

Assignment 1: Your book's stationers

due Sunday, March 16, 7:00 pm; email as an attachment to swerner@folger.edu
worth 10% of your final grade

In this assignment, you are going to focus on the stationers responsible for your book, researching who they were and what their roles were in the making of this book.

Some questions to help you focus your exploration of your book's stationer(s):

1. How does your book identify its stationer(s)? Is there a name or multiple names on the title page? In a colophon? As part of any prefatory material? (I recommend quoting this information exactly as it appears in the book the first time you discuss it; you can use standardized names thereafter.)
2. Is the stationer anonymous? If the full name of the stationer is not identified as part of the book itself, is that information provided elsewhere, such as in the ESTC catalog? (If it's in square brackets, that typically means it's information supplied by the cataloger, rather than taken from the book's imprint.)
3. Are there multiple stationers responsible for causing your book to come into print? What roles do they take (e.g., printer, bookseller, publisher, conglomerate of publishers)?
4. What biographical information about your stationers might help us understand this book and its cultural position? What other types of books did he or she print or sell? Was she or he part of a family of stationers? Were there other stationers that he or she often worked with?
5. If your book was printed in London between 1557 and 1709, can you find the entry for this book in the Stationers' Register? If your book is not the first printing of a work, you will need to go back to the entry for the first printing and then trace it forward to reach your book. For your final paper on your book's biography, you will want to know what happened to your text after your book was printed, so if there are subsequent editions, you might want to follow those through as well. (Again, I recommend quoting the entry exactly and citing it by the date of the entry as well as by the page on which it appears.)

Helpful resources (most of these we covered in class):

A short-title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English books printed abroad, 1475-1640. Eds A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave. 2nd ed., revised W.A. Jackson, F.S. Ferguson, and Katharine F. Pantzer. London: Bibliographical Society, 1976-1991. 3 vols.

Z2002 .P7 1976 Copy1 R.R.

Commonly referred to as "STC." The first two volumes are organized alphabetically; the third volume has a number of useful indices, including a printers' and publishers' index identifying all the items printed by a particular stationer by STC number. It's useful to look at the hard copy of the STC even though it is online as part of the ESTC, because the hard copy often provides information on when a book was entered into the Stationers' Register.

Short title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America, and of English books printed in other countries, 1641-1700. Ed. Donald Wing. 2nd ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1982-1998. 4 vols.

Z2002 .W5 1982 Copy 1 R.R.

Commonly referred to as "Wing." Again, the first volumes are organized alphabetically; the last volume is indices. Wing does not provide cross-references with the Stationers' Register, unfortunately. (Wing titles have been incorporated into the online ESTC.)

English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC).

<http://estc.bl.uk>

Commonly referred to as “ESTC.” An online, open-access union catalog that combines STC, Wing, and eighteenth-century works and is hosted at the British Library. While not all of the information from the printed STC was transferred into the ESTC, the ESTC is a valuable resource, especially when it comes to tracking editions of a work or looking for other works by the same author. The ESTC, like the STC and Wing, is not a catalog of a specific institutions holdings, but it does record many extant copies regardless of where they are held; some locations of individual items is listed in each record.

A transcript of the registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640 A.D. Ed. Edward Arber. 1875. Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1967. 5 vols.

Z2002 .S79a copy1 R.R. (also online; see “resources” tab on course site)

A transcript of the registers of the Worshipful Company of Stationers from 1640-1708 A.D. Eds G.E. Briscoe Eyre and Charles Robert Rivington. London: Roxburghe Club, 1913-1914. 3 vols.

Z2002 .S79ar copy1 R.R. (also online; see “resources” tab on course site)

Both of these sets are transcriptions of the Registers of the Stationers’ Company and are commonly referred to as “the Stationers’ Registers.” The volumes include not only the entries for rights to copy, but also information about apprentices and fines; they are organized chronologically, but if you’re only seeing apprentice information, you’ll have to skip ahead (or back) to find the entries for that period.

E. Gordon Duff. *A Century of the English Book Trade: Short Notices of all Printers, Stationers, Book-Binders, and Others Connected with it from the Issue of the First Dated Book in 1457 to the Incorporation of the Company of Stationers in 1557.* London: Bibliographical society, 1905.

Z151 .D86 R.R.

H. G. Aldis. *A Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of Foreign Printers of English Books, 1557-1640.* London: Bibliographical society, 1910.

Z151 .D51 R.R.

Henry R. Plomer. *A Dictionary of the Booksellers and Printers Who Were at Work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1641 to 1667.* 1907. London: Bibliographical Society, 1968.

Z151 .D52 1968 R.R.

Henry R. Plomer. *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers Who Were at Work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1668-1725.* Oxford: Bibliographical Society, 1922.

Z151 .D53 R.R.

While these four books are referred to as “printers’ dictionaries” (and sometimes, uniformly, as “Plomer”), they are encyclopedias of brief entries on all the printers and booksellers at work in the periods covered. Each entry includes biographical information, including the dates when they were actively working, and, in some cases, brief blurbs of some of the highlights of their careers.

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (DNB)

<http://www.oxforddnb.com/> (available at Folger, Georgetown, and GW)

The granddaddy of biographical information for important British figures. Some stationers, but not all, might have entries in the DNB. They are detailed and up-to-date if they are there, so it’s worth checking. If you don’t have access through your home institution, you can email the entries to yourself while you’re at the Folger.

The British Literary Booktrade, 1475-1700, eds James K. Bracken and Joel Silver, *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, Volume 170, (Detroit; Washington, DC; London: Gale Research, 1996).

Z325 .B74 1996—though often on a seminar reserve shelf; Georgetown and GW have online access through the Gale Literature Resource Center.

The DLB only has 45 entries, but they are in-depth and valuable. The entries are listed at the back of the Clegg article on the Stationers’ Company and can be found on the “resources” tab on our course site.