understood in terms of individual expressions of lived religion. At the same time, this study has traced wider economic, socio-political, geographical, religious and legislative factors that influenced their work. Like all booksellers, they benefitted from an expanding, literate, middle-class society and legislative changes that enabled a free press and religious toleration. Other significant influences were the Evangelical Revival from the 1730s, and the climate for social reform, including the abolition of the slave trade, during the last quarter of the century.

Their working practices responded to the requirements of their nonconformist denomination or authors. With over seven hundred titles to her name and over fifty years as their publisher, Tace Sowle was the major contributor to Quaker publishing. Her career was supported by her publishing committee, the Second Day Morning Meeting, who authorised and funded the texts she produced. She demonstrated great energy and business acumen at the start of her career while benefitting from the Quakers' extensive distribution network, which ensured a stable market for her publications. Sowle took charge of all the logistical elements to their book production including warehousing and shipping. With no need to offset financial risk, she shared few imprints with other printers or booksellers, other than members of her own family. Nor did she need to advertise widely. She was able to retain publishing autonomy of the family business, even whilst married to Thomas Raylton, a Quaker minister. From the start of her career, Tace Sowle occasionally advised the Second Day Morning committee on texts that she thought suitable for reprinting. She married twenty years after her solo career began. Her husband's later role as a member of the Second Day Morning committee most likely benefitted her continued status as Quaker publisher, since her position was never challenged. A business partnership with her great nephew, Luke Hinde, secured her legacy into the nineteenth century.

Mary Fenner published seventy-three religious titles under her own M. Fenner or M. Waugh imprints but a further four hundred titles that show James Waugh's name on imprint pages, a practice which conformed to Stationers' Company rules. Hers is the only example in this cohort of women which experienced working with Anglicans in business. As a young widow, Mary Fenner had fought to salvage her family's financial investment in her husband's experimental printing enterprise. Mary's may have been an exceptionally unfortunate encounter with a disgruntled member of the Anglican

establishment whom she was unable to convince to continue the enterprise with her. John James' objections were personal, insulting and uncompromising, leaving her with no choice but to surrender the lease on the Cambridge premises and the contract with the university. Her subsequent printing and bookselling business in London, however, was supported by nonconformists, including her business partner John Wilson, a Baptist, and Philip Doddridge, the leading Independent minister, author and academy tutor. These individuals, together with a cohort of dissenting authors, subscribers and readers, were central to the recovery of her fortunes. Following Wilson's death, she operated alone for several years, publishing exclusively titles by nonconformist authors. Her business utilised commercial business practices. Most of Doddridge's works were published from the Turk's Head in Gracechurch Street during his lifetime. She advertised widely in the London and countrywide press. During pre-publication of some works, she was involved with raising subscriptions for titles through extensive advertising. Her name reappeared on imprints as 'M Waugh' after James Waugh's death in 1767, but she had always remained the printer in the family business throughout her second marriage.

With over four hundred titles or editions between them, Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp were significant contributors to Evangelical and Moravian publishing from 1755 to 1796. The Moravians were at the heart of the Evangelical Revival in London. Mary Lewis made a significant contribution to the family business throughout her marriage. In turn, her daughter, Martha Trapp, inherited the same business from her husband. Mary Lewis and Martha Trapp published many short titles in addition to longer translations of Moravian texts and prestigious works by other Evangelical writers. They too used the press to advertise their publications. Annual reprints of John Cennick's sermons were a source of regular income. The women's relationship with the United

Brethren was profound, although sometimes sporadic, as the demands of Moravian rules meant Mary and Martha often adapted their denominational loyalties to their family circumstances. Both their husbands' personal shortcomings required the women to operate their businesses alone for substantial periods before they inherited them as widows. Mary Lewis published 337 works, 227 of which designate her as the sole bookseller. Some controversial titles that she published would have most likely appealed to a wider readership than her immediate community because of their scandalous topics. Charles Bradbury's autobiographical defence against accusations of homosexual behaviour were an example of such titles, as were those she published for James Rely, another divisive figure, accused of antinomianism. Her reasons for publishing this controversial material are impossible to know, but may have been due to sympathetic religious convictions, economic necessity, or personal loyalty to her authors. While Mary Lewis remained a member of the Moravian congregation until her death, Martha's membership finally ended on her second marriage to the Independent minister, Timothy Priestley, in 1796, and she handed the business to her son-in-law and daughter, Vaughan Griffiths shortly after.

The work of the Baptist bookseller, Martha Gurney, has the strongest claim to have contributed to the political sphere. She remained a Baptist throughout her life. Her name appears on 130 imprints, mostly alongside other nonconformist booksellers, who formed a supportive professional community for her publishing career. Her career was also supported by revenue from her family's shorthand primer, *Brachygraphy*, and her brother's transcripts of state trials and parliamentary debates. As a seller of Bibles and books of divinity she was esteemed as a knowledgeable, well-read woman and retail bookseller. Between 1791 and 1794, she was the predominant trade bookseller of titles by William Fox, her business partner, for which she used complex methods of mass

distribution. Her participation in controversial debate is shown mainly through this production of Fox's pamphlets. Together with Martha Trapp, and others, however, she contributed as a bookseller to texts by Maria de Fleury that criticised the views of the controversial evangelical minister, William Huntingdon. Martha Gurney's first title supporting the abolition of the Slave Trade was published in 1788. This was the sermon written and delivered at Maze Pond by her minister, James Dore. From then, she became the leading woman publisher of anti-slave trade literature, working alongside other abolitionists, primarily Quakers. She distributed many tens of thousands of pamphlets in support of this nationwide campaign. Fox's *An Address to the People of Great Britain*, which called for a national boycott of buying West Indian sugar and rum, was produced for mass distribution rather than profit, reflecting Martha Gurney's belief in the cause of universal liberty, ideals expressed by her minister, James Dore, in his sermon. In distributing these pamphlets, Martha Gurney contributed significantly to a major political cause.

Religious debate was the precursor to political debate. The literary culture that nonconformists created, and the logistical conditions in which these women operated, enabled their careers to thrive as they published religious texts and some secular titles. A few of their publications reflected the activities in trade and science that nonconformists pursued. There was much overlap between topics — religious, moral, political, and so on — but their output was primarily religious. Tace Sowle's output, in her first few years, was interspersed with titles relating to philosophy, medicine and trade. She also published texts that called for the reform of laws requiring Quakers to pay tithes. Mary Fenner's published texts consisted entirely of religious titles before and after Waugh's name appeared on the Turk's Head imprints. Mary Lewis published very few secular titles. These were restricted to some medical texts and confessional

accounts of ‘malefactors’ supplied by the Ordinary of Newgate, the chaplain of Newgate prison. Of this cohort of women booksellers, Martha Gurney published the largest number of non-religious titles, including four reprints of *Brachygraphy*, twenty-two accounts of trials, and the sixteen pamphlets written by Fox.

The case studies of these women booksellers respond to Amanda Vickery’s call for examples of women whose economic, roles and preoccupations highlight the shortcomings of theories concerned with gender. These women were certainly not drained of economic purpose and public responsibility or in need of masculine protection. The opposite appears to have been the case, since these women supported their husbands, their male authors and other booksellers, and often used their skills to maintain their businesses in the absence of male family members. Neither did they fulfil a caretaker role as widows, by awaiting a son or male relative to take over. They supervised their apprentices, utilised their skills, adapted their working practices, and successfully operated their publishing businesses for their entire working lives.

There were other women who also operated independently in the luxury goods trade around Cheapside, in the same area of London, but these traders did not participate in influencing public opinion, since their work did not contribute to the literary sphere. While they may have enjoyed similar agency and even economic security, their contribution was not dependent on the dissemination of beliefs or ideas. That is not to deny that other women, particularly those involved with religious missions, impacted their religious denominations and wider communities. Women booksellers, however, represent a special case; they enjoyed direct access to readers through their logistical contribution to the literary sphere.

Active engagement at a personal and logistical level with nonconformist religious leaders, congregations, authors, readers, family members, and other book trade

professionals immersed these women in their trade and their nonconformist religion alike. Through this connection, they were able to build and sustain long and successful careers. Communitarianism, a twentieth century theory formulated to explain the influence of a community on a person's social identity, is particularly relevant in understanding these women's success. For Martha Gurney, in particular, relationships with a community who shared her fervour for a humanitarian cause was life changing. It gave impetus to her work, changing her occupation from the sales of court records, shorthand primers, Bibles and books of divinity, to undertaking the mass production, sales and distribution nationwide of campaigning abolition literature.

These relationships enabled these women to contribute to the literary and public spheres through their extensive publishing activity. Their activities demand a qualification to Habermas's view that women took only a limited role in the literary sphere and that women and religion had no role at all in contributing to the public and political spheres. This study has demonstrated that the exceptional contribution to publishing by nonconformist women booksellers impacted not only the literary sphere, but also the public, and in some instances, the political sphere.

Appendix A: Table 2 Summary of Women Active in the London Print Trades

1701–1800: Explanatory Notes

Table 2 has been compiled by interrogating a number of sources, including: The British Book Trade Index (BBTI), which itself is compiled from an extensive list of sources; the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC); the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (*ODNB*); Ian Maxted, *Exeter Working Papers in British Book Trade History*; D.F. McKenzie, *Stationers' Company Apprentices 1701–1800*; H. R. Plomer, *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers Who Were at Work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1726 to 1775*; McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street*; Hannah Barker, 'Women, Work and the Industrial Revolution'; and other individual commentators whose names are cited within individual entries and this thesis.

Contemporary databases list only what is extant today. They can provide just an indication of the total number of titles produced, since it is likely that many titles do not survive. High-quality publications are more likely to have survived because of their value rather than pamphlets or poorly produced popular titles which, despite their greater numbers, would have been more susceptible to deterioration or disposal. Many women are known to have been 'masters' of apprentices, their high status, however, is not always reflected in the numbers of imprints attributed to them. Women's names were cross checked with the ESTC and titles counted. Titles listed on ESTC offer an approximate indication of comparative outputs. Where the ESTC has listed only one or two titles for a woman bookseller, I have included the titles themselves within the table. Due to the limitations of the tabular format, I have not been able to list all the titles of more prolific producers. However, I have included references to the sources, enabling future researchers to undertake their own search to locate these titles.

List of Abbreviations and other Anomalies.

Italics denote entries for women who are listed on McKenzie's record as Stationers' Company apprentices, but who were not printers.

ND = No date; i.e., dates are unknown or cannot be ascertained.

NT = Not traceable; i.e., there are no titles or apprentices traceable to the subject who appears on the ESTC database.

NR = No record of the address.

Note from the author.

I make no claim that this database is the ultimate definitive list of women in the print trade throughout the eighteenth century. It is a record of all those involved as printers or sellers that have come to my attention and/or who have been documented by previous researchers. Throughout my research when I have occasionally discovered names of women not previously recorded on imprint pages as booksellers I have added them to this Appendix. In pursuit of this aim I searched the ESTC for the terms 'Mrs' or 'Widow' although these terms are not often used on imprint pages. This returned a few names that were unaccounted for. I also looked for women booksellers who may have used common Christian names, such as Mary, Martha, Maria, Hannah, Elizabeth, and others. This random method did occasionally uncover records of women booksellers not otherwise recorded. This method cannot claim to be scientific or complete. It represents my best efforts.

My aim in reproducing this database, therefore, in addition to it having been an invaluable resource for my own research, is that it may possibly be a useful resource for subsequent researchers who may use it as a starting point to their own research.

Table 2: Summary of Women Active in the London Print Trades 1680–1800.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1799–1809	Mrs Jane	Aldridge	1	NT	Librarian Circulating Library, Wood Square	Maxted. Title: <i>Chymical Experiments on the Barnet Well Water</i> , by Reverend William Martin Trinder M.D.
1752	Anne	Allen	NT	1	Southwark	McKenzie.
1743–1747	Mrs	Amey	3	NT	Over against Craig’s Court, near Charing Cross	ESTC & Plomer. Widow(?) of Robert Amey (active 1733–1753), who was also situated in the Court of Requests (eighteenth-century small claims court) and who she met in the Guildhall.
1754–1761	Mrs	Andrews	2	NT	Pamphlet Shop, The Sign of the Kings Speech (1754–1758), over against the Admiralty	ESTC & BBTL. Publisher of <i>The Evening Advertiser</i> .
1682(?)– 1697(?)	Elizabeth	Annesley	NT	NT	NR	ESTC & BBTL. Titles included: <i>The Life and Errors of John Dunton Citizen of London</i> , by John Dunton.
1735	Eleanor	Arnold	NT	1	Tower Hill	McKenzie. Apprentice: Jeremiah Liddell.
1747–1755	Mrs	Ashburn	7	NT	China Shop, on the corner of Fleet Ditch	ESTC & BBTL. Titles included: <i>The Art of Cookery, Made Plain and Easy, Which Far Exceeds Anything of the Kind Ever Yet Published</i> .
1701–1715	Elizabeth	Astley	NT	2	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: William Arnold & Rebecca Armstead.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1751–1757	Anna	Bagshaw	NT	1	Gracechurch Street	McKenzie.
1764–1797	Mrs Elizabeth (Betty)	Bailey	6	NT	Printing Office, The Ship and Crown, 41 Leadenhall Street	ESTC & BBTI. Elizabeth Bailey was active after her husband Thomas Bailey's death (December 1764) until the entry of her son(?) into the business (June 1767). See Garvey, <i>A Dynasty on the Margins of the Trade</i> .
1797	Susan	Bailey	NT	2	Bishopsgate	McKenzie. Apprentices: Thomas Dean & William Tatum.
1724	Mrs	Baker	1	NT	NR	ESTC. Title: <i>A Practical Treatise: or, Second Thoughts on the Consequences of the Venereal Disease</i> (1743), by Joseph Cam M.D and published with G. Strahan, W Mears & C. King.
1759–1762	Elizabeth	Bakewell	10	NT	Opposite Burchin Lane, Cornhill	Plomer & ESTC. Partner of H. Parker, widow of Thomas Bakewell. Titles included architectural and historical texts, currency tables, and the King's speeches. Also sold in conjunction with Bible and Crow, near Chancery Lane.
1698–1713	Mrs Ann/Abigail	Baldwin (née Mulford)	1000 approx.	NT	Black Bull (before 1699), the Old Bailey & Oxford Arms (after 1699), Warwick Lane	<i>ODNB</i> . Baptized as Abigail (1658) but identical with Ann Baldwin. Different sources give different names. Published under the imprint A. Baldwin. Widow and successor to Richard Baldwin (1698). Continued to run their flourishing business after her husband's death. Possibly related to E. Baldwin at the same address. Succeeded by her son-in-law James Roberts (1713). The business continued under Roberts for a further forty-one years.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Whig publisher. Remembered by Dunton for her remarkable bookkeeping skills. Titles included treatises on issues such as social welfare and the standing army, pamphlets by Whig authors including Defoe, anti-Quaker works, and periodicals which ranged from the economic journal the British Merchant of Commerce Preserved to the notorious Female Tatler.
1791	Sarah	Barnard	NT	3	Mitre Court Fleet Street	McKenzie. Apprentices: Edward Beard, Thomas Sloane & Robert Stephenson.
1788	Mrs Maria	Barrell	1	NT	No. 16, 4 King's Bench	ESTC. Author as well as bookseller. Title: <i>British Liberty Vindicated; or, A Delineation of the King's Bench</i> , by Maria Barrell.
1728	Ann	Barrett	NT	1	NR	McKenzie.
1753	Mrs	Barry	1	NT	Prujean Court, the Old Bailey	ESTC. Bookseller to the Queen. Sold with P. Elmsley.
1739–1741	Mrs	Bartlett	NT	NT	The Royal Exchange, Cornhill	BBTI. Titles included books and pamphlets. Shared imprint with Mrs A. Dodd, Mrs Cook & Mrs Nutt.
1719–1735	Sarah	Bates	34	NT	The Bible & Sun, Giltspur Street, near Pye	ESTC, BBTI & Plomer. Widow of Charles Bates, partner of Hannah Tracy (1720). Bookbinder as well as bookseller. Titles included cookbooks, ballads and chapbooks.
1721–1741	Grace	Batley	NT	NT	Paternoster Row	BBTI. Widow to Jeremiah Batley. No ESTC entries for Grace Batley, although over 360 entries for Jeremiah Batley.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1709	Susannah	Battersby	NT	4	NR	McKenzie.
1691–1709	Margaret	Bennett	8	4	Bloomsbury Market	McKenzie & BBTI. Widow to Joseph Bennet (1692). Bound to Abraham Miller. Catholic printer. Seven apprentices, although only four listed in Stationers' Company records.
1696–1707, 1721 & 1725	Mrs	Billingsley	2	NT	Printing Press, near the Royal Exchange, Cornhill	ESTC & BBTI. Wife and successor to Benjamin Billingsley. Managed the business during her husband's mental illness. Only two imprints under M. Billingsley, but she presumably published more using her husband's imprint B. Billingsley, as he was ill rather than dead. Titles included histories, such as: <i>The Case of the Citizens and Shop-keepers of London, With Respect to the Pedlars within this City, and the Several Markets Thereof; As It Was, By A Great Number of Citizens, Presented to the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen & The Presentment of the Grand Jury for the City of London, of the Abuses Committed by the Farmers of the Markets.</i>
1804–1813	Elizabeth	Blackadder	NT	NT	10 Took's Court, Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane	BBTI. Widow(?) of Walter Blackadder.
1762	Margaret	Bland		1	NR	McKenzie. Milliner.
1706–1727	Rebecca	Bonwick(e)	65	2	Red Lion, St Paul's Churchyard	ESTC, BBTI & Plomer. Widow of Henry Bonwick, partner to James Bonwick. Leading member of Printing Conger (c. 1706–1719).
1794–1800	Mrs E.	Booker	36	NT	56 New Bond Street	ESTC.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Stationer, bookbinder, map and chart seller and engraver/etcher as well as bookseller.
1713–1716	Anne	Boulter	63	NT	The Buck and London, Temple Bar Without	ESTC & BBTI. Titles included poetry and sermons.
1714–1725	Mrs S.	Boulter	12	NT	Next to Old Man's Coffee House, Charing Cross	ESTC.
ND	Mrs	Braggs	1	NT	Over against the Crown, Prince's Street, Drury Lane	ESTC. Title: <i>The Gotham Swan: or, The Rook's Flight from Gravesend & Being the Remarkable Case of Sherwin and His Wife Written by Himself: In Vindication of their Innocent and Wrongful Sufferings by the False Accusations of Thomas Goodman of West-Smithfield, and the Horrible Contrivances of William Silver, Innkeeper, Constable, and Post-Master of Gravesend.</i>
1817–1824	Mrs	Bridges	NT	NT	104 St John's Street, West Smithfield	ESTC, BBTI & Maxted. Traded as William Bridges (1790–1805), Henry Bridges (1804–1820) & Mrs Bridges (1821–1824).
1736–1758	Mrs	Brindley	2	NT	NR	ESTC & Plomer. Widow(?) of J. Brindley.
1774–1804	Elizabeth	Brooke	2	NT	11 Little Eastcheap, near the Monument	BBTI.
1799–1811	Mary	Brooke	NT	NT	35 Paternoster Row	BBTI. Partner and/or successor to Thomas Brooke.
1762	Elizabeth	Brown(e)	NT	1	NR	McKenzie.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Turned over John Browne to William Carter.
1777–1778(?)	Hannah	Browning	NT	2	Little Carter Lane, Doctors' Commons	McKenzie.
1703	Susan	Brundell	NT	2	NR	McKenzie.
1744	Sarah	Buck	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: James Buck (freed by redemption).
1759	Ann	Bunker	NT	2	NR	McKenzie.
1758	Mrs	Burnet	NT	NT	NR	ESTC. Sold with Mrs Cooper & Mr Brindley.
1763	Ann	Burton	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. James Daly turned over to her.
1763–1778	<i>Margaret</i>	<i>Bush</i>		5	NR	<i>McKenzie.</i> <i>Mathematical Instrument Maker, Amen Corner.</i>
1750	Mrs	Butlers	NT	NT	Nags Head Court, Gracechurch Street	BBTI.
1798–1811	Mary	Callard	NT	NT	2 Norris Street, Haymarket	BBTI. Related(?) to Susan Callard. Stationer as well as bookseller.
1771	<i>Susannah</i>	<i>Capon</i>		1	NR	<i>McKenzie.</i> <i>Milliner.</i>
1771	Mrs	Carringtons	2	NT	NR	ESTC.
1733	<i>Mary</i>	<i>Carter</i>		3	NR	<i>McKenzie.</i> <i>Mathematical Instrument Maker, Clement Danes.</i>
1705	Elizabeth	Cater	NT	2	NR	McKenzie.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Apprentices: Elizabeth Cater & Elizabeth Lowthe (freed 1705).
1780–1821	Joyce	Chalmers	NT	NT	NR	BBTI & Maxted. Stationer.
1781–1785	Elizabeth	Chapman	NT	NT	29 Greenhills Rents	BBTI. Pocket book maker.
1733–1738	Ruth	Charlton	7	NT	At her house at the corner of Milford Lane, The Strand and Sweetings Alley, near the Royal Exchange, Cornhill	ESTC. Pamphlet seller as well as bookseller. Shared imprints with Mrs Nutt, Mrs Cook, Mrs Dodd, Mr Slow & Mr Taylor.
1756(?)/ 1772(?)/ 1758(?)	Margaret	Chastel	1	NT	Golden Bible, Compton Street, Soho	BBTI & Maxted. Related(?) to Moses Castel. Sold French texts with J. Marshall. My enquiries suggest dates active 1756, while BBTI lists 1772, and Maxted indicates 1758.
1772	Mary	Chater	3	NT	40 King Street, Cheapside	BBTI.
1685	Tace	Cheese	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Tace Sowle's aunt. Apprentices: Edward Saunders freed by Tace Sowle 1701.
1695–173	Hannah	Clark(e)	1	12	Thames Street	McKenzie. Also see Treadwell, 'Lists of Master Printers'. Dates active unclear; one title in 1705 not found, one in 1795 found.
ND	Mary	Clarke	NT	1	NR	McKenzie.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Apprentice: Benjamin Benbow.
1727	Sarah	Clements	1	NT	NR	ESTC.
1791	Hannah	Close	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: John Samuel Close, her son(?).
1755	Mrs	Collier	1	NT	The Royal Exchange, Cornhill	ESTC.
1802–1815	Anne	Collins	NT	NT	20 Change Alley	BBTI. Successor to William Collins.
1710–1717	Susannah	Collins	NT	5	NR	McKenzie.
1732	Elizabeth	Colston	NT	1	Cripplegate	McKenzie.
1740	Elizabeth	Coltman	NT	1	NR	McKenzie.
ND	Mrs	Condall	3	NT	Toy shop	ESTC. Titles included: <i>The Art of Cookery</i> , by Hannah Glasse.
1731–1766	Mrs E.	Cook(e)	43	NT	The Royal Exchange, Cornhill	BBTI, Plomer & Maxted. Publisher and pamphlets seller as well as bookseller. Shared imprints with Ruth Charlton, Mrs Dodd & Mrs Nutt.
1779	Mary	Cooke	NT	2	NR	McKenzie.
1752–1776	Mrs S.	Cooke	25	NT	The Royal Exchange, Cornhill	ESTC. Daughter-in-law or daughter of Mrs Cooke.
1736–1761	Mary	Cooper	2700	0	Globe, Ivy Lane, 8 Paternoster Row	BBTI. Widow and successor to Thomas, partner with C. Hitch (1744). Succeeded by John Hinxman of York. See Schneller, 'John Hill and Mary Cooper'.
1771	Mrs	Corbet	1	NT	Book Street, Hatton Garden	ESTC.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Title: <i>The Impossibility of Possessing Gospel Happiness, Without the Internal Principle of Gospel Holiness, and Entire Submission to Its Heavenly Doctrines, and the Rational Precepts of Christ Jesus</i> (1771), by Reverend Thomas Smith, Reader at the Rolls Chapel and supported by the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers.
1783–1794	Ann	Crowther	NT	2	Queens Head Court, Paternoster Row	McKenzie.
1764–1766	Mary	Crump	NT	1	NR	McKenzie.
1704	Mary	Curtis	NT	1	NR	McKenzie.
1716–1721	Mary	Dalton	NT	NT	NR	Wife of Isaac Dalton. Imprisoned in Newgate (1721). See Bell, 'A Dictionary of Women in the London Book Trade, 1540–1730'.
1701	Sarah	Darker	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: John Darker.
1762–1781	Mary	Darly	NT	NT	Near Leicester Fields or The Sign of the Acorn, Charing Cross and Fleet Street or 39 The Strand	BBTI & ESTC. Printseller. Titles included: <i>A Political and Satirical History Displaying the Unhappy Influence of Scotch Prevalency [sic]</i> (1761, 1762 & 1763).
1779–1783	Mrs Mary	Davenhill	20	NT	13 Cornhill (1779–1780) & 30 Cornhill (1780–1783)	BBTI. Widow and successor to William Davenhill.
1787	Mrs M.	Davenport	1	NT	Chelsea	ESTC.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1780–1792	Mary	Davis	NT	NT	50 Corner Sackville Street, Piccadilly (c. 1780–1786)	BBTI. Successor to William Davis, partner to Robert Davies (c. 1780).
ND	Mrs	Dee	1	NT	35 Charles Street, Horse-Lye-Down	ESTC. Title: <i>Poems, Occasioned by the Confinement and Acquittal of the Right Honourable Lord George Gordon, President of the Protestant Association</i> , by Maria De Fleury.
1766	Elizabeth	Denham	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: Nathaniel Denham.
1770–1778	Mrs H.	Denoyer	2	NT	Lisle Street, Leicester Fields	ESTC & BBTI. Titles included: <i>Almeria: or, Parental Advice: A Didactic Poem Addressed to the Daughters of Great Britain and Ireland</i> , by Mrs Cutts.
1712–1739	Anne	Dodd	700 approx.	NT	The Peacock, Temple Bar Without, near Essex Street, The Strand	Plomer & BBTI. See also Bell, 'A Dictionary of Women in the London Book Trade, 1540–1730'. Daughter of Joseph Bliss, printer of Exeter, and wife of Mr Dodd. Employed by Thomas Gent. Active later in life (lived 1685–1739). Succeeded by daughter Mrs Anne Dodd II. Pamphlet seller.
1739–1756	Mrs Ann II	Dodd	200 approx.	NT	The Peacock, Temple Bar Without, near Essex Street, The Strand	BBTI & ESTC. Successor to Mrs Ann Dodd I. Distributor of newspapers and pamphlets.
1707	Margaret	Downes	NT	NT	NR	McKenzie. Freed by patrimony.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1797–1721	Anne	Downing	NT	2	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: William Roberts & William Downing (freed).
1734–1753	Martha	Downing	155	1	Bartholomew Close	Plomer, ESTC & BBTI. Also see <i>ODNB</i> entry for Joseph Downing (1676–1734) and Rivers, <i>Vanity Fair and the Celestial City</i> . Widow of Joseph Downing. Printer as well as bookseller and reprinted many of Joseph's earlier titles. Titles included Church of England and Protestant sermons, devotional exercises, and Society for Reformation of Manners and Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge prints.
1772–1785	Mrs Henrietta	Du Noyer	6	NT	Haymarket	BBTI. Widow(?) of Peter Dunoyer.
ND	Mrs	Du Prés	1	NT	Millinery Shop, Ship Street	ESTC. Title: <i>The Brightelston Directory</i> .
ND	Mrs	Dyers	1	NT	Toy shop, Leicester Fields	ESTC. Printed fables in verse.
1780	Mary	Dymott	NT	2	Stand and Warwick Court	McKenzie.
1781	Mary	Earle	NT	NT	NR	McKenzie. Freed by patrimony.
1696–1723	Mary	Edwards	4	NT	Nevils Alley, Fetter Lane	ESTC & Plomer. Wife of David Edwards. Freed an apprentice (1723).
1764	Mrs	Englefields	1	NT	The Bible, West Street	ESTC.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Title: <i>A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley</i> , by Mary Fletcher.
1775–1779	Mary	Farlow	NT	2	Mitre Court, Fleet Street	McKenzie.
1688–1691	Mrs	Feltham	5	NT	Westminster Hall	ESTC. Titles included: <i>Mr Tho. Hicks: His Last Legacy to the Quakers Wherein their Erroneous Principles are Detected</i> , printed for William Whitwood, Duck Lane.
1734–1757	Mary	Fenner	73	1	Turk's Head	BBTI, ESTC, Plomer, McKenzie & Black. One title in Cambridge and sixty-four in London as M. Fenner (1741–1744). More titles as M. Waugh (see below). Subject of case study in this thesis.
1768–1821	Elizabeth	Fielder	0	5	26 Cornhill, 53 Old Broad Street & 82 Old Broad St	BBTI. Also see William B., <i>A Directory of Printers and Others in Allied Trades</i> . Married William Fielder, successor to William Mason, partner to Thomas Fielder. Registered Press with Charles Philip & William John Galabin.
1793	Mary	Flavell	NT	2	Shoe Lane, St Bride's	McKenzie.
1768–1790	Margaret/Mary	Follingsby	12	NT	4 Fleet Street, near Temple Bar	ESTC.
1737	Alice	Foster		2	Watling Street	McKenzie. Milliner.
1756	1756	Freeman	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: Rebecca Freeman, daughter(?).
1763–1768	Mrs	Gardiner	3	NT	Gracechurch Street	ESTC.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1715–1728	Mrs	Garways	27	NT	Mrs Garway's shop, the Royal Exchange, Cornhill	ESTC. Titles included: <i>The Practical Scheme of the Secret Disease: A Gleet and a Broken Constitution, Caused by Fast Living, Former Cures, Salvations, Taking of Mercury, Self-abuse & Shewing To Those Who Want a Cure of Either the Venereal Distemper, or A Gleet, What Will Best Do It & To Those Who are Already Under Cure, How They May So Shorten It, As That Their Doctor Shall Cure Them of Their Gleet, or of the Venereal Distemper, In (Very Often) Less Than a Quarter of the Time, That They Might Otherwise Be, If They Had Never Seen this Scheme</i> , approved by Dr. Chamberlen and given gratis.
1720	Sarah	Gathorne	NT	1	Fleet Street	McKenzie.
1738	Rebecca	Gibbs	NT	3	Printing House Yard	McKenzie.
1767	Ann	Gilbert	NT	2	Leadenhall Street	McKenzie.
1725	Hannah	Gray	NT	1	St Paul's Churchyard	McKenzie.
1710	Elizabeth	Grover	NT	4	Aldersgate St, next to the Ball	McKenzie.
1770–1805	Martha	Gurney	130	NT	128 Holburn Hill & 34 Bell Yard, Temple Bar, or Leather Lane	ESTC. Daughter of Thomas Gurney, sister of Joseph Gurney. Seller of Abolitionist and controversial pamphlets by William Fox and Maria de Fleury. See Whelan, 'William Fox, Martha Gurney, and Radical Discourse in the 1790s', and subject of case study in this thesis.
1785	Mary	Gurr		1	NR	McKenzie. Milliner.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						<i>Apprentice: Catherine Milward.</i>
1768	Sarah	Hadley	NT	1	Ludgate Street	McKenzie.
1790	Mrs	Hancock	1	NT	NR	ESTC.
1763–1767	Elizabeth	Hands	NT	5	Old Nichol Street Shoreditch, Bethnal Green	McKenzie.
1786–1804	Sarah	Hardy	1	NT	NR	BBTI. Successor to Henry Hardy (bankrupt). Playing card printer.
1783	Mrs	Hardy	1	NT	Hatter and Hosier	ESTC. Title: <i>Necessary for all Christians</i> , by Samuel Hardy (husband).
1787–1796	Elizabeth	Harlow	31	NT	76 St James' Street, 46 Pall Mall	ESTC & BBTI. Widow and successor to George Harlow(e). Bankrupted 2 July 1796. Bookseller to the Queen (1793–1796). Titles included novels by Eliza Parsons and publications in French, such as <i>View of La Guillotine: or, The Modern Beheading Machine of the French Revolutionary Material</i> , by Maurice Montgaillard. Shared imprints with William Lane of Minerva Press.
1752	Ann	Harper	NT	NT	NR	McKenzie. Freed by patrimony.
1699–1711	Elizabeth	Harris	8	1	Harrow, Little Britain	ESTC & McKenzie. Widow of John Harris.
1708	Priscilla	Harris	NT	NT	NR	McKenzie.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1769–1781	Mary	Harrison	18	8	Stationers Court, 2 Red Lion Court, Fleet Street	ESTC & McKenzie. Mistress of eight apprentices, including her own son. Widow of James Harrison I, partner to William Thorn, succeeded by son, James Harrison II. Apprentices: Francis Goodman, William Harrison, John Jenkins, Robert Ravenscroft, James Reed, Margaret Reed, Thomas Rowney & William Thorn.
1730	Sarah	Harvey	NT	1	Middle Temple	McKenzie. Apprentice: James Buck.
1767	Hannah	Hatwell	NT	1	Newgate Street	McKenzie.
1802–1805	Mrs	Hayes	1	NT	50 Sloane Street, (1802) & 50 Sloane Square, Chelsea (1805)	ESTC. Librarian and owner of circulating library.
1778	Mrs	Hayes	1	NT	Vauxhall Road, opposite Chester Place	ESTC. Title: <i>Heaven Open to All Men</i> .
1744	Mrs	Haywood	1	NT	Great Piazza, Covent Garden	ESTC. Printed with Mrs Nut & Mrs Cooke.
1694–1712	Mary	Head	NT	4	NR	McKenzie. Four apprentices turned over to her.
1770	Martha	Hearn	NT	1	Wood Street	McKenzie. One apprentice turned over to her.
1723	Katharine	Heathcote	NT	4	Baldwin Gardens	McKenzie & BBTI. Widow of William Heathcote (active 1714–1717). Apprentices: Samuel Bagnell, John Dillow, Katharine Heathcote (freed by patrimony) & William Webb.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1736	1736	Henvell		1	The Old Bailey	McKenzie. Linen draper.
1760–1774	Mary	Hinde/Hunde	65	NT	George Yard, Lombard Street	Maxted, BBTI, ESTC & ECCO. Widow of Luke Hinde, who was successor to Tace Sowle, her great nephew. Succeeded by James Phillips. Quaker and Abolitionist publisher.
1761–1764	Jane	Hinxman	82	NT	Paternoster Row, The Globe	ESTC. Titles included Anglican texts and plays.
1768 & 1772	Mrs	Hogarth	2	NT	At her house in Leicester Fields	ESTC. William Hogarth's widow. Titles: <i>Hogarth Moralised, Being a Complete Edition of Hogarth's Works, Containing Near Fourscore Copper-plates, Most Elegantly Engraved, With An Explanation, Pointing Out the Many Beauties that May Have Hitherto Escaped Notice; And A Comment on their Moral Tendency, Calculated to Improve the Minds of Youth, and Convey Instruction, Under the Mask of Entertainment</i> , printed by W Strahan & <i>The Analysis of Beauty</i> , by William Hogarth and with the approbation of Jane Hogarth.
1747	Rebecca	Holmes	NT	1	Cornhill	McKenzie.
1707	Elizabeth	Holt	17	1	NR	McKenzie & ESTC. Apprentice: Isaac Dolton (bound 1700, freed 1707).
1704–1727	Sarah	Holt	23	8	St John's	McKenzie. Apprentices: Thomas Allestree, Stephen Baylis, William Crowder, John Evans, Sarah Holt (freed by patrimony) Francis Stephens, William Strooper & Richard Ward.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1770–1777	Catharine	Hood	NT	3	Warwick Lane, Stationers Alley	McKenzie. Apprentices: John Lane, Edward Mackentear & Thomas Pulser.
1793–1800	Mary	Hooper	2	NT	212 High Holborn	BBTI. Widow and successor to Samuel Hooper, partner of William Wigstead (1798). Print seller and stationer as well as bookseller.
1731	Elizabeth	Howlatt	NT	1	St George's, Bloomsbury	McKenzie.
1788	Mrs	How(e)s	18	NT	15 Charles Street, Monkwell Street Chapel (every Tuesday evening) & at Providence Chapel, Titchfield Street	ESTC. Descendent of Hannah House. Greengrocer(?). Involved as seller in Huntingdon/Maria de Fleury debate. Actively protesting against William Huntingdon, selling protest leaflets every Tuesday evening at Providence Chapel, Titchfield Street, at which Huntingdon was minister. Sold only William Huntingdon and one title by his daughter, Elizabeth Morton, defending her father.
1790–1794	Hannah	Humphreys	NT	NT	Bedford Court, Covent Garden	Print seller.
1712–1738	Mary	Hussey	NT	NT	Little Britain	BBTI.
1724–1731	Jane	Ilive (Iliff)	13	2	Aldersgate Street, next the Ball	Daughter of Eleanor and Thomas James. Widow and successor to Thomas Ilive. Succeeded by Jacob. Mo Isaac and Abraham. Printer for Stationers' Company
1645–1719	Elinor	James (née Banckes)	13	NT	Mincing Lane, next to Mark Lane	McDowell & ESTC. Widow of Thomas James, mother of Jane Ilive. Author and publisher.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Titles included: <i>Advice to the King and Parliament</i> .
1735–1765	Elizabeth	James	23	NT	The Royal Exchange, Cornhill	ESTC & BBTI. Printed Bibles and psalms for Stationers' Company.
1759–1774	Sarah	James	2	4	Bartholomew Close & Cambridge	Widow of Thomas James. Letter founder.
1713–1725	Elizabeth	Janeway	15	4	Whitefriars	ESTC, & McKenzie. Supported by, and printed for, Stationers' Company. Apprentices: Charles Cooper, Edmund Hall, Aris Johnson & Richard Jones.
1757	Mary	Jefferies	NT	1	Puddle Dock Hill	McKenzie.
1732(?)	Sarah	Jenour	1	6	St Botolph's & Little Britain	McKenzie. Wife of Mathew Jenour and mother of Mathew Jenour. Took on, took over or freed five apprentices.
1774–1798	Elizabeth	Johnson	14	NT	Old State Lottery Offices, 16/4 Ludgate Hill, Ludgate Place	BBTI & ESTC. Associated with Ed Johnson (1780–1783). Newspaper proprietor and printer as well as bookseller. Established <i>British Gazetteer</i> and <i>Sunday Monitor</i> . An important printer as she published weekly newspapers. Apprentice: Edward Robert Johnson, her son, died 1789(?).
1777	Mary	Johnson	NT	2	Wood Street, Cheapside	McKenzie. Apprentices: James Clegg & Thomas Sharman.
1747	Martha	Jole	NT	1	Jennett Bell	McKenzie.
1760	Mary	Jole	NT	NT	NR	McKenzie. Freed by her uncle.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1741	Anne	Jones	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: Thomas Turner.
1793	Jane	Jones	NT	NT	NR	McKenzie. Freed by redemption.
1706	Mary	Jones	NT	2	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: William Davis & Thomas Hooper (freed).
1712	Sarah	Jones	NT	NT	NR	McKenzie. Freed by patrimony
1777	Mrs	Jones	1	NT	Compton Street	ESTC. Pamphlet seller.
1799–1804	Elizabeth	Jullion	NT	NT	2 Bridge Street, Lambeth & 2 Surry Foot, Westminster Bridge (1802)	BBTI. Related to Francis Jullion. Succeeded by Frederick Jullion (1805) and by Francis Jullion Jr (1806–1814). Librarian and owner of circulating library and stationer as well as bookseller.
1751–1758	Ann	Keep	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: Bayford Keep.
1786	Catherine	Kendall	NT	NT	NR	McKenzie. Freed by patrimony.
1799–1806	Elizabeth	Kent	NT	NT	116 High Holborn, 27 City Road	BBTI. Publisher, stationer and paperhanger as well as bookseller.
1717–1728	Mary	Kettilby	7	NT	NR	EEBO & BBTI. Related(?) to Walter Kettilby. Publisher of recipe books in small parts and editions.
1705	Ann	Keyes	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: William Catch.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1733–1756	Mary	King	13	NT	Bible and Crown, Fore Street, near Moorfields	ESTC. Related(?) to J. & John King. Bookseller of sermons, such as <i>Address After the Lisbon Earthquake</i> .
1749–1759	Mrs	Kingman	9	NT	The Royal Exchange, Cornhill	ESTC. Sold sermons and pamphlets.
1711	Mary	Knell	NT	2	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: Jarvis Adams & Thomas Mallcott.
1797	Mary	Langford	NT	NT	NR	McKenzie. Freed by patrimony.
1728–1741	Mary	Lapley	NT	3	NR	McKenzie.
1735–1736	Mary	Lapley II	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: John Dobyngs.
1796	Mrs	Larkins	1	NT	New Cross	BBTI.
c. 1813–1814	Catherine	Lavoine	NT	NT	27 Portman St	BBTI. Successor to Mark Anthony Lavoine.
1700–1730	Anne	Lea	2	NT	Atlas and Hercules, Cheapside (1701–1712) & Atlas and Hercules, Fleet Street (after 1725)	ESTC & BBTI. Map and chart seller as well as bookseller. Titles: <i>The Theatre of British Honours; Being An Account of the Present Nobility, With What has Happened Remarkable to Them or Their Ancestors & The Elements of Euclid, Explained and Demonstrated in a New and Most Easy Method, With the Uses of Each Proposition In All the Parts of the Mathematicks</i> , by Claude Francois Milliet D'Chales, a Jesuit.
1720	Elizabeth	Leake	NT	1	NR	McKenzie.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Apprentice: Joseph Crickley.
1689	Mrs	Lee	NT	1	St Swithin's	BBTI & McKenzie. Sister to Mr Goadby, stationer. Apprentice: John Johnson.
1689	Elenor	Lee	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: George Street.
1795–1797	Anne	Lemoine	1	NT	White Rose Court, Coleman Street	ESTC. Publisher as well as bookseller.
ND	Mrs	Lewes		NT	Mrs. Howes house, 15 Charles Street, Wells Street	ESTC.
1756–1777	Mary	Lewis	337	7	1 Paternoster Row, at the Bible and Dove, Paternoster Row (1764)	ESTC, BBTI, Plomer, McKenzie & subject of case study in this thesis. Printer and bookseller to the Moravians. Traded as M. Lewis & Son (1767–1768). Apprentices: Robert Benfield (1759), Thomas Bennett (1761), Edward Mackentear (1773), William Stephens (1768), William Telphord (1769), Joseph Tidmarsh (1768) & Henry Trapp (1759).
1764–1774	Mrs Ursula	Linde	5	NT	Catherine Street, The Strand & Bridges Street, near Covent Garden	ESTC & BBTI. Widow of Andreas Linde. Sold German texts.
1755–1757	Mary	Longman	28	NT	39 Paternoster Row	ESTC & BBTI. Also see Wallis, <i>At the Sign of the Ship</i> . Married Thomas Longman I (1730/1731). Went into partnership with nephew Thomas (1755). Retired 1757, died 1760.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Titles included works by Samuel Johnson, Shakespeare & Ben Johnson.
1794–1799	Mrs	Lowes	NT	NT	21 Pall Mall	BBTI. Librarian as well as bookseller. Bookseller to the Queen.
1703	Anne	Lownes	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: James Frost.
ND	Mrs Samuel	Lyn	NT	NT	NR	BBTI.
1745	Bridgett	Lynch	NT	NT	NR	BBTI. Titles included obscene literature.
1802–1805	Mrs	Lynott	1	NT	At her Circulating Library, Brunswick Square	BBTI. Related to John Lynott (active 1802–1805).
1683–1703	Elizabeth	Mallet	165	NT	Black Horse, near Fleet Bridge, Hat and Hawk, Bridle Lane & King's Arms Tavern, Ditch Side, Fleet Bridge	BBTI & ESTC. Appears in sixty-seven imprints. Associate and related(?) to David Mallet.
1744	Sarah	Mallison	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: William Lyon.
1700–1706	Sarah	Malthus	33	NT	London House Yard, the West End of St Paul's	ESTC & BBTI. Daughter of B.S., widow of Thomas Malthus. Titles included: <i>A London Spy</i> , by Ned Ward & <i>Life and Errors</i> , by John Dunton.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1705	Jane	Marsh	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: Edward Christopher.
1744–1746	Mary	Mason	2	NT	Bexley and Fore Street, Moorfields	BBTI & ESTC. Related(?) to Abraham Mason and Samuel Mason.
1805–1811	Elizabeth	Mathews	NT	NT	18 The Strand	BBTI. Successor to James Mathews, partner with Samuel Leigh
1719	Mary	Matthews	NT	4	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: William Harper, John Matthews, Thomas Sharpe & Thomas Tovey.
1705	Mrs	Mawson	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: Henry Mawson (turned over) & Richard Janeway (1709).
1709	Alice	Mayo	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: Thomas Goffe.
1742	Hannah	Mayo	1	2	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: William Mayo & John Townsend.
1682–1693	Anne	Mearne	NT	NT	Little Britain	BBTI.
1753–1770	Mary/Martha	Mechel(l)	NT	1	Kings Arms, Fleet Street	BBTI. Widow of James Mechel. Publisher of <i>The Entertainer</i> .
1725–1726	Cassandra	Meere	8	3	Old Bailey Ludgate	McKenzie, BBTI & ESTC. Widow of H. Meere (1708–1724). Printed the <i>Daily Post</i> until 1 Feb 1726, which then had the imprint R. Nutt, her son-in-law. Titles included: <i>The Historical Register, Containing An Impartial Relation of All Transactions, Foreign and Domestick, With A Chronological Diary of All the</i>

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						<i>Remarkable Occurrences, viz. Births, Marriages, Deaths, Removals, Promotions, etc. that Happen'd in This Year, Together With the Characters and Parentage of Persons Deceased, of Eminent Rank. Volume X (1725).</i>
1762–1767	Elizabeth	Merryman	NT	1	NR	McKenzie.
1770–1779	Sarah	Messing	NT	NT	NR	BBTI. Successor to Frederick Messing, Stationer Ordinary to the King.
1707–1721	Elizabeth	Mibourne	NT	3	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: Thomas Crane, William Greene & John Snell.
1697–1698	Mrs	Michel (Mitchel)	3	NT	Crown and Cushion, Westminster Hall Door	BBTI & ESTC. Titles included: <i>The Figurative Speeches: By Which God has Veiled His Secrets Contained in His Word, Until the End of the Time, Which is the Time Determined by Him, that They Should be Revealed, And Now By the Assistance of God, the Scriptures Being Opened by the Key of the Word, the Secrets Therein Contained, are Made as Plain to the Understanding, as a Riddle when Unfolded</i> , by M. Mersen & <i>A Clear and Brief Explanation Upon the Chief Points in the New-Testament, Where By Laying Scripture to Scripture, it is Fully Proved What is the Faith that Justifies, and What It Is to be A Believer, Also the Faith of Abraham Clearly Explained, and All Other Controversial Points Relating to Faith, Plainly Stated and Answered, With the Remnant and First Churches Peculiar Call, Also the More General Callings, Likewise Proving that the Law and Gospel Speaks Only to Those that are Under Them. The Whole Laid Down in a Plain and Easie Method, Fitted to the Understanding of the Meanest Reader</i> , by M.M.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1766	Mrs	Mills	1	NT	Golden Ball, opposite the Spur Inn	ESTC. Title: <i>Memoirs of a Foreign Minister at the Court of London, Containing Different Accusations, Wherein the Conduct of this Minister at London and Other Cities in Europe, is Demonstrated. In French and English.</i>
1770–1785	Elizabeth	Moore	1	5	Broad Street (1770) & Grocer's Alley, Poultry (1781)	McKenzie. Apprentices: William Alford, John Bryan, Joseph Cannon, William Royston & Thomas Suffrel. Title: <i>The Muse in Miniature, A Series of Moral Miscellanies, Humbly Attempted by the Trifler</i> (1771).
1711–1717	Anne	Mott	1	7	Fillet Street	BBTI & McKenzie. Widow(?) of B. Mott. Apprentices: Edward Cresser, Thomas Hood, Robert Manney, Samuel Palmer, William Reyner & Edward Say. Title: <i>Love for Money: or, The Boarding-school</i> , by Mr. Durfey, a comedy acted at the Theatre Royal.
1796–1805	Mary	Muller	NT	NT	34 Swallow Street, Piccadilly	BBTI. Librarian and owner of circulating library, toyshop owner and haberdasher as well as bookseller.
1794–1795	Mrs	Murray	10	NT	Fleet Street	ESTC. Titles included: <i>Proceedings of East India Company</i> .
1780–1821	Elizabeth	Newbery	28	NT	20 Ludgate Street, 80 St Paul's Churchyard & 21–37 Ludgate Street	BBTI & ESTC. Widow of Francis Newbery. Business managed by Abraham Badcock, then John Harris bought the business when Elizabeth retired (1797).
1692–1710	Ann	Newcomb	NT	NT	NR	BBTI.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1759–1761	Mrs Mary(?)	Newcomb	6	NT	Corner of Fountain Court, opposite Exeter Exchange, The Strand & Naked Boy, near Temple Bar, St May's Buildings, St Martins Lane	BBTI & ESTC. Publisher as well as bookseller.
1756	Jane	Nokes	NT	1	Paternoster Row	McKenzie. Apprentice: Benjamin Cooper.
1746	Hannah	North	NT	NT	NR	McKenzie. Freed by patrimony.
1752–1755	Elizabeth	Nunneley (née Reed)	4	3	Whitefriars	McKenzie & BBTI. Printer, freed by patrimony 4 Feb 1752, died 1755. Apprentices: James Plaxton Marshall, John Pendred & William Robbins.
1716–1740	Elizabeth	Nutt	539	7	The Savoy, The Strand	BBTI, ESTC, McKenzie & ODNB. Also see Fuderer, <i>Eighteenth-Century Women in Print</i> . Born 1666. Successor to husband John Nutt on his death (1716). Joined by son Richard (1722). Partners with R Gosling (1717–1740) and Mrs E. Cook(e) (1735–1750). Also shared several imprints with Mrs Dodd (1729–1744). Prosecuted for libel although bedridden (1727). Died 1746. Apprentices: John Bird, John Deacon, Thos. Draper, Timothy Hattersley, Isaac Lane, Joseph Phipps & William White.
1735–1740	Sarah	Nutt	14	NT	The Royal Exchange, Cornhill	BBTI & ESTC. Pamphlet seller and newsagent/vendor.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1759	Mrs	Overall	1	NT	Opposite the Church, Little Minories	ESTC. Title: <i>Dialogues on the Other World, By Way of Conference Between Three Friends, On the Angelical Heaven, The Nature and Fall of Angels, The Scripture Account of the State of the Dead, The Several Benefits of the Resurrection, The Millennium of St. John, And the Future Renovation of All Things, Tending to Illustrate the Writings of the Prophets and To Shew the Harmony of the Sacred System, To Which is Added By Way of Appendix, Certain Letters Respecting the Aforesaid Subjects</i> , by J. Fawcett.
1733–1740	Anne	Parker	27	4	Jewin Street	McKenzie & ESTC. Apprentices: James Mansfield, Richard Preston, Thomas Pritchard & John Reynolds.
1793–1817	Mary	Parr	NT	NT	52 Pall Mall	Jepcoate, <i>German Members of the London Book Trade</i> .
1730	Eleanor/Elinor	Parsons	NR	2	Gracechurch Street	McKenzie. Widow of Henry Parson, mother of Mary Fenner. Apprentices: Samuel Galpine & John Johnson (turned over to James Waugh 1744).
1791–1810	Mrs	Peacock	4	NT	259 Oxford Street	BBTI. Juvenile Library. Titles included: <i>A Collection of Poems and Letters, Lodowick; or, Lessons of Morality for the Amusement and Instruction of Youth, Truth and Filial Love & The Age of Chivalry; or, Friendship of Other Times; A Moral and Historical Tale. Abridged and Selected from the Knights of the Swan of Madam Genlis</i> , by C. Butler.
1783–1784	Mrs	Peat	2	NT	Temple Bar	ESTC.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Titles include collections of convivial songs and lectures, such as: <i>A Feast for the Votaries of Comus</i> (1783) & <i>O'Brien's lusorium</i> .
1779	Mary	Penn	NT	NT	NR	McKenzie. Freed by patrimony.
1737	Alice	Person	NT	2	St Botolph's	McKenzie. Apprentices: Benjamin Hutton & John Waton.
1771–1772	Sarah	Peyton	2	NT	58 Borough Southwark	BBTI & ESTC. Continued as Peyton and Greengraver.
1767 & 1800(?)	Mrs	Phillips	2(?)	NT	NR	BBTI. Two Mrs Phillips, one in 1805 in Great Russell Street, Covent Garden, and Anne Phillips in 1839 in Oxford Street, are listed but details are so limited as to doubt they are the same woman. Titles included: <i>Fearing the Lord, And Serving Him in Truth, The Means of Obtaining the Divine Protection; And Preventing the Ruin of a Sinful People</i> , a sermon preached at Aylesbury and Wendover in the County of Bucks, 18 December 1745, a day appointed by His Majesty for a public fast, on account of the present Unnatural Rebellion, by Thomas Piety.
1760	Elizabeth	Phipps	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: Charles Shaw.
1746(?)	Mrs	Piers & Weintz	1	NT	Holborn	ESTC.
1710–1723	Sarah	Popping	223	NT	Black Raven, Paternoster Row (1713–1723)	BBTI & ESTC.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Committed to Newgate by Swift (1711) and imprisoned (c. 1716). Published <i>Observer</i> and joint seller of <i>Protestant Post Boy</i> with B. Harris. Titles included Pope's satire on Edmund Curri and the works of John Dunton & Richard Steele.
1788	Mrs Rachel(?)	Potter	2	NT	55 Cannon Street	BBTI & ESTC. Titles: <i>Spiritual Commerce: or, A Series of Epistolary Letters, Written on Spiritual and Interesting Subjects</i> , by J. Pavey & <i>A Supplement to A Volume of Spiritual Epistolary Letters</i> , by J. Pavey.
1722–1724	Mary	Poulson	9	NT	NR	ESTC.
1794–1796	Martha	Priestley/ Trapp	11	NT	1 Paternoster Row	BBTI & this thesis. Daughter of Mary Lewis and widow of Henry Trapp. Recognised after marriage to Timothy Priestley.
1786	Mrs	Randall	1	NT	NR	ESTC. Title: <i>An Essay on the Virtues and Properties of Ginseng Tea</i> , by Count Belchigen.
1712–1715	Elizabeth	Rawlins	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: Benjamin Odell.
1700–1706	Jane	Rayment	NT	2	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: Thomas Janes & William Taylor.
1740–1755	Mary	Read	15	3	Whitefriars	McKenzie. Printed almanacs for Stationers' Company. Apprentices: James Plaxton, Josiah Millidge & Henry Vicaris.
1708–1718	Mary	Redmaine	NT	3	Redmaine, Thomas Taunton	McKenzie.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Apprentices: Francis Redmaine, Roger Redmaine & Thomas Taunton.
1763–1766	Sarah	Reiley	0	0	Pelican Court, Little Britain	Musgrave.
1799	Grace	Richards	0	NT	Lamb's Conduit Passage	ESTC. Reference to imprints to G. Richards at Bell Savage Yard.
1740	Mary	Richards	NT	3	Holborn	McKenzie. Apprentices: William Underwood, Daniel Williams & William Wyatt.
1724	Ann	Richardson		5	Paternoster Row	McKenzie. Milliner. Apprentices: Mary Best, Mary Highfield, Elizabeth Howe, Martha Morfor & Ann Morris.
1766/ 1759–1765	Mrs	Richardson	1	NT	26 Paternoster Row	ESTC & BBTI. Maxted reads 1759–1765. Widow of Joseph Richardson.
1785–1791	Ann(a)	Rivington	9	1	5 Badger Yard, St John's Square, Clerkenwell (1785–1824), 2 Badger Yard (1825–1826) & St John's Square (1826–1841)	BBTI, ESTC, ODNB & McKenzie. Daughter of Edmund Burge of Basinghall Street. Married John on 24 July 1777 at St Mary's, Islington. Took over her husband's printing business and took John Marshall into partnership (1786). Andrew Strahan turned over an apprentice to her (1787). The firm took in the master printer Deodatus Bye and traded as Rivington, Marshall, and Bye (1790). In the following year the firm was styled simply Marshall and Bye, suggesting that Ann(e) had withdrawn from active involvement in printing, but she continued to receive income from the business until her death in Islington on 3 March 1841. Apprentice: Joseph Hart.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1775	Ann	Roberts	0	NT	Three Arrow Court, Chancery Lane & 15 Clare Court, Drury Lane	BBTI. Print seller of maps and charts.
1715	Mary	Roberts	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: John Shillingford.
1747	Agnes	Rockall	NT	4	St Martin's Holiday Yard, Creed Lane	McKenzie. Apprentices: Abraham Birt, William Groom, Richard Priest & William Woodcock.
1701–1740	Elizabeth	Rumball	29	2	The Post House, Russell Street, Covent Garden.	BBTI, ESTC & McKenzie. ESTC lists Edmund Rumball so unclear if any of the 'E. Rumballs' are Elizabeth or Edmund. BBTI quotes Plomer, but Plomer does not specify whether E. Rumball is Edmund or Elizabeth, although there are 29 titles listed under E Rumball. Apprentices: Claudius Bonner (turned over 1718) & Michael Stapleton.
1783–1817	Mary	Ryland	NT	NT	New Bond Street	BBTI & Maxted. Wife of William Wynne Ryland, who was executed for fraud on 29 Aug 1783 after an extraordinary thunderstorm. Print seller and fancy ornament seller.
1787	Sarah	Ryland	NT	1	Fetter Lane	McKenzie. Apprentice: John Delattre.
1800	Mrs	Sael	1	NT	The Strand	ESTC. Seller with T. Hurst, Paternoster Row. Title: <i>A Comparative Statement of Facts and Observations Relative to the Cow-pox</i> , published by Doctors Jenner and Woodville.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1775–1809	Mary	Say (see Vint)	5 (Say), 15 (Vint)	6	10–11 Ave Maria Lane	BBTI, ESTC & McKenzie. Widow and successor to Charles Green Say. Traded as Mary Say (1775–1787). Remarried Edward Vint of Crayford at St Martin's Ludgate (1787). Traded as Mary Vint (1787–1809). Printed <i>Gazetteer</i> (1778–1791). Apprentices: John Abraham, William Berrister, George Bridgman, John Nichols, George Smith & William Wilson.
1785–1791	Mrs Jane	Scot	2	NT	NR	ESTC. Widow of Dr. John Scot. Titles included: <i>A Concise Essay on the Great Medical Efficacy and Safety of Dr. John Scot's Pills, In Curing Gouty, Bilious, and Nervous Disorders</i> , by John Scot.
1741–1753/1755	Mary	Senex	21	NT	Over against the Globe & over against St Dunstan's Church, Fleet Street	BBTI & ESTC. Successor to John Senex, associated with Samuel Birt. Map and chart seller and publisher of scholarly texts as well as bookseller.
1768–1769	Mrs	Shepherd	6	NT	Horsemonger Lane, Southwark & Stokes End, Southwark	ESTC.
c. 1784–1802	Mary	Shrigley	NT	NT	Red Lyon Square, 42 Devonshire Street	BBTI. Traded as Mary Shrigley & Co. (1784–1785) and as M&M Shrigley (1799–1802).
1761–1768	Anne	Shuckburgh	19	NT	Temple Gates, Fleet Street	BBTI & ESTC.
1764	Elizabeth	Shuckford	NT	1	Trinity Lane	McKenzie. Glazier.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						<i>Apprentice: William Crook.</i>
1726	Mary	Simpson	NT	2	Cannon's Alley	McKenzie. Apprentices: John Addy & Gilbert Beauchamp.
1797	Mrs	Smith	2	NT	Pop Gun, Lincoln's Inn Field	ESTC. Widow of John Smith. Titles included: <i>The Trial of John Smith, Bookseller, Of Portsmouth-Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Before Lord Kenyon, In The Court Of King's Bench, Westminster, On December 6, 1796, For Selling a Work, Entitled, 'A Summary Of The Duties Of Citizenship'</i> .
1753–1792	Sarah	Smith	NT	NT	Lothbury, 5 Bartholomew Lane & 13 Sweetings Alley, Cornhill	ESTC. Also traded as Smith & Son.
1682–1725	Elizabeth	Smith	27	NT	Ludgate Street (1708–1725) & Gutter Lane (1719–1723), under the Royal Exchange, over against Exchange Alley	ESTC.
ND	Mrs	Smith	NT	NT	Corner of Newman's Street, Oxford Street	ESTC.
1705–1709	Anne	Snowden	NT	4	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: Thomas Davis, Henry Lebrand, Thomas Peacock & John Philmott.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1704	Jane	Sowle	NT	2	The Bible, Leadenhall Street	McKenzie. Widow of Andrew Sowle, mother of Tace Sowle. Apprentices: Moses Carter & John Mongar.
1691–1749	Tace	Sowle	744	5	Crooked Billet, Holloway Lane, Shoreditch (c. 1691), next to Meeting House, White Heart Court, Gracious/Gracechurch Street (c. 1706) & Bible, Leadenhall St (c. 1706)	BBTI, ESTC & McKenzie. Quaker printer and bookseller. Apprentices: George Bond, Thomas Brown, Phillip Gwillim, Andrew Hinde & Edward Saunders. Subject of this thesis.
1705–1721	Anne	Speed	28	NT	The Three Crowns, Exchange Alley, over against Jonathan's Coffee House, Cornhill	ESTC & BBTI. Thomas Speed's widow. Titles included Church of England sermons and theological tracts.
1702–1720	Mary	Spicer	NT	4	Duck Lane	BBTI & McKenzie. Apprentices: Thomas Boorman, John Buck, William Gibson & Thomas Spicer.
1767	Mrs	Spurlls	2	NT	Craig's Court, Charing Cross	ESTC. Titles included: <i>A Series of Letters, Discovering the Scheme Projected by France, In M DCC Lix, For An Intended Invasion Upon England with Flat-Bottom'd Boats; Various Conferences and Original Papers Touching that Formidable Design, Pointing at the Secret and True Motives, Which Precipitated the Negotiations, and Conclusion of the Last Peace, To Which are Prefixed, The Secret Adventures of the</i>

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						<i>Young Pretender; And the Conduct of the French Court Respecting Him During His Stay in Great Britain, And After His Return to Paris.</i>
1785–1790	Mrs	Stackhouse	2	NT	NR	ESTC. Widow of T. Stackhouse. Titles included: <i>A New Universal Atlas; Consisting of a Complete Set of Maps, Elegantly Engraved and Coloured, Peculiarly Adapted to Illustrate and Explain Ancient and Modern Geography: The Whole Being Particularly Suited to Facilitate the Study of Geography; And Thereby the Knowledge of History, Both Ancient and Modern</i> , by T. Stackhouse.
1757	Mrs	Stamfords	1	NT	NR	ESTC.
1787	Mrs Elizabeth	Steele	1	NT	NR	ESTC & this thesis (see Introduction). Printer and author as well as bookseller. Claimed to be author of <i>Mrs Baddeley's Memoirs</i> . Titles included: <i>Spring; A Descriptive Poem, From the French of Monsieur St. Lambert</i> .
1712	Jane	Steele	NT	3	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: Charles Fox, John Neale & Jane Steele (freed by patrimony 1712).
1772–1772	Ann	Steidel	NT	NT	Albemarle Street, Piccadilly	BBTI. Widow of George Steidel.
1768–1776	Elizabeth	Stevens	4	1	Bible and Crown, over against Stationers' Hall	BBTI & McKenzie. Successor to Paul Stevens. Stationer, bookbinder and publisher as well as bookseller. Apprentice: Christopher Wildman.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1816–1833	Mary	Stockdale	NT	NT	176, 178 & 180 Piccadilly	BBTI.
1797	Mrs	Swain	1	NT	East Street, Walworth	ESTC. Shared the imprint of her husband's work with Martha Gurney. Title: <i>Redemption: A Poem, In Eight Books</i> , by Joseph Swain, Walworth.
1708	Elizabeth	Thomas	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentices: Richard Loader (turned over to John Bennett).
1786–1790	Elizabeth	Tilley	2	NT	Fish Street	ESTC. Titles: <i>Let Him, That Thinketh He Standeth, Take Heed Lest He Fall: or, The Danger of Self-Sufficiency in Matters of Religion</i> , by John Free, a sermon preached on 4 May 1786 alluding to the evil report, which has lately been propagated & <i>The New Lyric Repository, For 1792</i> , collected by W. Dale, successor to the late R. Parsley, containing a selection of all the favourite songs, duets, trios, etc., now sung at the Theatres Royal and those sung last season at Vauxhall, the Apollo, etc., to which is added a collection of toasts and sentiments.
1757	Mary	Tilly	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: William Normanton.
1698	Mary	Tonson	3	3	NR	McKenzie, ESTC & BBTI. Widow of Richard Tonson. Apprentices: Egbert Sangar, William Wise & Henry Yemes.
1718–1727	Mrs	Tracy	NT	NT	Three Bibles, London Bridge	BBTI & ESTC. Widow of Ebenezer Tracy. Sold with D. Midwinter and J. Holland in St Paul's Churchyard.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						Titles included: <i>An Exposition of the Revelations, By Shewing the Agreement of the Prophetick Symbols with the History of the Roman, Saracen, and Ottoman Empires, And of the Popedom. To This are Added These Remarks on this Prophecy.</i>
1791–1794	Martha	Trapp (see Priestley)	117	NT	1 Paternoster Row	ESTC & subject of case study in this thesis. Daughter of Mary Lewis, widow of Henry Trapp. Also active as Martha Priestley, 1794–1796.
1775–1780	Mary	Trickett	4	NT	9 Broad Way, Black Friars	BBTI & ESTC. Widow of William Tricketts. Printer as well as bookseller.
1790	Mrs Margaret(?)	Turner	1	NT	56 Upper Norton Street, Portland Road	ESTC. At least two Margaret Turners at both ends of the century publishing one title each.
1709–1717	Mary	Veasey	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: John Holloway.
1790–1793	Mary	Vint (see Say)	15	3	Ave Maria Lane	McKenzie, BBTI & ESTC. Apprentices: William Holder, Stephen Hurley & George Purkiss.
1754	Jane	Vokes	NT	3	Paternoster Row	McKenzie. Apprentices: James Day, John Hankin & Robert Marsh.
1738–1748	Mary	Walker	NT	3	Creed Lane	McKenzie. Apprentices: Thomas Hadley, George Holland & Molton Spier.
1719	Mrs	Walkers	2	NT	Eagle Street	ESTC.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1756–1773	Catherine	Ware	243	NT	The Bible and Sun, 36 Ludgate Hill, Amen Corner, Paternoster Row	BBTI, ESTC & Plomer. Successor to Richard Ware. Traded as Richard Ware (1753–1755), as Catherine Ware (1759–1761), as Richard Ware and Co. (1763), as Catherine and Richard Ware (1763–1773), and as Richard Ware (1774–1777). Bankrupt November 1778. Stationer as well as bookseller.
1767–1772	Mrs	Waugh (see Fenner)	14	NT	Turk's Head (1744) & 8 Lombard Street (after 1767)	BBTI, ESTC Married James Waugh (1744). Three titles at Turk's Head under M. Waugh (1744) and further eleven titles after James Waugh's death (1767) Subject of case study in this thesis.
2	Mrs	Weller	2	NT	The Royal Exchange, Cornhill	ESTC.
1719	Mary	Wellington	NT	1	Bridgewater Square	McKenzie. Apprentice: Samuel Harrison.
1791–1797	Elizabeth	Wenman	23	NT	144 Fleet Street	BBTI & ESTC. Also traded as Wenman and Hodgson.
1747–1760	Mrs	Whartons	4	NT	Toy shop, The Bluecoat Boy, near the Royal Exchange	ESTC. Titles included: <i>The Art of Cookery</i> , by Hannah Glasse, and <i>The Servant's Directory</i> .
1716	Lorrain	Whitledge	NT	1	NR	Plomer, Apprentice James Sponge
1725	Alice	Wilde	NT	2	St Botolph's	McKenzie. Apprentices: Cornelius Clark & Thomas Windsor.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
1706–1712	Margaret	Wilde	4	6	NR	BBTI, ESTC & McKenzie. Produced four titles as M & J Wilde for Stationers' Company. Apprentices: Thomas Branson, William Davy, Thomas Downing, Phillip Roper, Joseph Taylor & Thomas Windsor.
1773	Mrs	Wilds	1	NT	50 St Paul's Churchyard	ESTC. Title: <i>The Statue of Truth, In The Garden of Allegory</i> , by T.S., addressed to Lord North and containing such remarks as may not be unworthy his Lordship's notice, useful to the managers of His Majesty's revenues.
1707	Anne	Williams	NT	1	NR	McKenzie. Apprentice: William Gillison.
1747	<i>Hannah</i>	<i>Williams</i>		2	<i>Bishopsgate</i>	<i>McKenzie</i> <i>Milliner.</i> <i>Apprentices: Rose Jame & Martha Vere.</i>
1733	Catharine	Wilmer	NT	1	Fenchurch Street	McKenzie. Apprentice: David Hide.
1735–1760	Mrs	Winbush	5	NT	Mrs. Winbush's house, next to Old Man Coffee House, Charing Cross	BBTI & ESTC. Published with Mary Lewis.
1759–1770	Margaret	Withers	50	1	The Seven Stars, Fleet Street	BBTI, ESTC & McKenzie. Successor to Edward Withers. Published with Mary Lewis, E. Dill & J Worrall.
1773	Mrs	Woodfall	3	NT	NR	ESTC. Widow of Mr Woodfall, Charing Cross.

Dates Active	Christian Name	Surname	Number of Publications	Apprentices	Address	Source and Notes
						<i>Title: A Letter on the Occasion of the Public Enquiry Concerning the Most Fit and Proper Bread to be Assised for General Use.</i>
1701	Eleanora	Wright	NT	1	Charing Cross	McKenzie. Apprentice: John Wright.

310 entries.

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Faith, Community and Trade

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Lilian Goldman Law Library

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