

NOTES

VARIATIONS BY HANSARD ON AN UNCONVENTIONAL THEME

THOUGH IN THE PERIOD OF THE HAND PRESS (say to about 1830) the potential for variation among printers was virtually limitless, in fact there were well-established conventions for dealing with particular aspects of the trade, conventions which allowed of little variation. True, the conventions might vary from centre to centre, from country to country, and from period to period, thus providing bases for 'localizing' doubtful or deceitful publications.¹ In most countries the conventions were formalised by the compilation of printer's grammars, in Britain ranging from Moxon's of 1683–4² to Savage's of 1841³ and beyond. But the conventions — by definition — cover only conventional situations: the grammars are of little assistance in coping with unconventional situations, where individual printers would have either to follow house rules or to devise ways of coping with the unconventional as it arose.

Among the unconventional situations is that where there has been a miscalculation in signatures, a situation sufficiently infrequent that no conventions had evolved for coping with it. What I refer to is the situation where a printer — presumably with compositors simultaneously setting relatively widely separated parts of the same text — finds that he has miscalculated the signing of the first (and subsequent) gatherings of particular stints. On the one hand he may have allowed himself too many letters of the alphabet;⁴ on the other hand he may have allowed himself too few. It is the latter phenomenon which I propose to illustrate.

In the early volumes of *Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates* there are several instances of the printer leaving himself too few letters, as the collations show:

Vol.2, 1804 (according to the title page printed by Cox and Baylis, but according to the printer's imprint, on f2^v, by S. Gosnell), $\pi_{a-b^4} A-I^4 I^{*4} K-3E^4 *3E^4 3F-4D^4 a-e^4 f^2$

Vol.4, 1805 (according to the title page printed by J. Brettell, but according to the printer's imprint, on c4^v, by Cox Son, and Baylis), $\pi[a]^2 b^4 B-3H^4 *3H^4 3I-3Z^4 a-c^4$

Vol.5, 1805 (as Vol.4), $\pi[a]^4 b^4 B-2B^4 2B^{*4} 2C-3H^4 3I^2 a-s^4$

Vol.9, 1807 (printed by J. Brettell and Co.), $\pi[a]^4 b^4 B-3B^4 3B^{*4} 3C-3X^4 3X^{*4} 3Y-4G^4 4H^4 (4H3 + \chi 1) 4I^4 a-g^4$

In each of these instances the columnation of the preceding gathering is also repeated, with an appended asterisk — e.g. in Vol.9 gathering 3B is columnated 737–752, 3B* 737*–752* ; 3X 1041–1056, 3X* 1041*–1056*.

On the evidence of these four volumes, repeating the signature of the preceding gathering and appending to it an asterisk was a conventional method of dealing with the odd duplication in the early years of the nineteenth century, being employed by two (and maybe three) printers within four years. But I have not found this procedure advocated — under any likely heading — by Savage or any other early-nineteenth-century printer's grammarian.

With Vol.10 (1808) the printing of *Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates* was assumed by Thomas Curzon Hansard, who — with Vol.23 (1812) — became the owner of the publication, changing its title to *The Parliamentary Debates* and reissuing the earlier volumes with cancel title leaves. Hansard too had problems with signatures — it is easy to believe that the method of compilation itself caused problems, though stints invariably begin in the middle of a speech. But he did not always use the same method of marking repeated signatures as his predecessors had. He did so in Vol.14 (1809):

[A]⁴ B-3U⁴ *3U⁴ 3X-4E⁴, 2A-F⁴ G²

He did so too in Vol.15 (1810), though here the miscalculation is more complex:

[A]⁴ B-C⁴ D⁴ (-D⁴ + D*⁴) E-2U⁴, 2A-2S⁴

The miscalculation involves three leaves rather than a multiple of four, implying perhaps that the problem was one of the supply of copy rather than of miscalculation. However, Hansard employed a variety of devices to mark repeated signatures, as if his house had no fixed way of coping with the unconventional, which in fact arose relatively frequently; or perhaps he was overcome by the complexity of individual instances. Between 1808 and 1813 (Vols. 10–26) — after which the problem does not recur — there are repetitions in seven volumes. In two volumes (14 and 15 — already noted) the appending of an asterisk, in the manner of his predecessors, was resorted to. Basically the same device was employed in a further volume, though here the miscalculation was gross, involving not just one signature but fourteen:

Vol.16, 1810, π⁴ A⁴ A*⁴ A⁴ A***⁴ A****⁴ B⁴ B*⁴ B**⁴ B***⁴ B****⁴ B*****⁴
B*****⁴ B*****⁴ B*****⁴ C⁴ C*⁴ C**⁴ D-4C⁴**

One can merely surmise that whoever set gathering D believed that there were only two gatherings to precede it, the text starting with B — as was the practice in the other 40 volumes of the first series, completed in 1820. In the event D was preceded by 17 gatherings. The five 'A' gatherings were *paginated* rather than *columnated*, in a manner paralleling the signing: e.g. A** is paginated 1**–8**. The ninth 'B' gatherings are also paginated in the same manner, leading to such curiosities of reference as B*****1†, paginated 9*****. The three 'C' gatherings, however, are *columnated*: 17–32, 17*–32*, 17**–32**. And from D the volume is *columnated* unexceptionably. On the face of it the experience with such a cumbersome system in Vol.16 is reflected in the employment of a different system of signing in the following volume:

Vol.17, 1810, [A]⁴ B-L⁴ M[1]⁴ M[2]⁴ N[1]⁴ N[2]⁴ O[1]⁴ O[2]⁴ P[1]⁴ P[2]⁴
P[3]⁴ P[4]⁴ P[5]⁴ P[6]⁴ P[7]⁴ P[8]⁴ Q[1]⁴ Q[2]⁴ R[1]⁴ R[2]⁴ S[1]⁴ S[2]⁴
T-3D⁴ 3E² (A)-(2I)⁴ [(2K)]²

In this instance the seven gatherings apparently anticipated, M-S, became 20 and the seven letters of the alphabet were eked out by appending arabic numbers within brackets. The columnation, which had reached 160 with L4^v, gave way to pagination in three sequences: M[1]1^r - P[2]4^v, pages 161-224; P[3]1^r - P[8]4^v, pages 177*-224*; Q[1]1^r - S[2]4^v, pages 225-272. With T1^r the columnation resumes at 273.

In the meantime Hansard had in fact tried this last system on a smaller scale, with the arabic numbers appended within parentheses:

Vol.11, 1808, [A]⁴ B-I⁴ K(1)⁴ K(2)⁴ L-4D⁴ a-l⁴

In this instance pagination of the two 'K' gatherings was sufficient to cope with the situation, columnation being suspended at I4^v (128) and resumed at L1^r (145).

What is apparently a further simplification of the system employed in Vols. 11 and 17 is that employed in Vol.19, though perhaps the 'simplification' is rather a consequence of the practice — which was to be continued for the remainder of the first series — of enclosing all signatures in parentheses:

Vol.19, 1812, [(A)]⁴ (B)-(3A)⁴ (3B1)⁴ (3B2)⁴ (3B3)⁴ (3B4)⁴ (3C)-(4F)⁴ 2(A)-(H)⁴

Here the anticipated three gatherings, (3B)-(3D), became six, again a situation readily resolved by suspending columnation at (3A)4^v (736), paginating (3B1) - (3D) (737-794), and resuming columnation at (3E)1^r (785).

The final system to be illustrated is a further variation on the system employed in Vols. 11, 17 and 19:

Vol.26, 1813, [(A)]⁴ (B)-(2K)⁴ (2L_{No.1.})⁴ (2L_{No.2.})⁴ (2M)-(4L)⁴ [a]-[e]^e [f]⁴
(-[f]4)

Once more paginating the two '2L' gatherings was sufficient to cope with the situation, columnation being suspended at (2K)4^v (512) and resumed at (2M)1^r (529).

It is puzzling that within such a comparatively short period Hansard should not have settled on one system, given that the particular publication seems to have regularly caused problems — whether the cause was in fact simultaneous set-

ting (alone, or compounded by the practice of columnating rather than paginating), the supply of copy, or something else. In the event, Hansard's variations covered a range of the gamut of conceivable options.

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NOTES

¹ See R.A. Sayce, 'Compositorial Practices and the localization of printed books, 1530-1800', *The Library*, 5th ser., 21(1966), 1-45. (Reissued 1979 with addenda and corrigenda as Occasional Publication No.13 of the Oxford Bibliographical Society.)

² Joseph Moxon, *Mechanick Exercises on the whole art of printing (1683-4)*, ed. Herbert Davis & Harry Carter, 2nd edn., London, Oxford University Press, 1962.

³ William Savage, *A Dictionary of the art of printing*, Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1841.

⁴ See B.J. McMullin, 'Gatherings signed with two letters', *Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand Bulletin*, 8(1984).

⁵ It was only in 1909 that *Hansard* became an 'official' publication, reporting verbatim. In the years represented by the first series reports of speeches (in the third person) were taken from printed sources and submitted to the speaker for revision before being printed as part of the *Debates*.

THE LIBRARY OF THE REV. JOHN HERBERT GREGORY

MOST OF THE MINISTERS AND PRIESTS of the various denominational churches in colonial Australia came from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, whilst others arrived later from European countries as their fellow nationals migrated to Australia.

As there were no public libraries in Australia until the 1840s, it behoved any migrating theologian to bring with him his tools of trade in the form of a private reference and recreational library. Richard Johnson arrived at Port Jackson in 1788 as chaplain to the First Fleet 'with a large number of religious books and tracts.'¹ John Dunmore Lang brought a valuable library of seventeen hundred volumes with him on his return in 1831²; in the following year William Ullathorne's first concern was to gather a library of five hundred volumes before sailing³; no doubt others brought with them, on their long sea trip to the Australian colonies, at least one case of books each. Many of these ministers and priests were university trained and, as well as using their books for the preparation of sermons or for reference in the religious controversies of the time, would, as highly educated persons, be interested in classical and current literature.

Most colonial booksellers imported the latest theological and literary works; some ministers imported their own new books from London, Edinburgh or Dublin; others visited local booksellers or bought from their catalogues. Catalogues of early Melbourne booksellers show the importance of the

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