

with the conditions of historical scholarship and indeed of all intellectual labor being transformed through the symbiotic relationship print has with new media, it has become increasingly difficult to consider one without the influence of the other. Yet what seems far more difficult is imagining print culture studies today without *PPAC* as a foundational catalyst and without the reactive effects this work has exercised for over twenty-five years — and continues to exercise — across a diverse range of disciplines.

Chapter 15

“Little Jobs”

Broadsides and the Printing Revolution

PETER STALLYBRASS

The printed calendars and indulgences that were first issued from the Mainz workshops of Gutenberg and Fust . . . warrant at least as much attention as the more celebrated Bible.

—Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*

Printed Sheets

I BEGIN WITH a counterintuitive proposition: printers do not print books.¹ It is the process of gathering, folding, stitching, and sometimes binding that transforms printed sheets into a pamphlet or book. Certainly, some printers may have undertaken or paid for all of the latter processes. But that is not what printing is about. It never was. The first dated text that survives from Gutenberg’s press is not a book but an indulgence. Most indulgences are printed on only one side of a single piece of paper. They were usually printed as multiple settings of the same text, which the compositor placed in a single

For Elizabeth Eisenstein and James Green.

1. I owe this formulation and much else to James Green, the Librarian of the Library Company of Philadelphia. See his “The American Bindings Collection of Michael Zinman,” in *The Library Company of Philadelphia: 1999 Annual Report* (Philadelphia: Library Company of Philadelphia, 2000), 9, where he writes: “Printers print sheets, but books are made by binders.” That printing is about sheets, not books, is a point repeatedly emphasized by Hugh Amory. See particularly “A Note on Statistics” in his *Bibliography and the Book Trade: Studies in the Print Culture of New England*, ed. David D. Hall (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 163–70, where he notes the pitfalls of measuring printing by titles or number of pages. One of the many impressive features of *The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*, vol. 1 of *A History of the Book in America*, ed. Hugh Amory and David D. Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000) is the insistence of the editors and the contributors on the sheet as the basic unit in printing. See particularly graphs 8a and 8b on p. 516. Hugh Amory and David Hall draw on the implications of D. F. McKenzie’s work, particularly *The Cambridge University Press, 1696–1712: A Bibliographical Study*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1966).

forme; the printed sheet was subsequently cut up to make two, four, or more separate copies.

Gutenberg was already printing his great Bible when he stopped working on it to print 2,000 copies of his thirty-line indulgence in 1454–5. He undertook this work because it was paid for up front and brought an immediate cash return. The massive project of printing the Bible required a large investment of money, above all to buy paper. Gutenberg both kept afloat and subsidized his larger project by printing broadsides (that is, single sheets printed on one side only).² But Gutenberg's 1454–5 edition of 2,000 indulgences was only a foretaste of what was to come. In Augsburg in 1480, Jodocus Pflanzmann printed 20,000 certificates of confession, four to a sheet, and Johan Bämmler printed 12,000 indulgences. In 1499–1500, Johann Luschner printed 142,950 indulgences for the Benedictine Monastery at Montserrat.³ As Clive Griffin has shown, so profitable was the printing of indulgences that printers competed fiercely for the patents to print them. Successful printers sometimes had to set up new printing houses to cope with the work. Varela, for instance, set up a second house in Toledo where he printed indulgences from 1509 to 1514.⁴

As with Gutenberg, so with Caxton—the first surviving dated text that Caxton printed in England is an indulgence. The names of the recipients (Henry Langley and his wife) and the date (December 13, 1476) are written in by hand in the carefully placed blank spaces of the printed text.⁵ Caxton

2. Albert Kapr, *Johann Gutenberg: The Man and His Invention*, trans. Douglas Martin (Aldershot, Hants.: Scolar Press, 1996), 189–90. See Keith Maslen, "Jobbing Printing and the Bibliographer: New Evidence from the Bowyer Ledgers," in his *An Early London Printing House at Work: Studies in the Bowyer Ledgers* (New York: Bibliographical Society of America, 1993), 141: "If we go back to the cradle of printing we find no . . . separation [of jobbing work from printing books]. Gutenberg's Indulgences of 1454–5 were necessarily printed and issued while his massive forty-two-line Bible was still slowly going through the press, not to be completed until 1456. His thirty-line *Indulgence* . . . may claim to be the earliest [surviving] product of the Western printing-press. It has many of the characteristics of its kind, ensuring neglect by librarians and scholars. It has no author as books do. It is a legal form, produced for an institutional customer, and serving an immediate social need. There is no point in keeping it once that need has been satisfied."

3. See John L. Flood, "Volentes Sibi Comparare Infrascriptos Libros Impressos . . .": Printed Books as a Commercial Commodity in the Fifteenth-Century," in *Incunabula and Their Readers: Printing, Selling, and Using Books in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Kristian Jensen (London: British Library, 2003), 139–51.

4. Clive Griffin, *The Crombergers of Seville: The History of a Printing and Merchant Dynasty* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 52.

5. George D. Painter, *William Caxton: A Biography* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1977), 83–4; N. F. Blake, *Caxton and His World* (New York: London House and Maxwell, 1969), 79, 232–3. Lotte Hellinga has shown that Caxton printed the 1476 indulgence while he was already at work on his edition of *The Canterbury Tales*. See Hellinga, *Caxton in Focus* (London: British Library, 1982), 81.

depended for his survival and success on an extensive patronage network for his more substantial projects,⁶ but the ready money for the job printing of indulgences presumably appealed to him as a merchant. Other printers in England followed Caxton's lead. While only eight editions of indulgence documents by Caxton survive, nineteen editions were printed by Wynkyn de Worde and ninety-two editions by Richard Pynson. Eighty of Pynson's editions of indulgence documents were printed between 1500 and 1529, an example of the rapid increase in the production of indulgences in the early sixteenth century.

In England, indulgences or letters of confraternity were issued on behalf of an extraordinary range of institutions: excluding London, they were issued to the Confraternity of St. John in Beverley, the Church of St. Botolph in Boston, St. James's Chapel in Bosworth Field, the Hospital of Burton Lazarus, the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Colchester, the Hospital of St. Roch in Exeter, Hereford Cathedral, the Franciscan Convent in Ipswich, the Augustinian Priory in Kirkby, the Trinitarian Priory in Knaresborough, the Monastery of the Virgin Martyr and St. John the Evangelist in Langley, the Hospitals of St. Katherine and of St. Sepulchre in Lincoln, the Palmers of St. Lawrence in Ludlow, the Chapel of St. Mary in the Field in Newton (Isle of Ely), the Hospital of Pity in Newton (Suffolk), the Chapel of St. John the Baptist in North Newington, Christ Church and the Dominican Friars in Oxford, the parish church in Rickmansworth, the Collegiate Church of St. Wilfrid in Ripon, the Hospital of the Trinity and St. Thomas in Salisbury, the Guild of St. George in Southwark, the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin in Strata Marcella, the Hospital of St. Sepulchre in Suffolk, the Trinitarians in Thelsford, the Hospital of St. Sepulchre in Thetford, the Chapel of St. Margaret in Uxbridge, the Confraternity of St. John in Wakering, the Hospital of the Holy Trinity in Walsoken, the Confraternity of St. Cornelius in Westminster, the Confraternity of St. Mary of Mount Carmel and the Guild of Saints Christopher and George in York.⁷ And dozens of other indulgences, indulgenced pictures, and licenses were issued in general or on behalf of specific individuals, continental institutions, or to raise money to fight the Turks or to ransom captives.⁸

England's contribution to the sale of printed indulgences in the fifteenth century, though, was small compared with that of the Holy Roman Empire

6. On Caxton's patrons, see Hellinga, *Caxton in Focus*, and *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 3, 1400–1557, ed. Hellinga and J. B. Trapp (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999), 84–5, 213–14, 270–1.

7. *STC* (see Chap. 1, n. 38), 14077c.26 to 14077c.84a.

8. See *STC* 14077c.85 to 14077c.123.

from where thirteen editions survive for 1453, thirty editions for 1480, forty-three editions for 1481, thirty-six editions for 1482, thirty-three editions for 1488, eighteen editions for 1489, and twenty-six editions for 1490.⁹ Paul Needham estimates that copies from at least six hundred editions of indulgences survive for the fifteenth century. But that number is the tip of a much larger iceberg. We know that more than two dozen editions of the 1479 Rhodes indulgence were printed in Germany, Switzerland, and the Low Countries. But of the thousands of copies from the six known English editions of the Rhodes indulgence, just nine copies survive, and four of the editions are known only through fragments that have been preserved as printer's waste reused in the binding of other books.¹⁰ If the majority of copies have disappeared, so almost certainly have the majority of editions. In 1500 the Bishop of Cefalù paid for copies of more than 130,000 indulgences: not one survives.¹¹ And the 20,000 Spanish indulgences that Jacopo Cromberger printed in 1514 and the 16,000 that he printed two years later are recorded only in notarial documents. Again, not a single copy survives.¹² Because of how many editions survive in only one or two copies, it is statistically certain that hundreds of other editions have vanished without trace.

Tessa Watt notes that the survival rate of sixteenth-century English ballads is perhaps one in ten thousand copies and one in ten editions. She cites Folke Dahl's estimate of 0.013 percent of English newsbooks surviving from 1620 to 1642. Even for the slightly more substantial chapbooks, many editions (and even whole titles) were lost through use. The first surviving copy of William Perkins's chapbook *Deaths Knell* (1628) is labeled "9th edition"; had it not been announced as such we would have no knowledge of its popularity.¹³ One in ten thousand copies and one in ten editions is probably too optimistic an estimate for fifteenth- and sixteenth-century indulgences.

Given the mass production of printed indulgences, Luther's Ninety-five Theses attacking indulgences must be read as a response to printing, and in particular to the campaign that was under way in Mainz, spearheaded by the pardoner Johann Tetzel, to sell huge numbers of indulgences to finance the

9. See Rudolf Hirsch, *Printing, Selling, and Reading 1450–1550* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1967), 122.

10. Paul Needham, *The Printer and the Pardoner: An Unrecorded Indulgence Printed by William Caxton for the Hospital of St. Mary Rounceval, Charing Cross* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1986), 30, 33.

11. *Ibid.*, 31.

12. Griffin, *Crombergers of Seville*, 51.

13. Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991), 141, 259. On newsbooks, she cites Folke Dahl, *A Bibliography of English Corantos and Periodical Newsbooks 1620–1642* (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1952), 22.

rebuilding of St. Peter's in Rome.¹⁴ But Luther initiated a new phase of printing in which the single sheets that Tetzel was offering would have to compete against a remarkable proliferation of pamphlets. As Andrew Pettegree notes, more than three-quarters of the ten thousand or so pamphlets printed in Germany between 1500 and 1530 were printed in the six years between 1520 and 1526. Yet 50 percent of those pamphlets consisted of two sheets of paper or less, usually in the form of the small quarto *Flugschriften*, in which two sheets were folded to make sixteen pages.¹⁵ Elizabeth Eisenstein, moreover, is surely right to argue that we must see the thousands of Lutheran pamphlets within the context of the millions of Catholic printed indulgences. As she notes, "a late medieval crusade" against the Turks in response to the fall of Constantinople, not Florentine humanism or the Reformation, made printing a form of mass production from its very inception. Though Luther's Theses "received top billing in their day and are still making the headlines in our history books," the indulgences and Bibles that came from Mainz in the middle of the fifteenth century revealed the revolutionary possibilities of the new technology. Eisenstein continues:

If first things were placed first, it would . . . be noted that indulgences got printed before getting attacked. The first dated printed product from Gutenberg's workshop was an indulgence. More than half a century lapsed between the Mainz indulgences of the 1450s and Luther's attack on indulgences in 1517. During this interval the output of indulgences had become a profitable branch of jobbing-printing. 'When . . . Johan Luschner printed at Barcelona 18,000 letters of indulgence for the abbey of Montserrat in May 1498 this can only be compared with the printing of income tax forms by His Majesty's Stationery Office.'¹⁶

14. See Falk Eisermann, "Der Ablass als Medienereignis: Kommunikationswandel durch Einblattdrucke im 15. Jahrhundert; Mit einer Auswahlbibliographie," in *Tradition and Innovation in an Era of Change / Tradition und Innovation im Übergang zur Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Rudolf Suntrup and Jan R. Veenstra, vol. 1 of *Medieval to Early Modern Culture / Kultureller Wandel vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2001), 99–128.

15. Andrew Pettegree, "Books, Pamphlets, and Polemics," in *The Reformation World*, ed. Pettegree (London: Routledge, 2000), 109–26, esp. 110–11. See also Mark U. Edwards Jr., *Printing, Propaganda, and Martin Luther* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1994).

16. Eisenstein, *PPAC*, 178, 368, 375. The quotation is from S. H. Steinberg, *Five Hundred Years of Printing*, rev. ed. (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1961), 139. James Clark gives further evidence that "long before the printing press became a servant of religious radicals in the 1520s, it had already come to occupy an honoured position at the very heart of the clerical establishment." Clark, "Print and Pre-Reformation Religion: The Benedictines and the Press, c. 1470–c. 1550," in *The Uses of Script and Print, 1300–1700*, ed. Julia Crick and Alexandra Walsham (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004), 71–92, 90. Compare Clark's account with David d'Avray's unsubstantiated claim for the "mass" circulation of manuscripts before the advent of printing. Since he gives no figures, it is hard

Printer-publishers who did not undertake job printing such as indulgences to underwrite the expenses of larger projects were much more likely to fail. In late-fifteenth-century Ulm, Lienhart Holler attempted to survive by printing deluxe books for private consumption. As Martha Tedeschi has shown, he went bankrupt, while two other Ulm printers flourished by printing single-sheet broadsides.¹⁷ Clive Griffin reaches the same conclusion:

Spanish printers of the early sixteenth century were surrounded by evidence of colleagues who had failed to establish their operation on a sound economic foundation and who had collapsed. . . . There is evidence that printers had to engage in other commercial activities unless they were fortunate enough to corner the market in one of the few lucrative areas of jobbing printing. [Arnao Guillén de] Brocar, for instance, made his money not from the magnificent editions for which he is now remembered, but from the privilege which he enjoyed on the best-selling works of the grammarian, Antonio de Nebrija, and by his appointment as joint printer of the indulgences of the Santa Cruzada.¹⁸

Like Brocar, Gutenberg made his wealth less from his large undertakings than from job printing and the publication of small books, such as calendars and schoolbooks.¹⁹

As Elizabeth Eisenstein suggests, we can learn more about the printing revolution from indulgences than from the celebrated printing of Gutenberg's Bible or Caxton's Chaucer. Printers were businessmen, pursuing profit, and profit was rarely to be made by publishing huge folios that required major capital investments. Christopher Plantin, who ran one of the greatest printing houses of early modern Europe, almost bankrupted himself printing his most famous book, the Polyglot Bible, despite the official patronage of

to know what he is arguing, D'Avray, "Printing, Mass Communication, and Religious Reformation: The Middle Ages and After," in Crick and Walsham, *Uses of Script and Print*, 50–70.

17. Tedeschi, "Publish and Perish: The Career of Lienhart Holle in Ulm," in *Printing the Written Word: The Social History of Books, c. 1450–1520*, ed. Sandra Hindman (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 1991), 67.

18. Griffin, *Crombergers of Seville*, 9 n.18.

19. Kapr notes that Gutenberg printed at least twenty-four editions of Donatus that survive, the most important of all medieval schoolbooks and "the most widely distributed book of the fifteenth-century." These schoolbooks, printed on vellum to stand up to wear and tear, comprised fourteen leaves or twenty-eight pages and were probably "the first books to be printed from type in Europe." But Kapr argues that Gutenberg interrupted the printing of Donatus to print even shorter items, assured of sale, such as calendars (*Gutenberg*, 148, 212). The only surviving copy of Gutenberg's Türkenkalender of 1454 comprises three sheets. See Eckehard Simon, *The Türkenkalender (1454) Attributed to Gutenberg and the Strasbourg Lunation Tracts* (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1988).

Philip II of Spain.²⁰ The Bible took him four years of hard work to publish and he never had adequate financial support for the immense quantities of paper and parchment that he had to buy in advance. Indeed, so bad was his situation that he was forced to sell some of the paper that he had acquired even before he had begun the printing. As Colin Clair concludes, though the Polyglot Bible brought Plantin fame, "it left him burdened with crippling debts which were covered neither by the sales nor by the King of Spain."²¹

No doubt the economic failure of his greatest publication led Plantin to experiment with publication by subscription. On November 14, 1574, two years after the publication of the Polyglot Bible, Plantin submitted to the Synod of Louvain a proposal for printing an enormous *Graduale*.

The plan was that the abbots of the archdiocese should each subscribe to a fund for the publication of the *Graduale*. The abbot of Averbode would contribute 500 fl., his colleague at Perk 400 fl., the abbot of St. Peter's Ghent 1,000 fl., and so on. As security for the repayment Plantin offered to pledge books to each subscriber to the value of his contribution, or to guarantee the total sum invested with the estimated 15,000 fl. worth of books he had stored at the Carmelite monastery in Antwerp.

The abbots were not interested in the plan, and the *Graduale* was never printed.²²

In England, printing John Minsheu's *Ductor in Linguas* posed some of the same problems as Plantin's Polyglot Bible, since it required Greek, Anglo-Saxon, and Hebrew typefaces, in addition to roman, black letter, and italic. John Barnard notes that Minsheu started work on his dictionary in 1599 and was given a royal patent in 1611:

Minsheu, however, was unable to raise the capital to publish the book until 1617: in doing so, he sought the support of the two universities, the Inns of Court, and 'diuers Honorable and Right Worshipfull Personages, Bishops, and others,' including merchants and London citizens: even so money ran out in the course of the printing and the work was done at different times by two different printers. It was this difficulty that led to the publication of the second edition in 1625 by subscription, the first English example of this practice, one revived in the 1650s and taken up by the trade in the 1670s and 1680s.²³

20. Leon Voet, *The Golden Compasses: A History and Evaluation of the Printing and Publishing Activities of the Officina Plantiniana at Antwerp*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Vangendt, 1972), 2:296–7.

21. Clair, *Christopher Plantin* (London: Plantin Paperbacks, 1987), 64, 74–5, 83–4.

22. Voet, *Golden Compasses*, 2:297.

23. Barnard, introduction to *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 4, 1557–1695, ed. Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002), 9.

Publication by subscription, however, was a belated response to the problems that English publishers had repeatedly experienced when they ventured too far from broadsides, pamphlets, small books, and the few large books that had a guaranteed market (e.g., Bibles and law books) or that were paid for up front by governments, patrons, or authors. In 1582 Christopher Barker, the King's Printer, claimed that even if one held a monopoly on a large book, one was still likely to be impoverished or bankrupted by printing it. He argued, for instance, that Henry Bynneman's patent for publishing dictionaries was "more Dangerous to the Patentee than profitable" and calculated that the dictionary required at least £10,000 capital ("equivalent to over £1,500,000 in today's currency," as Barnard notes). Although Barker's argument was self-interested since he was defending his own monopolies, he was right. When Bynneman tried to publish Morelius's Latin and Greek dictionary in the early 1580s, it was a financial disaster.²⁴

Even a book that was as popular and influential as John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* was not at first a financial success because of the massive quantities of paper that had to be bought before the printing could even begin and because of the expenses and complications of type, layout, and woodcuts. Foxe's Book of Martyrs would never have been published at all if John Day, who printed it, had not subsidized the enormous task with the profits he made as patentee of the best-selling ABCs. In this, Day was no different from Plantin, who complained to one of his patrons that he would have been ruined by the Polyglot Bible if he had not subsidized it through the sale of his best-selling breviaries.²⁵ Reprints and job printing had to support the deluxe volumes. But the deluxe volumes, surviving in substantial numbers, dominate accounts of the history of printing, while the great majority of broadsides, almanacs, pamphlets, and schoolbooks have disappeared completely. Later editions of *Actes and Monuments* were printed only when the capital involved was put up by publishing groups, later known as congeries. John Barnard notes that "the 1596 edition was financed by a group of ten trade partners, and when the stationers gained the rights to Foxe's work in 1620, they experienced serious difficulties in providing a subsequent edition, a problem only solved when no fewer than sixteen men agreed to share the risk of a new three-volume folio edition (1632)."²⁶ Like Plantin, although by a different means, Foxe's later publishers learned how to spread the risk in such a large undertaking.

24. *Ibid.*, 7–8.

25. Clair, *Plantin*, 74–5.

26. All of the information about Foxe is taken from Barnard, introduction to Barnard and McKenzie, *Cambridge History of the Book*, 4:8–9.

Printers throughout early modern Europe thought of books in terms of the number of sheets required both because of the cost of paper and because of the frequency with which they printed only parts of a book. The 1632 edition of Foxe was put together from the sheets of two different printers. If it is possible to generalize from Peter Blayney's findings, nearly a third of all books published in early-seventeenth-century England involved shared printing, often between more than two printers, regardless of what the title pages claim. Blayney has further discovered that of the twenty-one printers working in London in 1605–9, Nicholas Okes shared printing of books with no less than eleven other printing houses. And of all the contemporary printers, Blayney has found only one who did not undertake shared printing: Robert Barker, the King's Printer, who nevertheless "certainly shares his work, since he sometimes had complete books printed for him by 'assigns' or 'deputies.'"²⁷ Shared printing was particularly important for large editions that needed to be printed in a hurry, such as almanacs, but it was also a way of coping with the strains of printing large books in a timely fashion. If one believed the title page of "The Fifteenth Edition" of Isaac Watts's *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, the book was entirely the work of Benjamin Franklin, who "Printed and Sold" it in Philadelphia in 1741. In fact, the title page conceals not just shared printing but a publication that draws on the resources of three different cities. Franklin printed only the first and last sheets of the book in Philadelphia. In New York, James Parker printed the other ten sheets. Franklin and Watts then sent the sheets they had separately printed to Boston, where Charles Harrison bound the sheets to make what the *Boston Evening Post* described as "a small pocket volume."²⁸ It is difficult to think of a more striking example of the difference between the printing of sheets and the making of a book. Neither Franklin nor Parker was involved in any way in the transformation of the sheets they printed into a book. In this exceptional case, the difference between printing sheets and making books is clarified by the fact that the printing was done in Philadelphia and New York, while the books were made in Boston.

In the era of the handpress, shared printing was undoubtedly a common practice. In his *Autobiography*, Benjamin Franklin wrote that he and his

27. Blayney, "The Prevalence of Shared Printing in the Early Seventeenth Century," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 67 (1973): 437–42, and *The Texts of "King Lear" and Their Origins*, vol. 1, *Nicholas Okes and the First Quarto* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982), 49–50.

28. C. William Miller, *Benjamin Franklin's Philadelphia Printing* (Philadelphia, PA: American Philosophical Society, 1974), no. 266, 130–1. See also James N. Green, "Benjamin Franklin as Publisher and Bookseller," in *Reappraising Benjamin Franklin*, ed. J. A. Leo Lemay (Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press, 1993), 98–114, and "The Middle Colonies 1720–1790: English Books and printing in the Age of Franklin," in Amory and Hall, *Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*, 248–98.

partner, Hugh Meredith, procured the printing of "Forty Sheets"²⁹ of the third edition of William Sewel's *History of the Rise, Increase, and Progress, Of the Christian People called Quakers*, although the title page only says "Printed and Sold by Samuel Keimer."³⁰ Franklin composed a sheet a day, while Meredith did the presswork. The speed with which they worked is explained by the fact that Keimer, who did the bulk of the printing, had been working on the book for five years. The Quakers, who were financing the publication, were understandably frustrated at Keimer's slow rate of progress. So it was not difficult for Franklin to siphon off some of the printing in order to speed up the completion of the work. Franklin writes: "so determin'd I was to continue doing a Sheet a Day of the Folio, that one Night when having impos'd my Forms, I thought my Day's Work over, one of them by an accident was broken and two Pages reduc'd to Pie, I immediately distributed & compos'd it over again before I went to bed."³¹ This passage has frequently been commented on as an example of Franklin's histrionic display of virtue. He was eager that his "Industry" should be visible to his neighbors to give the printing house "Character and Credit." What has not, I think, been noticed is the prior passage in which Franklin explains why, even without the dropping of forms, such large projects were repeatedly delayed. For like Gutenberg, Franklin never refused job printing even (or particularly) when he was working on large jobs. As he casually puts it: "The little Jobs sent in by our other Friends now and then set us back."³² The "little Jobs" took precedence over prestigious folios, because the "little Jobs" regularly injected cash into the notoriously undercapitalized book trade.

It is now well established that printing houses of any size usually undertook several tasks concurrently.³³ But that large jobs were interrupted by smaller jobs is the clear implication of the contract that John Palsgrave, a prebendary at St. Paul's, drew up with Richard Pynson for his book on how to speak "trewe frenche." The contract stipulates that "the sayde richard schall imprint

29. In fact, forty-four sheets and, in addition, the title page.

30. Miller, *Franklin's Philadelphia Printing*, no. 1, 1-2.

31. Benjamin Franklin, *Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography: An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds, Criticism*, ed. J. A. Leo Lemay and P. M. Zall (New York: Norton, 1986), 49.

32. *Ibid.*

33. See Charlton Hinman, *The Printing and Proof-Reading of the First Folio of Shakespeare*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 1:16-24; D. F. McKenzie, "Printers of the Mind: Some Notes on Bibliographical Theories and Printing-House Practices," in *Making Meaning: "Printers of the Mind" and Other Essays*, ed. Peter D. McDonald and Michael F. Suarez (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 2002), 25-6. Peter Blayney argues in his magnificent *Texts of "King Lear"* that "the basic pattern" of a smaller printing house with a single press would be more likely to be "one of interruption rather than of concurrency," whereas "any printer commonly using two or more presses would probably diversify the nature of his output, and would thus be more likely to choose concurrent printing as the solution to problems of organization" (54).

euery hoole workyng day for the more speding off the saide work a shete off paper on bothe the sides. and not to cesse for none occasion except the kynges grace haue any thyng to be prynted tyll the hole worke be full fynnyshyd." Palsgrave further stipulated that "all the sayde bokys" should "amountt vnto the holle nombre of vij c and ffyfte . . . complete bookes fullye and enterlye accomplysshyd and ffynnyshyd."³⁴ Given concurrent printing, there was every reason why the printing of 750 copies of a book of over five hundred leaves should be interrupted by other work. Even if Pynson had worked on nothing else, he would have had to spend more than 250 days on this one book. But in fact he worked on more than a hundred other surviving projects before he died six years later in 1529 with Palsgrave's book still not completed. When *Lesclaircissement de la Langue Francoyse* was finally published, the book included the information that John Hawkyns had "fynnyshed" printing it on July 18, 1530, more than seven years after the original contract had been drawn up.

If Pynson did not finish Palsgrave's book, it was partly because of the extensive job printing for the government that his contract allowed. This work included proclamations, statutes, and thirty-seven editions of legal year-books. But Pynson also undertook job printing for all sorts of other institutions that were explicitly excluded by the contract. The following are just the institutions for which we have surviving indulgence documents printed by Pynson between 1523 and his death:

- 1523: the Monastery of the Holy Cross, Colchester (two editions of indulgences)
- 1524: the Augustinians (certificates of confession and absolution)
- 1526: the papal commissioners (two editions of indulgences for the reconstruction of St. Peter's, Rome)
- 1527: the Trinitarian Order (letters of confraternity to ransom captives from the Turks)
- 1528: the Monastery of the Crutched Friars, London (two editions of letters of confraternity) and the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin of Strata Marcella, Montgomeryshire (letters of confraternity)³⁵

Every copy of these indulgence documents was a single sheet or less, printed on one side. In fact, only the letter of confraternity for the Trinitarians consisted of a whole sheet. The other editions consisted of individual copies of a half or a quarter of a sheet.

34. Quoted in Percy Simpson, *Proof-Reading in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Centuries* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1935), 46-7.

35. *STC* 14077c.2, .39, .40, .55, .76, .101A, .101B, .122.

So rarely do these "little Jobs" survive, though, that it is usually impossible to reconstruct how printers moved back and forth between printing books and jobbing. Take, for instance, William and Isaac Jaggard (father and son), the printers and part-publishers of Shakespeare's First Folio. As Charlton Hinman and Peter Blayney have shown, the printing of the First Folio was slowed down (in the usual way) by the concurrent printing of Thomas Wilson's *Christian Dictionary* and Augustine Vincent's *Discoverie of Errours*.³⁶ While the *Discoverie* was being worked on intensively, Jaggard started work on another large book, André Favin's *The Theater of Honour and Knight-hood*, also a folio, but both the Favin and the First Folio were further pushed back when Jaggard began to print William Burton's *Description of Leicester shire*, yet another folio, which he probably completed between July and October 1622. Burton's book was no risk to Jaggard, since he was printing it, according to its title page, "for Iohn White." The book, in other words, was financed by John White, the publisher, rather than by Jaggard, the printer, and the money that the book brought in to Jaggard as printer would have helped to capitalize his own work as a publisher. But the First Folio remained a serious financial risk. So it is not surprising that the Jaggards decided to share its costs. Although the title page declares that the First Folio was "Printed by Isaac Jaggard and Ed. Blount," the colophon states that the book was published "at the charges of W. Jaggard, Ed. Blount, J. Smithweeke, and W. Aspley." In other words, the Jaggards shared their risk with three other publishers.

With printers like the Jaggards, it is important to be clear about the extent to which they undertook work as publishers. As David Scott Kastan observes: "For a printer, the size of the job would be of little concern, assuming his rates were set appropriately; indeed a large job would be an advantage, assuring consistent work. The publisher, however, assumed the financial risk of the project, fronting the costs for producing and wholesaling the books; for the publisher, then, the larger the project the greater the risk."³⁷ However large and successful a firm the Jaggards were, they were above all printers, undertaking work that had been paid for by others. That work included lengthy books such as Burton's *Description of Leicester shire*, but it also consisted of innumerable "small Jobs," for which William held three patents.³⁸ At the beginning

36. Hinman, *Printing and Proof-Reading of the First Folio*, 1:16–24; Peter W. M. Blayney, *The First Folio of Shakespeare* (Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1991), 5–8; Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print: A History and Chronology of Shakespeare Publishing* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2003), 46–8.

37. Kastan, *Shakespeare and the Book* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2001), 141 n. 13.

38. Keith Maslen observes that Hinman, who was aware that even "well-established firms like Jaggard's . . . evidently valued job work," considers just "the 'other Jaggard books' that went through the press with the Shakespeare First Folio. His only piece of related jobbing, and one brought late to

of his career as a printer, Jaggard acquired the rights to print playbills, which would be paid for by the acting companies. One might have thought that such a monopoly was a small matter were it not for the fact that it became the central concern of the Stationers' Company for more than a decade, involving the king, the archbishop of Canterbury, the secretary of state, the lord keeper, the lord chief justice, privy councilors, the earl of Holland, Viscount Rochester, the bishop of London, the mayor of London, the Court of Aldermen, the House of Commons, the House of Lords, the Committee of Grievances, the King's Bench, the Star Chamber, and the Court of Chancery.³⁹

In 1619, James I granted a monopoly to Marin de Boisloré, "esquire of the body to his Maiestie," for his "acceptable service." The monopoly was for thirty-one years and, according to the stationers' complaint to the House of Commons, gave to Boisloré and his assignees, Roger Wood and Thomas Symcock, the sole rights

to imprint, utter, and sell, all and all manner of Briefes of Letters Patents for losses by fier or water, all Indentures for Apprentices, all indentures for waterworkes, all bonds and Recognizances, all licenses to gather by, licenses to marry, licenses for Victualers, all acquittances, all articles for visitacions of Bishops and Officials, all billes for teaching schollers, billes for Phisitions, and all play-billes, all pasports, Charts, Epitaphs, portraictures and pictures whatsoever, and all other things printed, and hereafter to be printed upon one side only of a sheete or sheetes of paper, or a skin or skinnes of parchment, as more at large . . . may appeare.⁴⁰

The monopoly appeared to cover just about all broadsides ("printed upon one side only of a sheete or sheetes of paper, or a skin or skinnes of parchment"). In their response, the monopolists, while claiming that their patent was a "small thing," make clear how much is at stake. They assert that the "22 Master Printers," "great rich men," have engrossed all the lucrative job printing to themselves.⁴¹

[Hinman's] notice, is a Heralds' Visitation Summons printed about August 1623 with the same types as the Folio. Yet the Jaggards, father and son, both concerned with the Folio, were Printers to the City of London, authorised to print 'proclamations, acts of common council and other matters for the service of this city.' Maslen, "Jobbing Printing," 141.

39. See William A. Jackson, introduction to *Records of the Stationers' Company, 1602–1640* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1957), xvi–xxii; and W. W. Greg, *A Companion to Arber* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 59–66, 75, 164–75.

40. Guildhall Library, Broadside 23:115, in Wallace Notestein, Frances Helen Relf, and Hartley Simpson, eds., *Commons Debates 1621*, 7 vols. (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 1935), 6:535.

41. On the central importance of monopolies to the development of copyright in seventeenth-century England, see Joseph Loewenstein's impressive analysis in *The Author's Due: Printing and the Prehistory of Copyright* (Chicago and London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2002).

Of these "great rich men," Boisloré and his assignees single out for particular mention "four rich Printers," who, they argue, were the real instigators of the complaint:

viz. Master Lownes, Mater Purfoote, Master Jaggard, and Master Beale. Master Lownes now Maister of his Company, a man of great woorth, when he was made Warden foure yeares agoe or thereabouts . . . procured an ordinance for the Company for the sole printing and selling of all Indentures for Apprentizes. Master Purfoote procured all Briefes for collections in like manner, Master Jaggard all Play-bills, and Master Beale all Bonds and Recognizances for Victualers. And if any poore Printer who had heretofore usually printed these things did print any of them, these foure rich Printers being men of great worth, and all of them of the Livorie of their Company, presently caused the poore Printers Presse and Letters to be seised, and the party either imprisoned or fined at their pleasures . . . by which meanes they enjoy the sole printing and selling of these thinge.⁴²

In other words, William Jaggard and his associates are accused of making their wealth from printing broadsides and of jealously protecting the monopolies that have enriched them.

We do not need to believe the claims of the new monopolists that they were charitably going to distribute the printing of broadsides among "the poore Printers" to accept their claim that the wealthiest members of the Stationers' Company had taken over the richest pickings of the trade: job printing. Ten years after the new monopoly had been granted, and despite the fact that first Wood and Symcock and then Symcock alone appear to have had minimal success in enforcing their claims, Humphrey Lownes, Clement Knight, Thomas Purfoot, and John Beal petitioned the king, representing themselves as "poor printers," though one of their opponents said that they were worth £4,000. Three months earlier, on February 12, 1629, the stationers had ordered John Beale, Miles Flesher, Robert Young, William Jones, John Wright, and Richard Shorlayker "to follow the busines" and they petitioned both the House of Commons and the House of Lords. As William Jackson notes, the selected petitioners were all interested parties: Beal had a patent for indentures and recognizances; Flesher had a patent for prison petitions; Young had a patent for a wide variety of indentures; Jones had a patent for recognizances; Wright was one of the ballad partners; and Shorlayker was a major dealer in prints.⁴³

42. Guildhall Library, Broadside 24;3, in *Commons Debates 1621*, 6:537-8.

43. Jackson, introduction to *Records of the Stationers' Company*, xxi, xxi n. 4.

The major dispute of the Stationers' Company in the early seventeenth century was thus not about books at all: it was about sheets of paper or parchment printed on one side only. A final irony of the dispute about sheets printed on only one side is that it was conducted through sheets printed on only one side. The broadside abstract that proclaimed the patent granted to Boisloré and his assignees (*STC* 8615) was answered by the stationers' broadside addressed to the House of Commons (*STC* 16786.6), which was in turn answered by the broadside with which Boisloré responded (*STC* 3217.5). And in 1628, Thomas Symcocke asserted his sole claim to the monopoly in a further broadside (*STC* 8903). Printing had become a standard means of conducting legal, economic, and political campaigns.

In 1621, the same year that the stationers published their first complaint, the bookbinders printed a petition against the monopoly of the goldbeaters, the brewers printed a petition for tax relief, the London brokers printed a petition against foreign brokers, the carpenters printed a petition against the restrictions of the building commissioners, the cloth-workers printed a petition for a restriction on the export of undyed cloth, the customs-house clerks printed a petition against a new monopoly, the cutlers printed a petition against the monopoly of goldbeaters, the dyers printed a petition against abuses in dyeing and requesting a prohibition on the use of logwood, the felt makers printed a petition against the importation of felts and hats, the fustian makers printed a petition against export taxes, the goldbeaters printed a petition in answer to the cutlers' petition, the hot pressers printed a petition against a new monopolist, the merchants of the staple printed a petition against the merchant adventurers, church ministers printed a petition for equitable assessments, the shipwrights printed a petition on the governance of their company, the tilers and bricklayers printed a petition against unlawfully made bricks, the watermen printed a petition on the reasons for forming a company, the water-tankard-bearers printed a petition against the opening of private branches and cocks, the Wharfingers printed a petition against the woodmongers, and the woodmongers printed a petition justifying their practices.⁴⁴

In the broadside defending Boisloré's patent, William Jaggard is named as one of the "four rich Printers" with a particular concern for sheets printed on only one side because of his monopoly on "all Play-bills." In fact, playbills were not the only broadsides on which Jaggard held a monopoly. On May

44. The list of all the surviving London petitions can be found in *STC* 16768.4 to 16787.14. It should be noted that a disproportionate number were either printed in 1621 or have been preserved from that year.

26, 1604, James I had issued a warrant ordering that "in every Church and chappel a Table of Ten Commandments may be set up by William Jaggard his deputies or assignes at the charge of the parish and that the said Jaggard nor his deputies take above xv d. sterling for every of the said tables."⁴⁵ While the patents for these broadsides had indeed helped to make him a rich printer, Jaggard was probably more alarmed about Boisloré's threat to another part of his business that must have been more lucrative than either of these patents: the broadsides for which he had a monopoly as a result of his appointment as Printer to the City of London in 1610, a position that he held until his death in 1623 and that he passed on to his son Isaac. The job printing for the city would have guaranteed a steady flow of cash.

Although only a fraction of the Jaggards' broadsides survives, it is enough to show the variety of work that they undertook, even, or especially, when they were printing and publishing large books. For the three years from 1621, just before they began the First Folio, to 1623, the year of the folio's completion, the following single sheets or two-leaved folios survive:

FOR THE CITY OF LONDON:

"The order of my lord maior, the aldermen, and the sheriffs, for their meetings" (*STC* 16728). Single sheet

"An act for reformation of the negligences of constables" (*STC* 16728.3).

Two-leaved folio

"An act. . . made for the preuention of theft" (*STC* 16728.5). Single sheet

"Orders regarding Blackwell-hall" (*STC* 16728.7). Two-leaved folio

"An acte of common councell, concerning the preseruacion and clensing of the river of Thames" (*STC* 16728.9). Single sheet

FOR THE KING:

"An abstract of his maiesties royall priuiledge, graunted to G. Wither" (*STC* 8704.5). Single sheet: commanding that Wither's *Hymns* should be bound with all copies of the metrical psalms

FOR THE COLLEGE OF HERALDS:

"To the high-constables of the towne of ——— or to any of them, greeting . . ." (*STC* 16768.32). Single sheet: a blank form summoning the gentry to present evidence of their claims to gentility to R. Treswell and A. Vincent

45. PRO, SP 38/7, quoted in Edwin Elliott Willoughby, *A Printer of Shakespeare: The Books and Times of William Jaggard* (London: P. Allan and Co., 1934), 66.

FOR THE TOWN OF TEWKESBURY:

"Reasons, why the county of Gloucester, ought to joyne with the towne of Tewkesbury, in repaying of a decayed bridge" (*STC* 23918.5). Single sheet: a petition presented to parliament by the town of Tewkesbury

FOR PHILLIP PAGE:

"To the right reverend. . . the Lords spirituall and temporall, in Parliament. An abstract of the greuances of P. Page against Foxwell, Hutton, Sherbon, Day, and Cason" (*STC* 19087.7). Single sheet: a dispute over land, in which Page accuses Sherburn and Day, servants of Lord Chancellor Bacon, of accepting bribes.

The printers of the First Folio proudly proclaimed themselves "Printer[s] to the Honourable Citie of London." But that they also printed a petition from a town that wanted help repairing a bridge, a blank form for the College of Heralds, and a complaint of corruption by a private citizen reminds us of the ubiquity of job printing. Every branch of central and local government, every town, every diocese, and institutions such as the universities and the Inns of Court required an endless series of "small Jobs." But merchants, shopkeepers, and hundreds of other individuals also ordered printed documents, receipts, labels, and tickets. And just as English printers competed with each other and paid good money for patents for such "small Jobs," so did Parisian printers. As Henri-Jean Martin observes, "we know from the bitter rivalries between printers for the privilege of printing [broadside] that the business was highly prized, both for its status and profitability."⁴⁶ Martin's reference to the "status" of job printing may seem surprising. But in job printing, whether for royal proclamations or commercial advertisements, printers could display the full range of their art, their images, and their type faces. The first printed proclamation in England is a broadside beginning with a magnificent decorative initial *H* that is over a third the height of the sheet. And the proclamation makes use of three different sizes of type, an ornamental border, six woodcuts of different coins, and another decorative initial.⁴⁷ Such broadsides reached a massively greater readership or viewership than books, since they were "distributed, proclaimed, and posted throughout the realm."⁴⁸ At the same time, according to a much later

46. Martin, *Print, Power, and People in Seventeenth-Century France*, trans. David Gerard (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1993), 161–75, esp. 165.

47. *Henricus dei gracia* (London: William Faques, 1504), *STC* 7760.4.

48. See Pamela Neville-Sington, "Press, Politics, and Religion," in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 3, 1400–1557, 580 and fig. 28.1.

account, compositors were paid more for job work than for their regular work on books.⁴⁹

Though the Jaggards were proud of their status as Printers to the City of London, it is unlikely that they were as eager to promote themselves as printers of the First Folio. As David Scott Kastan suggests, they may have become the printers of Shakespeare's plays by default, simply because they were "willing to do it": "Few stationers would have been eager or even able to undertake a project the size of the Shakespeare folio. The commitment of resources and the impossibility of any quick profits would have made it an unattractive venture for any but the most ambitious publishers."⁵⁰ Undertaking the First Folio was ambitious as a publishing venture in which capital was risked, not as a piece of printing in which technical skill was displayed. As Colin Clair laconically remarks, "One cannot help regretting that so famous a book should be so poorly printed." As a specimen of the printer's art, the First Folio does not begin to compare with William Jaggard's 1608 edition of Robert Glover's *Nobilitas Politica vel Civilis*, with its engraved costume plates and variety of fonts.⁵¹ Nor is it visually impressive like such job printing as Jaggard's 1621 edition of an "Act for Reformation of the Negligences of Constables, and of the Abuses and Misdemeanors of Apprentices, Carmen, and Others, and for the Better Apprehension of Offenders," with its heraldic cuts.⁵² But there is no way of comparing the First Folio to the playbills and tables of the commandments for which Jaggard held patents: not one of his playbills or tables survives.⁵³

We have only fragments of job printing before 1640, but our picture of job printing after 1640 is about to be radically changed by the groundbreaking work of Jason Peacey. In 1641, a single London bookseller, George Thomason, began to collect printed material on a massive scale. In the process, he created an extraordinary problem for modern scholars: how to account for the fact that between 1588 and 1639, the number of printed items ranged from 211 to 695 surviving titles a year, whereas in 1641 there are 2,042 titles and in 1642 an astonishing 4,038? Joad Raymond, from whom I take these figures, notes that in 1661, Thomason's library consisted of 22,000 items, mainly "pamphlets, newsbooks, broadsides, sermons, theological treatises,

49. Maslen, "Jobbing Printing," 144, quoting William Savage's 1841 *Dictionary of the Art of Printing*.

50. Kastan, *Shakespeare and the Book*, 59–60.

51. Clair, *A History of Printing in Britain* (London: Cassell, 1965), 136.

52. *STC* 16728.3.

53. A point noted by Blayney in *Texts of "King Lear"*: 1:37–8.

and books of poetry."⁵⁴ But as D. F. McKenzie has pointed out, we have no idea whether the total volume of printed material increased at all in the 1640s unless we can calculate the total number of sheets printed in any one year.⁵⁵ And how could the total number of printed sheets increase so astronomically when there is no evidence that there was a comparable explosion of presses or, more importantly, of compositors and pressmen to run the presses? And where would massive new supplies of paper have come from?

One way of addressing the problem has been to note that there must have been a major increase in printing small pamphlets and newspapers at the expense of larger volumes during the revolutionary period. This conclusion is undoubtedly true, but since pamphlets and newspapers were staple fare in the 1630s, it still does not address the astronomic increase in titles. What Jason Peacey brilliantly illuminates in his new work is that the term "broadside" is totally inadequate to get at what, because of Thomason, is preserved for the first time in history: a massive collection of single pieces of paper, ranging from full sheets to tiny lottery tickets. If we deduct this job printing from Thomason's 22,000 items, the increase in items printed looks far less impressive. The Thomason collection, in other words, allows us to see materials that had always been a fundamental part of printing but that would otherwise have been entirely lost. As Peacey shows, these materials include invitations to meetings, lottery tickets, petitions, and a mass of blanks (printed forms, like indentures, with spaces left to fill in by hand). This bewildering variety of printed forms was printed in a bewildering variety of quantities. Who today would imagine printing petitions when soliciting for a job? But on February 7, 1728, a customer named Dr. Cradock paid for 250 copies of the list of governors of Guy's Hospital; ten days later, he ordered 100 copies of a petition to be made surgeon of the hospital; nine days later, he ordered another 100 copies of the petition. And a month after his first purchase, he ordered 1,000 copies of the petition. Even more surprising are the 34,000 petitions that Edward Umfreville ordered in his campaign to become the Middlesex coroner.⁵⁶ Petitioning on such a scale would be inconceivable without printing. But prior to Thomason's collection, we only rarely get a glimpse of such job printing as John Beale undertook on May 3, 1609, when he agreed to print 1,900 "Recognizances for Alehouse Keepers," half of them on parch-

54. Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2003), 161–5.

55. McKenzie, "The London Book Trade in 1644," in McDonald and Suarez, *Making Meaning*, 130.

56. Maslen, "Jobbing Printing," 50, 147.

ment.⁵⁷ Though quantity was a crucial part of printing, so was speed when it came to job printing as opposed to the printing of large books. In 1572, the duke of Alva put in an order to Plantin for a broadside justifying the sacking of Malines by his troops on October 2–4 of that year. Alva delivered the order for 150 copies in Dutch and 100 in French at 9 A.M. and Plantin delivered them “aprèsdisnée” on the same day. Similarly, in 1577 Plantin received an order to print German passports at 11 A.M. and he completed them by 4 P.M. the same day.⁵⁸

In his foundational article on job printing, Keith Maslen summarizes the little that we know and gives a detailed account of the role of jobbing in the large Bowyers’ printing house in eighteenth-century London.⁵⁹ If one looks just at the jobs that Maslen mentions in his article, one is immediately struck by the sheer number and variety both of its customers and of the jobs it undertook. Its customers included Henry Lintot, bookseller; Thomas Woodward, bookseller; Fletcher Gyles, bookseller; John Whiston, bookseller; Thomas Trye, bookseller; Henry Plowman, stationer; Alexander Hamilton, solicitor; Edward Umfreville, solicitor; members of Parliament; the Society of Antiquaries; the post office; the customs house; the excise office; London Common Council; Marylebone Council; St. Andrew’s parish; the bishop of Exeter; the archdeacon of St. Albans; St. George’s Chapel; Bridewell Hospital; Bethlehem Hospital; Guy’s Hospital; St. Bartholomew’s Hospital; the Westminster Infirmary; Felstead School; Dr. Busby’s Charity; the Bedford Level Corporation; Shadwell Water Works; the New River Water Company; the Amicable Society for Perpetual Assurance; the coopers; the fishmongers; the haberdashers; the mercers; the plumbers; the stationers; the apothecaries.

The jobs included 1,400 advertisements (each consisting of an eighth of a sheet); 200 bills for a house to let; 100 catalogues of books (half a sheet); 500 catalogues of books (three and a quarter sheets); 1,000 summonses to master printers to meet at a tavern (an eighth of a sheet); 250 proposals for a book of poems (half a sheet); 500 lists of subscribers (half a sheet); 550 summonses for nonpayment of arrears (500 with “Sir,” 50 with “My Lord”); 3,800 messages to members of the Commons over a period of two months, with enough copies of each message for every member; 34,600 petitions to become a coroner (over a year and a half); 1,000 directions to postmasters; one ream of tide surveyors’ bills for rummaging; 150 instructions to the surveyors of the customs; 1,006 advertisements for a customs house sale; 8,000 summonses for persons

57. Jackson, ed., *Records of the Stationers’ Company*, 109.

58. Voet, *Golden Compasses*, 2:302 and 302n.

59. Maslen, “Jobbing Printing,” 139–52.

refusing to pay excise; 2,000 advertisements of a “job for Common Council Men” (a quarter of a sheet); 250 licenses for ale houses; 500 certificates for burying; 500 blank receipts (half a sheet); 400 lists of the apothecaries (half a sheet); 1,000 notices for the improvement of the Chelsea physic garden (one sheet); 14,000 briefs “for the relief of the poor episcopal reformed churches” in Poland and Transylvania; 250 citations of clergymen (a quarter of a sheet); 500 citations of churchwardens (a quarter of a sheet); 1,000 receipts for tithes; 3,500 petitions for a living; 104 separate editions of hymn sheets between 1710 and 1757; 250 lists of the governors of a hospital (half a sheet); 100 petitions (half a sheet); 100 petitions (a quarter of a sheet); 1,000 petitions (one eighth of a sheet); 500 rules for school masters and school mistresses; 150 tickets for a school feast (a quarter of a sheet); 1,000 orders of the trustees of a charity (a quarter of a sheet); 300 sales of timber; 6,000 bills for Bateman’s Spirits of scurvy grass; 50 Ealing coach bills; 1,000 shop bills for nets, fishing tackle, and the like (an eighth of a sheet); 1,000 notices of sale of hogs and pigs (a quarter of a sheet); 100 bills for a play (a quarter of a sheet); 300 tickets for a play (an eighth of a sheet). In addition, the Bowyers undertook 130 different jobs for the Excise, including abstracts, bills for low wine, certificates of having taken oaths, commissions for seizing the goods of tallow chandlers, diaries for brewers and for brewery surveyors, brewers’ discharges, candle and soap entries, informations against officers of the excise, malt books, and receipts for paying excise.

How many historians of the book today, let alone anyone else, have seen a fraction — or even any — of these ephemera?⁶⁰ Yet in 1731, the Bowyers undertook 137 jobs compared with 86 books and pamphlets. (My numbers differ from Maslen’s here because he counts the 76 issues of the *Votes of the House of Commons* as a single job, despite the fact that they were printed over a period of three and a half months.) It must be acknowledged, however, that jobbing did not necessarily require the quantities of paper that went into printing books. However extensive the Bowyers’ job printing, it accounted for only 25 percent of the sheets they printed in 1731. In other words, the Bowyers were certainly not “jobbing printers,” any more than Gutenberg or Caxton were. They were printers who tried to balance the rapid cash flow that came from job printing against the speculations they made when printing books.⁶¹

60. For a magnificent survey of the sheer variety of job printing, mainly from a slightly later period, see Maurice Rickards, *The Encyclopedia of Ephemera: A Guide to the Fragmentary Documents of Everyday Life for the Collector, Curator, and Historian* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

61. In *Texts of “King Lear,”* Blayney convincingly argues that the larger printing houses, like the Jaggards’, monopolized much of the job printing and that the smaller printers like Okes would have had a tough time competing for what was left. He further suggests that smaller printers like Okes

In England, the earliest records that survive that give any sense of the total output of a printing house are from Cambridge University Press and the printing houses of Charles Ackers and the Bowyers. If they give an adequate picture of the role that jobbing played in the economics of printing, my claims for the significance of "little Jobs" may seem inflated. Less than 25 percent of Charles Ackers's printing, for instance, consisted of job printing. But then Ackers could not be described as primarily a printer of books, either. In 1733, 271,625 of the 595,530 sheets that he printed for what McKenzie calls "book work" were for the monthly *London Magazine*. The magazine, McKenzie suggests, accounted for at least half of Ackers's profits that year since he was both the printer and the part-owner of it.⁶² Is a magazine more like a book or a broadside? Even Cambridge University Press, which was established to publish learned books, "not admitting low & trivial things of quick sale to be printed at its press," undertook a wide range of job printing. Maslen notes that 120 of the 274 items that Cambridge printed between 1696 and 1712 were "small Jobs" of less than one sheet.⁶³

To find eighteenth-century printers to compare with the Bowyers and Charles Ackers, we need to cross the Atlantic to Philadelphia, where Benjamin Franklin and his partner David Hall kept comparable records. In 1765, Franklin and Hall printed fifty-two editions of their weekly newspaper, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, which consisted of a demy sheet, printed on both sides. In the same year, they printed a large quantity of unbound almanacs (James Parker, drawing up the Franklin-Hall accounts, records "9771 of Poor Richard's Almanacks for 1766 [i.e., printed in 1765] at 4d."); a sermon, made up of one and a half sheets; a number of broadsides for the legal bodies of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania (a single-sheet proclamation for the opening of trade with the Indians, a half sheet for the Proprietaries' Land Office, a half sheet for paving and cleaning the streets, and the like); and a half sheet for "The New-Year Verses of the Printers' Lads."⁶⁴ Franklin and Hall also printed the records of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania, which added up to a substantial folio volume when the parts, issued separately, were bound

"would not have allowed jobbing to cause *major* disruption in the flow of books" (38). With some trepidation, while accepting that this may be true for Okes, I would suggest that the examples of printing houses as diverse as Gutenberg's, Pynson's, the Bowyers', and Franklin and Hall's reveal a surprisingly high level of disruption in the printing of books as the norm.

62. McKenzie, "The Economics of Print, 1550-1750: Scales of Production and Conditions of Constraint," in *Produzione e Commercio della Carta e del Libro sec. XIII-XVIII* (Prato: Le Monnier, 1992), 404.

63. Maslen, "Jobbing Printing," 141.

64. Miller, *Franklin's Philadelphia Printing*, nos. 842, 866, 835, 847, 848, 849, 843.

together. Apart from that book, which they undertook as the colony's printers, they printed only one other book that year: the catalogue of the Library Company of Philadelphia in an edition of four hundred copies.⁶⁵ Just two books, in addition to the newspaper, the almanacs, and the broadsides. What else did Franklin and Hall print? Their work book gives a detailed day-by-day account of the other work they undertook that year. In Lawrence Wroth's summary, it consisted of:

- 700 vestry notices
- 1,000 library notes
- 100 promissory notes
- 13,350 lottery tickets
- 2,500 advertisements
- 200 deeds on paper and 190 on parchment
- 1,000 bonds and certificates for loading foreign molasses (spread over the year)
- 300 venires
- 200 bonds for loading lumber
- 200 advertisements, desiring landlords to pave their footways
- 500 tickets for the charity school
- 100 advertisements for the sale of land
- 100 bills of health
- 1,000 way bills
- 200 certificates
- 50 invitation cards
- 100 advertisements for the sale of a plantation
- 200 receipts and 500 promissory notes for the library
- 200 proclamations on trade with the Indians
- 1,000 bills for sale of goods
- 200 advertisements for opening the land office
- 200 deeds "on best Pott Paper" and 112 on parchment
- 1,000 permits
- 60 advertisements for the sale of lands
- 1,000 "loose Advertisements, Folio Page, small Paper"
- 400 bonds and 200 certificates for loading iron and lumber (spread over the year)
- 100 articles of agreement
- 200 copies of "a Ship's Report Inwards"
- 100 copies of "a Ship's Report outwards"
- 500 advertisements
- 500 promissory notes

65. *Ibid.*, nos. 810, 844-6. Despite the 1764 date on the title page of Library Company catalogue, the printing was not finished until March 11, 1765.

- 1,000 copies of "Governor Franklin's Answer to some Charges against him"
(a broadside)
- 100 copies of duties on foreign sugar
- 100 copies of duties on enumerated goods
- 100 advertisements for the sale of a house
- 100 "Single advertisements on a Half Sheet (very long)"
- 200 advertisements for a night school
- 200 notices for St. Paul's Church
- 200 permits for sailing
- Four different promissory notes, 200 copies each
- 2,000 copies of John Dickinson's address to the inhabitants of Pennsylvania
(a broadside)
- 1,000 certificates
- 100 certificates
- 100 copies of duties on foreign sugar
- 400 copies of John Galloway's "Vindication" (a broadside)
- 100 promissory notes for linen manufacture
- 300 notices about a meeting⁶⁶

I make no apology for reproducing this list in full. Only twenty copies of ten editions of "little Jobs" of a sheet or less are recorded in C. William Miller's exhaustive bibliography.⁶⁷ Twenty copies of the 35,262 copies that Franklin and Hall record in their 1765 work book. In other words, nearly all of Franklin and Hall's job printing has disappeared. Paradoxically, twenty of over 30,000 is quite a high survival rate compared with that of fifteenth-century indulgences or seventeenth-century broadsides. David McKitterick notes that only a single imperfect copy survives of the sheet almanacs that Cambridge University printed before 1640. Yet we know that between 1631 and 1633 alone the press had printed nearly 30,000 such almanacs, none of which survives.⁶⁸ It is only because their records survive that we know that "small Jobs" were a substantial part of what Franklin and Hall undertook. In fact, as James Green has shown, Franklin's most important publications in terms of financial returns were, first, his newspaper (one or one-and-a-half sheets) and almanacs (mostly one-and-a-half sheets), second, government printing (including a variety of single sheets), third, job printing (excluding government work), and only fourth and last, pamphlets and books that he published at his own risk (about eighty works over nearly twenty years, only fifteen of

66. Lawrence C. Wroth, *The Colonial Printer* (New York: Grolier Club, 1931), 218–22.

67. Miller, *Franklin's Philadelphia Printing*, nos. 836–840, 843, 847–50.

68. McKitterick, *Printing and the Book Trade in Cambridge, 1534–1698*, vol. 1 of McKitterick, *A History of Cambridge University Press*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1992–2004), 203.

which were of ten sheets or more).⁶⁹ We can draw a simple conclusion from Green's analysis of Franklin's whole career: Franklin was a printer, but he was only marginally a printer of books and still more marginally a publisher of books. If we exclude the almanacs, Franklin and Hall printed only two books in 1765: the folio volume of the laws of Pennsylvania and the octavo *Charter, Laws, and Catalogue of Books, of the Library Company of Philadelphia* (consisting of eleven sheets). For neither book were Franklin and Hall the publishers. The laws were commissioned and paid for by the colony, and for "Paper and Printing 400 Catalogues," Franklin and Hall were paid £43 9s od by the Library Company.⁷⁰

Despite the staggering variety of jobs that printers undertook, as I emphasized above, such jobs did not necessarily use up many sheets of paper. As Hugh Amory notes, Franklin's 14,000 lottery tickets were printed "seventy to a demy sheet in a composite run of 200 sheets."⁷¹ By comparison, a single copy of the 1568 Bishops' Bible required 409 sheets, more than twice as many sheets as Franklin used for his 14,000 tickets. And a hypothetical edition of 1,000 copies of the Bishops' Bible would have required 409,000 sheets. But the cost of such massive undertakings as the Bible made job printing all the more important to the economics of printing, since it insured a regular flow of cash in an undercapitalized industry. At the same time, the fierce competition to gain monopolies on indulgences and other "sheets of paper or parchment printed on one side only" is a clear sign of the money to be made from this kind of printing.

Other profitable mainstays of the book trade included almanacs and reprints. The Bishops' Bible was itself essentially a reprint because there was already a known market for it. But securer profits were usually made on textbooks of one kind or another. This conclusion is suggested by the books that two of England's earliest printer-publishers produced as their regular staples. Between 1495 and 1534, Wynkyn de Worde printed or published 230 surviving editions of John Stanbridge's and Robert Whittinton's Latin textbooks. And the guaranteed market for legal books explains why Richard Pynson produced 92 editions of the folio yearbooks between 1496 and 1528. But we should remember that the size of the book and the collecting practices of lawyers guaranteed that numbers of copies from most editions of the yearbook would survive. By contrast, the format of the surviving editions of indulgences that

69. Green, "Benjamin Franklin as Publisher and Bookseller," 99.

70. Miller, *Franklin's Philadelphia Printing*, no. 810, 430–1.

71. Amory, "Note on Statistics," 168.

Pynson printed guaranteed that the majority of both copies and editions would vanish without trace.

Let me repeat the proposition with which I started: printers do not print books. They print sheets. If the printer is also the publisher, he or she will be financially involved in transforming those sheets into books. But in terms of printing, the sheets are what matter. It is even more important to emphasize how frequently printers were not even trying to make books. The conceptual gluttony of "the book" consumes all printing as if all paper was destined for its voracious mouth. In her response to Adrian Johns, Eisenstein has to emphasize yet again that her work is not "centrally about the history of books." The printing revolution that she describes "encompassed images and charts, advertisements and maps, official edicts and indulgences."⁷² We will only begin to understand the printing revolution when we start looking at the millions of sheets of printed paper that, beginning with Gutenberg's indulgences, transformed the texture of daily life.

A final point worth stressing is that job printing transformed daily life without necessarily having any connection to reading. Our obsession with literacy rates has tended to obscure the extent to which many printed sheets fulfill their function without being read. I hand my passport to the immigration officer to be stamped—but I read my passport for the first time while writing this essay. Coins and paper money have writing on them, but such writing needs to be read only in the bizarre case of United States bank notes, where, in contrast to every other currency that I have handled, the different notes are all the same size and shape, whether they are for \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, or \$100. Unable to understand a word of what a tax form says, I fill it in and affix my signature under the guidance of a tax lawyer. An indulgence served its function (or did not) whether or not the recipient could read the Latin or vernacular writing on it. And the laws that were issued through printed proclamations were (sometimes) put into effect whether or not anyone had heard or read them. We have tended to generalize the concept of "reading" so that we now read maps or read people or read societies.

Finally, although I cannot document my claim here, I would argue that printing's most revolutionary effect was on manuscript. If we define manuscript in terms of all writing by hand as opposed to the kind of manuscripts that have been the main object of study, we might begin to see that the history of printing is crucially a history of the "blank" (that is, of printed works designed to be filled in by hand). From indulgences to interleaved almanacs

72. Elizabeth Eisenstein, "Reply," in AHR Forum, "How Revolutionary Was the Print Revolution?" *American Historical Review* 107.1 (2002): 126.

to bills of lading to bank checks to those great twentieth-century bestsellers, the diary and the wall calendar, printing has become the great means (compulsory with tax and customs declaration forms) of eliciting writing by hand.⁷³ As we approach the United States by plane, the cabin crew hand out customs declaration forms. If we fail to complete the forms by hand (in pen, not pencil), we will be refused admission. In such situations we experience the immense power of printing to shape where we live, move, and have our being.

73. "Printing-for-manuscript" was the subject of my Rosenbach Lectures at the University of Pennsylvania in February 2006.

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after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein

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