

THE EVIDENCE FOR SHARED PRINTING IN AN UNUSUAL METHOD OF SIGNING : FLEETWOOD'S *SERMONS*, 1737

BIBLIOGRAPHERS ARE FAMILIAR with books where printing has been shared, and where signature sequences commence anew with 'A' at the beginning of each section or where the signatures of separate sections are distinguished by typographical symbols, such as asterisks or brackets, or by a change of fount or case. In Fleetwood's *Sermons*¹ there are four sequences, in which the signatures are distinguished by a preceding 1, 2, 3 or 4, a most unusual form of signing a book. An examination of the four sections, corresponding with the four sequences of signatures, confirms that four different hands were at work — i.e. that the numerals 1 to 4 indicate the four sections into which the volume was divided for setting.

As the full title indicates, the volume contains the collected works of William Fleetwood, Bishop of Ely, who died in 1723. It was published by subscription — from clergymen, booksellers and a few others² — over the imprint of eighteen booksellers, of whom fifteen are recorded as members of the New or Castle Conger, two as members of the Printing Conger,³ and one who is not identified by Plomer.⁴

The volume collates π^2 1a-1c χ^2 1A-1T², 2A-2Fff², 3A-3Hhh², 4A-4Bbb² (\$1 signed; 3Cc signed '3Cc', 3Nn signed '2Nn'). The pagination is continuous, but the dovetailing is imperfect in two instances: 1Tt2^r is numbered 167 and 2A1^r 173, the intervening page (1Tt2^v) bearing the number '168-172'; and both 2Fff2^r and 3A2^r are numbered 379, with three unnumbered pages between, the first blank and the other two containing the Preface to *Chronicon Preciosum*.

The evidence of press figures is suggestive. Press figure 1 occurs infrequently in Section 1, frequently in Section 3, but not at all in Sections 2 and 4. Press figure 2 occurs infrequently in Section 1 and nowhere else. Press figure 3 occurs infrequently in Sections 1 and 2, and although it occurs frequently in Section 3 its last appearance there is on 3G2^v. There are no press figures at all in Section 4, while in Section 2 only press figure 3 appears, and that most infrequently.⁵ The appearance of press figures may be tabulated thus:

	<i>Section</i> 1	<i>Section</i> 2	<i>Section</i> 3	<i>Section</i> 4
Press figure 1	Infrequent	None	Frequent	None
Press figure 2	Infrequent	None	None	None
Press figure 3	Infrequent	5 times	Frequent	None

The pattern of press figures is suggestive of shared printing, but there is further evidence in the running titles. The running titles vary according to the work, and a pattern may be discerned in the styling of dates used as part of the running title for sermons etc.:

Sections 1 and 4 (month in roman):

A Sermon preached before the Houfe of Commons, Nov. 5 1691. (1F1^r)

A CHARGE delivered to the Clergy | of the Diocefe of Ely, at Cambridge, Aug. 7, 1716. (4Cc1^v-2^r)

Section 2 (month in italic):

A Sermon Preached before | Her Majefty, April 4. 1705 (2Bbbb2^v-Ccc1^r)

Section 3 (date omitted from running title):

A SERMON preached before | the QUEEN at St. James's (3S1^r-2^v)

The combined evidence of press figures and running titles can be bolstered by the evidence of variations in the length and make-up of dashes, dashes being a frequent mark of punctuation in Fleetwood. In all sections the dashes vary in length, apparently according to the needs of justification. In Section 1 dashes may be 4 mm., 9 mm. or 13 mm. in length. In Section 2 dashes are made up from hyphens (en rules), but the gaps between them are barely discernible. In Section 3 dashes are less frequently adjusted in the interests of justification and are more uniformly 9 mm. long; there are, however, a few 4 mm. dashes and in two exceptional cases⁶ there are 13 mm. dashes, though these are made up of a 9 mm. and a 4 mm. rule placed together.⁷ In Section 4 the dashes are made up from hyphens, but the spaces between them are readily visible and a dotted line results. In other words, there are four different styles of dash, each peculiar to and used consistently in one of the sections.⁸

The paper is consistently watermarked H/-, with a cornermark CM over T in the opposite half of the sheet, except that in 3Fff - 3Hhh it is watermarked Y/- [the long stroke of the Y is decidedly bent], with what Heawood⁹ calls 'spectacles' as cornermark. Perhaps this is another example of imperfect dovetailing, the miscalculation this time being in the amount of paper required for Section 3.

It may be concluded that the printing of the volume was indeed undertaken in four sections — corresponding with the separate signature sequences — probably by four different hands. On the basis of the Fleetwood volume it might be suggested that any other volumes similarly signed will also be the product of shared printing.¹⁰

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NOTES

¹ *A Compleat collection of the sermons, tracts, and pieces of all kinds, that were written by The Right Reverend Dr. William Fleetwood, late Lord Bishop of Ely.* London: printed for D. Midwinter, A. Bettesworth & C. Hitch, J. & J. Pemberton, R. Ware, T. Ward, C. Rivington, F. Clay, J. Batley and J. Wood, A. Ward, J. and P. Knapton, T. Longman, R. Hett, E. Wicksteed, and M. Downing. MDCCXXXVII. Fol.

² List of subscribers, $\chi 1^r-2^v$.

³ See N. Hodgson and C. Blagden, *The Notebook of Thomas Bennet and Henry Clements*, O.U.P. for the Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1956, Appendices 12 and 13.

⁴ H.R. Plomer, G.H. Bushnell and E.R. McC. Dix, *A Dictionary of the printers and booksellers who were at work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1726 to 1775*, O.U.P. for the Bibliographical Society, 1932. (The odd man out is J. Wood.)

⁵ In Section 2 press figure 3 appears on Tt1^v, Uu1^v, Uu2^v, Ccc2^r, and Ccc2^v.

⁶ 3S1^r and 3X1^r.

⁷ Nowhere in Section 3 is a 13 mm. rule used for a dash, and the table of prices, 3F2^r-3L2^r, uses only 9 mm. and 4 mm. rules.

⁸ In conjunction with smaller type on 3Z1^v 3Aa2^r and 3Dd1^r dashes of 11 mm. and 7 mm. are used, but these must be peculiar to that fount-size and do not appear with the general text type.

⁹ E. Heawood, *Watermarks mainly of the 17th and 18th centuries*, Hilversum, Paper Publications Society, 1950 (1969). (Spectacles appear in conjunction with other letters, e.g. in Heawood 2910 and 2917.)

¹⁰ In this note I have given the doubled and tripled signatures in full — e.g. 3Ccc — in order to avoid the impossible '33C' which would result from the conventional reduction of Ccc to 3C. The alternative, in actual practice, would be to use 1, 2, 3, 4 as superior prefixed figures, in the way that duplicated signature sequences are normally indicated — e.g. ³3C — with a note on the precise form of signing.

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