

# Cheap Print and Street Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century

Edited by  
David Atkinson and Steve Roud





<https://www.openbookpublishers.com>

©2023 David Atkinson and Steve Roud (eds). Copyright of individual chapters is maintained by the chapters' authors.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International license (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0). This license allows you to share, copy, distribute and transmit the work for non-commercial purposes, providing attribution is made to the author (but not in any way that suggests that he endorses you or your use of the work). The majority of the chapters in this volume are licensed under the CC BY-NC license and if published separately follow that attribution. License information is appended on the first page of each contribution.

Attribution to the volume should include the following information:

David Atkinson and Steve Roud (eds), *Cheap Print and Street Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2023,  
<https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0347>

Further details about CC BY-NC-ND licenses are available at  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

All external links were active at the time of publication unless otherwise stated and have been archived via the Internet Archive Wayback Machine at <https://archive.org/web>.

Copyright and permissions for the reuse of many of the images included in this publication differ from the above. This information is provided in the captions and in the list of illustrations. Every effort has been made to identify and contact copyright holders and any omission or error will be corrected if notification is made to the publisher.

Digital material and resources associated with this volume are available at  
<https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0347#resources>.

ISBN Paperback: 978-1-80511-039-2

ISBN Hardback: 978-1-80511-040-8

ISBN Digital (PDF): 978-1-80511-041-5

ISBN Digital ebook (EPUB): 978-1-80511-042-2

ISBN XML: 978-1-80511-044-6

ISBN HTML: 978-1-80511-045-3

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0347

Cover image: 'Jack on a cruise', pewter print. British Museum 2011.7084.20,  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jack\\_on\\_a\\_cruise\\_\(BM\\_2011,7084.20\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jack_on_a_cruise_(BM_2011,7084.20).jpg)  
Cover design: Jeevanjot Kaur Nagpal

## 2. Charles and Sarah Bates and the Transition from Black-Letter

*David Atkinson*

---

The end of the seventeenth century was an important time for the growth of street literature. The lapse of the Printing Act in 1695 enabled the expansion of printing across the country. At much the same time, the ballad partnership, which had been in existence for much of the century, came to an apparent end.<sup>1</sup> This was also the time when street literature finally made the transition from black-letter (gothic) to white-letter (roman) type. This chapter looks at these changes through the output of two booksellers, Charles Bates and Sarah Bates, his widow, who were publishing ballads and chapbooks from the 1690s to the 1730s.<sup>2</sup> In particular, ballads sold by Charles Bates have survived in considerable numbers, in part because the first half of his career as a bookseller happened to coincide with the period when Samuel Pepys was collecting ballads.<sup>3</sup>

---

1 A ballad partnership was in existence before 1624 and was maintained through connections based on apprenticeship, marriage, and inheritance more or less throughout the century. The key document for the later period is the agreement drawn up in 1690 between William Thackeray, John Millet, and Alexander Milbourn, preserved in a copy in Samuel Pepys's ballad collection (Pepys Ballads 5.439–443). The death of John Millet in 1692 and subsequent disappearance from the records of William Thackeray are generally taken to mark the ending of the formal partnership. The key study upon which all further accounts have been based is Cyprian Blagden, 'Notes on the Ballad Market in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century', *Studies in Bibliography*, 6 (1954), 161–80.

2 Data retrieved from the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) during January 2021.

3 Helen Weinstein, *Catalogue of the Pepys Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge*, vol. II, *Ballads*, part i, *Catalogue*, part ii, *Indexes* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1992, 1994).

## I

Charles Bates was apprenticed to Jonah Deacon in 1683 and freed in 1690, and on his death in 1716 Sarah Bates took over the business, which continued into the mid-1730s.<sup>4</sup> There was a historical connection with the ballad partnership in that Jonah Deacon had been apprenticed to Mary Wright, widow of John Wright II, a member of the partnership in the mid-century. Records from the time of Charles Bates's death show a substantial stock in trade worth £316 but a net estate of only £236, which Margaret Spufford interprets as evidence of no more than quite modest prosperity, leaving only a small inheritance for his widow and five daughters.<sup>5</sup> The number of small debts owing at his death suggests that he conducted business with chapmen distributors on a credit basis.<sup>6</sup>

Imprint evidence provides three different addresses for Charles Bates, all in West Smithfield: (i) next door to the Crown Tavern, near Duck Lane end; (ii) the White Hart, near Pye Corner; (iii) the Sun and Bible, in Giltspur Street, near Pye Corner. It is difficult to establish a firm chronology because the vast majority of Bates's publications are undated, but it is possible to identify some signposts. It is perhaps logical to assume that the more generic address was in use before the named premises, and it is found on ballads dated 1690 and 1692,<sup>7</sup> as well as ballads on contemporary events, such as King William's victories in Ireland in 1690 and the siege of Mons in 1691.<sup>8</sup> The White Hart address

4 *Stationers' Company Apprentices, 1641–1700*, pp. 10, 46 (no. 1228); *Stationers' Company Apprentices, 1701–1800*, pp. 25, 26; Plomer, *Dictionary, 1668 to 1725*, p. 26; Margaret Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories: Popular Fiction and its Readership in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985 [1981]), p. 85.

5 Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories*, pp. 89–90.

6 Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories*, p. 103 n. 9.

7 *The Unconstant Shepherd; or, The Forsaken Lasses Lamentation* (printed for Charles Bates, next door to the Crown Tavern, near Duck Lane end, in West Smithfield, 1690) [ESTC R234520]; *The Young Lovers Enquiry; or, The Batchelors Question to Cupid* (printed for C. Bates, next door to the Crown Tavern, near Duck Lane end, in West Smithfield, 1692) [ESTC R187781].

8 *King Williams Triumph; or, His Signal Victory over his Enemies, together with the Surrender of Drogheda and his Joyful Entrance into the City of Dublin* (printed for Charles Bates, next door to the Crown Tavern, near Duck Lane end, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R188384]; *The Second Victorious Conquest; or, The City of Cork Storm'd* (printed for Charles Bates, next door to the Crown Tavern, near Duck Lane end, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R187427]; *The Royal Letter to our Gracious Queen Mary from his Majesty in Flanders, Who at the Head of Fifty Thousand Men Is Going to Raise the Siege of*

appears on a ballad dated 1693.<sup>9</sup> A ballad on the death of Queen Mary at the end of 1694 has the Sun and Bible address.<sup>10</sup> Subsequently, there are a handful of dated publications that show Bates at the Sun and Bible, and that is the address at which Sarah Bates continued the business. There could, of course, be some overlap among the imprints, and topical ballads could be printed more than once. A ballad on the execution of Sir John Johnston in December 1690 was published from next door to the Crown Tavern and then from the Sun and Bible.<sup>11</sup> A 'female warrior' ballad in which the heroine is mortally wounded at the siege of Cork in 1690 was similarly published from the two different addresses.<sup>12</sup>

Many of the imprints read 'printed for' C. Bates, or S. Bates, and it seems that neither was a printer *per se*. A number of imprints indicate that they were 'printed by Alexander Milbourn (A. M.), or his widow Elizabeth Milbourn (E. M.), and sold by C. Bates', or 'printed by and for William Onley (W. O.), and sold by C. Bates', or 'printed by and for Onley and Milbourn, and sold by C. Bates'. Milbourn and Onley were printers associated with the latter days of the ballad partnership when they worked closely with booksellers like Bates.<sup>13</sup> A few more imprints indicate other collaborations, particularly for topical ballads. The ballad on the death of Queen Mary, for example, was printed for Bates and Philip Brooksby, also in Pye Corner, and may have been produced quickly for the occasion. A ballad on the execution of the highwayman 'Captain' James Whitney in 1693 was printed for Bates and James Bissel,

---

*Mons* (printed for C. Bates, next door to the Crown Tavern, near Duck Laue [*sic*], in West Smithfield) [ESTC R187270].

- 9 *An Answer to the Young Lover's Enquiry* (printed for C. Bates, at the White Hart, in West Smithfield, near Pye Corner, 1693) [ESTC R172380].
- 10 *The Court and Kingdom in Tears; or, The Sorrowful Subject's Lamentation for the Death of Her Royal Majesty Queen Mary* (printed for P. Brooksby, at the Golden Ball; and C. Bates, at the Bible and Sun, both in Pye Corner) [ESTC R217382]; *The Court and Kingdom in Tears; or, The Sorrowful Subject's Lamentation for the Death of Her Royal Majesty Queen Mary* (printed for P. Brooksby; C. Bates, both in P[ye] Corner) [ESTC R234409].
- 11 *Capt. Johnsons Last Farewel* (printed for Charles Bates, next the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R234489]; *Capt. Johnsons Last Farewel* (printed for Charles Bates, at the Bible and Sun, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R227547/R231178].
- 12 *The Woman Warrior* (printed for Charles Bates, next to the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R227483]; *The Woman Warriier* (printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R234138]; *The Woman Warriier* (printed for Charles Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R235489].
- 13 Blagden, 'Notes on the Ballad Market', pp. 176–78.

another bookseller in West Smithfield specializing in ballads.<sup>14</sup> Ballads on the funeral of William III and on the accession of Queen Anne in 1702 were printed for Bates and Bridget Deacon, successor to Bates's old master Jonah Deacon, also located in Giltspur Street.<sup>15</sup> On the verso of the funeral sheet is a quite different ballad printed for Onley and sold by the booksellers of Pye Corner and London Bridge.<sup>16</sup> There are many other ballads printed by and for Onley and/or Milbourn and sold by the booksellers of Pye Corner and London Bridge, and it is plausible to think in terms of this generic group, including Bates, as a distribution network.

Charles Bates also sold a couple of ballads printed by and for Charles Brown (*A Pattern of True Love*), and printed by Charles Brown and Thomas Norris (*King Henry the Second and the Miller of Mansfield*).<sup>17</sup> Brown and Norris made a large entry in the Stationers' Register in 1712 of ballad and chapbook titles previously associated with the ballad partnership, and this has been understood as an attempt to claim ownership of those titles and to establish another near-monopoly.<sup>18</sup> Some of the surviving Brown and Norris titles were sold by the booksellers of Pye Corner and London Bridge, and when Sarah Bates took over at the Sun and Bible she, too, sold titles printed by Norris. The sort of imprint evidence cited here is never quite as unequivocal or as comprehensive as one might wish. In particular, it is not clear whether there is any real distinction to be drawn between 'printed by' and 'printed by and for', or precisely what

---

14 *The Penitent Robber; or, The Woeful Lamentation of Capt. James Whitney* (printed for J. Bissel; and C. Bates) [ESTC R187299].

15 *The Mournful Solemnity; or, The Royal Funeral of William the Third* (printed for B. Deacon; and C. Bates, in Pye Corner) [ESTC T55951]; *The Protestant Queen; or, The Glorious Proclaiming Her Royal Highness Princess Ann of Denmark, Queen of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland* (printed for B. Deacon; and C. Bates, in Pye Corner) [ESTC N69962].

16 *Johnny Armstrong's Last Goodnight* (London: printed by and for W. O.; and sold by the booksellers of Pye Corner and London Bridge) [ESTC T55950].

17 *A Pattern of True Love to You I Will Recite, Between a Beautiful Lady and a Courteous Knight* (London: printed by and for C. Brown; and a[re] to be sold by C. Bates, at the Sun an[d] Bible, in Giltspur Street) [ESTC R181555]; *A Pleasant Ballad of King Henry the Second and the Miller of Mansfield* (London: printed by C. Brown, and T. Norris; and sold by C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in in [sic] Giltspur Street) [ESTC T206322].

18 Robert S. Thomson, 'The Development of the Broadside Ballad Trade and its Influence upon the Transmission of English Folksongs' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 1974), pp. 82, 283–87.

kind of business relationship is indicated by 'and sold by'. So when, for the sake of convenience, we speak of titles 'published by' either Charles or Sarah Bates, it is unclear exactly what degree of responsibility they had for initiating and financing those publications, and/or whether they held any rights of ownership in the titles. Their business adds to the evidence for close collaboration between printers and booksellers in the street literature trade during the 1690s and extending into subsequent decades. For the majority of the Charles and Sarah Bates ballads, there is no clear statement as to who the printers were, but from what evidence there is, Milbourn, Onley, and Norris are the prime candidates.<sup>19</sup>

## II

Most of the surviving Charles Bates publications are broadside ballads, but there are also a number of chapbooks. These include 24-page prose romances (*Fortunatus, Valentine and Orson, Guy of Warwick*), histories (*The Conquest of France, The Destruction of Troy, The Gentle Craft, Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Essex*), jests and prognostications, and an account of a man who had supposedly lived through the reigns of nine different monarchs up to the year 1698.<sup>20</sup> A 48-page black-letter *Famous History of Friar Bacon* was printed for Bates and William Thackeray.<sup>21</sup> There are also some eight-page song chapbooks (*The Garland of Princely Jewels, The Jamaica Garland, The Melancholly Virgin's Garland, The Valiant Maid's Garland, The Virgins New Garland*). There are far fewer extant chapbooks than ballads, but a few of them include lists of books printed for and sold by Charles Bates at the Sun and Bible, 'where all Country Chapmen may be furnished with all sorts of Historys, small Books and Ballads', which name some titles not known to be extant.<sup>22</sup> One reason why the

19 Plomer, *Dictionary, 1668 to 1725*, pp. 220–21, has Norris as a bookseller and bookbinder but not as a printer, but ESTC lists numerous titles 'printed by' T. Norris at the Looking Glass on London Bridge.

20 *The Wonder of Wonders, giving an Exact Relation of Francis Mason, of Mile-End Green, near London, Who Hath Lived in the Reign of Nine Kings and Queens [...] to this Present Year. 1698* (London: printed for Charles Bates, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R475105].

21 *The Famous History of Frier Bacon* (London: printed for W. Thackeray, at the Angel, in Duck Lane; and C. Bates, next the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R176945/R43855].

22 *The Famous and Renowned History of Hector, Prince of Troy* [imprint cropped] [ESTC T140709]; *The Conquest of France* (printed by A. M.; for Charles Bates, at the Sun and

ballads may have survived better than the chapbooks is that Bates commenced business as a bookseller at a time when Samuel Pepys was more interested in collecting ballads than chapbooks.<sup>23</sup>

The 24-page romances and histories are typically three-sheet quartos, with a few newer titles in the smaller formats that would become more typical during the eighteenth century. While the ballads provide no indication of price, which might have been variable, there are a few hints pertaining to the chapbooks. A short list printed with the 24-page *Guy of Warwick* indicates that chapbooks like this sold for 3d.: 'These Books following, are lately Printed for, and sold by Charles Bates, at the Sun and Bible in Pye-Corner, and sold for 3d. a piece. Where any Person may be Furnished with all sorts of Histories, large or small.'<sup>24</sup> One issue of a broadside song in praise of shoemakers, written by Richard Rigb(e)y and sung at an assembly of shoemakers on St Crispin's Day 1695, includes an advertisement for the 24-page *History of the Gentle Craft*, price 2d.: 'There is likewise newly Writ and Printed a Book intitul'd, *The Shooe-maker's Glory: or, The Princely History of the Gentle-Craft* [...] To which this Song is added. Price Two-pence.'<sup>25</sup> A sixteen-page tract invites the reader to find the content worth 1d.: '*Friendly Reader*, If that these weighty Considerations should be reckoned not worth laying out one Penny, be pleased to Read it *Gratis*, keep it clean, & Return it in two Hours.'<sup>26</sup>

Charles Bates was also involved in the publication of a number of books comprising several sheets — up to a couple of hundred pages — in some instances in collaboration with other booksellers, such as Arthur

---

Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC N70022]. Titles not known to be extant include *The Egyptian Fortune Teller*, *Hercules of Greece*, *Jack and the Giants*, *The Merry Piper; or, Friar and Boy*, *The Rich Robber; or, Golden Farmer*, *The Lancashire Witches*.

23 Richard Luckett, 'The Collection: Origins and History', in Helen Weinstein, *Catalogue of the Pepys Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge*, vol. II, *Ballads*, part ii, *Indexes* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1994), pp. xi–xxi (pp. xiv–xv).

24 *The History of the Famous Exploits of Guy Earl of Warwick* (printed for Charles Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R215196]. Titles listed are *Valentine and Orson*, *Hercules of Greece*, *Three Destructions of Troy*.

25 Richard Rigbey, *The Shooe-maker's Triumph, being a Song in Praise of the Gentle-Craft* (printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R227583]. The chapbook is *The Shooe-makers Glory; or, The Princely History of the Gentle Craft* (London: printed by and for W. O.; and are to be sold by C. Bates, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R229836], which includes two songs credited to Richard Rigby (*sic*).

26 *A Gold Chain of Four Links* (printed for C. Bates, in Giltspur Street) [ESTC T223542]; *A Gold Chain of Four Links* (printed for C. Bates, in Pye Corner) [ESTC N508944].



Bettesworth, Ebenezer Tracy, and Josiah Blare, all on London Bridge.<sup>27</sup> Non-fiction titles include sermons and devotional works (*The Crucified Saviour*, *A New-Year's Gift*, *Our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount*, *The Fearful Estate of Francis Spira*), secular works (*The Adventures of Five Englishmen from Pulo Condoro*, *Colloquia Chirurgica*, *A New Academy of Complements*, *The Queen's Royal Cookery*), and longer fictional works, including a *Robin Hood's Garland* and romances and histories such as *Montelion*, *Argalus and Parthenia*, an eighty-page *Renowned History of Guy of Warwick*, and *The New History of the Trojan Wars*.

There is some evidence concerning prices for these longer books. *The New History of the Trojan Wars* and *A New Academy of Complements* have the price of 1s. printed on the title page.<sup>28</sup> At the end of *A New Academy of Complements* is an advertisement for *The Queen's Royal Cookery*, again priced at 1s. At the end of the eighty-page *Guy of Warwick* is an advertisement for books printed for and sold by Charles Bates and John Foster, including *A New Year's Gift* and *The New History of the Trojan Wars* at 1s., and some titles not known to be extant, such as *The British Fortune-Tellar [sic]* (1s. 6d.) *The Lady's Treasury Exposed* (6d.), and *The Art of Ringing Made Easie* (1s. 6d.). Evidently, the trade of a bookseller such as Bates was not confined to the broadside ballads and 24-page chapbooks at the very cheapest end of the market.

The single- and multiple-sheet editions of the *Trojan Wars* and of *Guy of Warwick* are quite different works, presumably aimed at different levels of readership, but they still cover some of the same narrative ground and appeal to a shared interest in legendary tales. The 24-page (black-letter) and eighty-page (white-letter) editions of *Guy of Warwick* use some of the same woodcut illustrations, probably printed from

27 Others include Robert Whitledge, bookseller and printer, specializing in religious titles and Welsh books; Francis Fawcett, bookseller in the Strand; Benjamin Harris, bookseller and printer (who was in Boston, Massachusetts, 1686–95); John Foster (or Forster) at the Golden Ball in Pye Corner; and W. Daley, known only from a single imprint with Bates.

28 *The New History of the Trojan Wars and Troy's Destruction* (London: printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner), price 1s. bound [ESTC T106839, T106841]; *A New Academy of Complements*; or, *The Lover's Secretary [sic]*, 4th edn (London: printed for C. Bates, in Giltspur Street; and A. Bettesworth, on London Bridge, 1715), price 1s. [ESTC T86876].

the same blocks.<sup>29</sup> Pricing must (to some extent) have defined the readerships for the different editions, but there is an evident continuity of cultural reference.<sup>30</sup> As a final sidelight on the business of booksellers like Bates, there is an advertisement in one devotional title for Bibles, books of common prayer, other religious books, and articles and canons of the Church of England.<sup>31</sup>

Nevertheless, the surviving output of Charles Bates is dominated by the more than 160 different ballad sheets, which provide an informative sample across a transitional period of ballad publishing. The ballads are noteworthy for several characteristics: (i) ballads in both black-letter and roman type, and in landscape and portrait orientation; (ii) printed music notation with some of the white-letter ballads; (iii) numbers of ballads that include some reference to licensing. The first decade or so of Bates's bookselling activity, moreover, coincided with a turbulent period of English politics, and some of the ballads are explicitly supportive of the Protestant settlement.

### III

That the use of black-letter for ballads and other kinds of street literature as late as the beginning of the eighteenth century was distinctly anachronistic is well known. For print-historical reasons, the earliest English books were printed in black-letter (textura, or gothic) type, which was gradually replaced, except for certain purposes such as Bibles, legal texts, and proclamations, by roman (white-letter) type during the second half of the sixteenth century.<sup>32</sup> Where black-letter did

29 *The History of the Famous Exploits of Guy Earl of Warwick* (printed for Charles Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R215196] (24 pp.); *The Renowned History (or the Life and Death) of Guy Earl of Warwick* (London: printed by A. M.; for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Guiltspur Street; and by J. Foster, at the Golden Ball, in Pye Corner) [ESTC T125807] (80 pp.).

30 Cf. Lori Humphrey Newcomb, *Reading Popular Romance in Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

31 *Divine Meditations and Pious Ejaculations on the Lord's Prayer [...]* (London: printed for R. Whitledge, at the Bible, in Creed Lane, near Ludgate; Eben. Tracy, on London Bridge; C. Bates, in Pye Corner; and F. Faucet, in the New Exchange, in the Strand, 1706) [ESTC T186366].

32 Stanley Morrison, "'Black-Letter' Text", in *Selected Essays on the History of Letter-Forms in Manuscript and Print*, ed. David McKitterick, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980–81), I, 177–205.

continue in use during the following century, Charles Mish argues that it was a conservative typography that reflected the conservatism of a literature aimed at a socially and culturally unsophisticated readership.<sup>33</sup> More recently, Mark Bland has identified the shift from black-letter to roman as one of a number of changes in the visual aesthetics of printed books that opened up the text block and brought spatial structure into printed works, and which can be related to the advance of vernacular literature into the social space of the mid-seventeenth century.<sup>34</sup>

Zachary Lesser argues both that the 'disappearance' of black-letter has been much overstated and that its continued use functioned as a kind of 'typographical nostalgia', enabling texts to be read as embodying an imagined popular culture with roots in the English past, which provided a counterpoint to the politics of the present.<sup>35</sup> With specific reference to ballads, Angela McShane correctly points out that throughout the seventeenth century, a range of typefaces — including black-letter, roman, italic, and engraved script — were used simultaneously, even if one kind was frequently predominant for the body text of the ballad stanzas.<sup>36</sup> So, for example, roman would often be used in titles, and roman or italic to distinguish proper names, even in the context of ballads printed predominantly in black-letter. Accordingly, a distinction based solely on familiarity with, or the ability to read, different typefaces is not altogether sustainable.

Instead, McShane argues that by the end of the century booksellers were consciously exploiting typographical differences in order to direct certain kinds of ballads towards certain kinds of readers, and describes what she calls 'cross-over' ballads, where the same titles were printed in

---

33 Charles C. Mish, 'Black Letter as a Social Discriminant in the Seventeenth Century', *PMLA*, 68 (1953), 627–30 (Mish describes the audience for black-letter as both 'middle-class' and 'culturally retarded').

34 Mark Bland, 'The Appearance of the Text in Early Modern England', *Text*, 11 (1998), 11–154.

35 Zachary Lesser, 'Typographic Nostalgia: Play-Reading, Popularity, and the Meanings of Black Letter', in *The Book of the Play: Playwrights, Stationers, and Readers in Early Modern England*, ed. Marta Straznicky (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006), pp. 99–126. Lesser suggests that the sudden disappearance of black-letter is an artefact of scholarly research (p. 121 n. 11).

36 Angela McShane, 'Typography Matters: Branding Ballads and Gelding Curates in Stuart England', in *Book Trade Connections from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Centuries*, ed. John Hinks and Catherine Armstrong (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press; London: British Library, 2008), pp. 19–44.

both typographical formats, with the inference that they were distributed into separate markets — children, women, or untutored readers, for example, versus the more politically engaged. Black-letter implied a broad appeal to a readership familiar with ballads from the past, while white-letter was associated with topicality and satire, sometimes to the point of obscurity, for the political cognoscenti. Typography became a form of ‘branding’ for printed products of different kinds.

Alongside all of these factors must be set the evident economic sense there was in continuing to make use of the older fonts, especially for printers/booksellers at the cheaper end of the trade. Crudely, trade precedent and inertia may have had as much to do with the anachronistic persistence of black-letter as any conscious marketing strategy. The manuscript title to the first volume of Pepys’s collection of ballads states that it was continued up to 1700, ‘When the Form, till then peculiar thereto, vizt. of the Black Letter with Picturs, seems (for cheapness sake) wholly laid aside, for that of the White Letter without Pictures.’<sup>37</sup> With the benefit of hindsight, this observation sheds little light on the matter. It is true that there are in Pepys’s collection ballads both in black-letter with woodcut illustrations (in landscape orientation) and in white-letter without illustrations (in portrait orientation). Nevertheless, half-sheet ballads in landscape orientation with woodcut illustrations were printed in white-letter throughout the eighteenth century and into the early decades of the nineteenth. As a sophisticated reader, possibly Pepys underestimated the visual and commercial appeal of illustrated sheets. Measurements provided in the catalogue of the Pepys collection suggest that, on average, the sheet size for the white-letter ballads may have been slightly smaller, potentially making them marginally cheaper to produce, because paper constituted a major part of the cost of early printing. Beyond that, there is no real reason to think that white-letter supplanted black-letter primarily on grounds of cost.

White-letter was the norm for Bates’s longer fiction and non-fiction. The eight-page song chapbooks are also in white-letter. Among the 24-page chapbooks there are examples in both black- and white-letter. The 24-page black-letter *Fortunatus*, *Conquest of France*, and *Guy of Warwick* all use roman in titles and for proper names and direct speech.

---

37 Weinstein, *Catalogue of the Pepys Library*, vol. II, part i, p. 3.

The *Conquest of France* was issued in both black- and white-letter editions, with remarkably similar settings of the text and the same woodcuts, and both have a main title dominated by one line in large roman ('Conquest of France') and one in large black-letter ('Edward the Black Prince').<sup>38</sup> The 48-page *Famous History of Frier Bacon* in black-letter has the songs and charms in roman. *Robin Hood's Garland*, in white-letter, has the name 'Robin Hood' in gothic type on the title page and in the running-heads.<sup>39</sup> Whatever the font selected for the body text, other typefaces could be employed to set up visual contrasts.

The transition from black-letter to roman is most readily observed among the ballads. With a few exceptions (below), the bulk of the surviving sheets are fairly equally divided between: (a) black-letter, in landscape orientation, illustrated with woodcuts; and (b) white-letter, in portrait orientation with text in two columns, mostly without illustrations, but in rather more than half the examples with music notation. Both black- and white-letter ballads were issued from all three of the addresses associated with Bates, so the transition must have been (at least in some degree) a gradual one. The black-letter ballads commonly have some roman and italic in titles and imprints, and used to distinguish proper names and refrain lines in the body text. Somewhat less frequently, some black-letter type is used in titles and imprints of white-letter ballads, with italic usually distinguishing proper names and refrains, although there are a few instances of refrain lines in black-letter.<sup>40</sup>

Although the prevalence of white-letter (including verse in portrait orientation, without illustrations) in the wider book trade within the period in question means that the white-letter ballads have something

38 *The Conquest of France* (printed by A. M.; for Charles Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC N70022]; *The Conquest of France* (printed by A. M.; for Charles Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC T161259].

39 *Robin Hood's Garland* (London: printed by and for W. Onley; and are to be sold by C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner, 1704) [ESTC T197054].

40 For example: *The Mournful Plotters; or, The Sorrowful Lamentation of Several Conspirators within the Walls of Newgate* (London: printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R188604]; *The Unkind Parents; or, The Languishing Lamentation of Two Loyal Lovers* (printed for C. Bates, next the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R227522]; *The Young-Mans Lamentation, being an Answer to the Maid that Dy'd for Love in Wood's-Close, near St. John's-Street* (printed for C. Bates, near the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R234517].

of an aura of typographical modernity about them, it may be misleading to think of the transition as driven by visual aesthetics in the manner suggested by Bland. The stanzaic nature of ballads means that, by the post-Restoration period, even where the typeface is predominantly black-letter, the text block is usually by its very nature broken up with white space, title lines, and illustrations. The occasional example of a more solid black-letter text block, such as *The Blind Begger's Daughter of Bednal-Green* or *The Woful Lamentation of Jane Shore*, provides the exception to prove the rule.<sup>41</sup> Some other booksellers' editions of the same ballads have a similarly solid black-letter appearance, and although a case could be made that these were old stories, the layout might just as well have been dictated by the density of what is quite a wordy text.

A modest number of Charles Bates's surviving ballads are beginning to move towards a typical eighteenth-century appearance of white-letter in landscape orientation with one or more woodcut illustrations. *The King Henry the Second and the Miller of Mansfield* printed by Brown and Norris and sold by Bates is entirely in roman (and italic), but with no illustrations and no real stanza divisions beyond indented first lines. Most of the ballads printed by William Onley and sold by Bates are in black-letter, but an exception is *The Valorous Acts Performed at Gaunt by the Brave Bonny Lass Mary Ambree*, which boasts a military woodcut and white-letter text divided into quatrains, with plenty of white space, and with the title in a mixture of gothic, roman, and italic dominated by a line in large black-letter ('Valorous Acts performed at Gaunt').<sup>42</sup>

At least two ballads were published in black-letter and then in white-letter, both in landscape orientation with woodcut illustrations. *The Jolly Gentleman's Frolick* was issued in black-letter (with a lengthy title in roman and refrain lines in roman and italic) from the White Hart, and then again in white-letter (with italic refrains) from the Sun and Bible.<sup>43</sup> *The Low-Country Soldier* was issued both in black-letter (with

41 *The Rarest Ballad that Ever Was Seen, of the Blind Begger's Daughter of Bednal-Green* (London: printed by and for W. Onley; and are to be sold by C. Bates, at the sign of the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC T127464]; *The Woful Lamentation of Jane Shore* (printed by and for W. O.; and sold by C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R221306].

42 *The Valorous Acts Performed at Gaunt by the Brave Bonny Lass Mary Ambree* (London: printed by and for W. O.; and sold by C. Bates, in Pye [Corner]) [ESTC R185917].

43 *The Jolly Gentleman's Frolick; or, The City Ramble* (printed for C. Bates, at the White Hart, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R227227]; *The Jolly Gentleman's Frolick; or, The City*

proper names in roman) except for a white-letter 'Epilogue', and in white-letter (with italic proper names), from the Sun and Bible.<sup>44</sup> The title in both cases is in a mixture of gothic, roman, and italic dominated by a line in large black-letter ('The Low-Country Soldier'). These ballads seem to have been quite new when printed for Charles Bates (at least, there are no earlier records in ESTC). *The Jolly Gentleman's Frolick* recounts the comical adventure of young gallant in London, with a generic Restoration flavour to it, while *The Low-Country Soldier* is a fanciful begging song for an old soldier, which makes reference both to the Elizabethan commander Sir Francis Vere and to the siege of Buda which took place in 1686. Here at least, the readiest explanation for the typographical transition would be a simple chronological one, the printer(s) replacing black-letter type with roman.

#### IV

Turning to the subject matter, the black-letter ballads run a familiar gamut of themes: love and sex, in comic, tragic, and pastoral guises; various historical/legendary stories (David and Bathsheba, Queen Eleanor, Jane Shore, the Children in the Wood, the Blind Beggar's Daughter); King William's wars in Ireland and Europe; the death of Queen Mary; a satire against Scots pedlars; the 'last farewell' of the highwayman Claude Duval; anti-Catholic propaganda; one of Thomas D'Urfey's playhouse songs; female soldiers; the complaints of the poor. The subject matter of the two-column white-letter ballads includes: love and sex, again in comic, tragic, and pastoral guises; the 'last farewell' of Sir John Johnston; the funeral of the Duke of Grafton; the lamentation of 'Captain' James Whitney; the proclamation of Queen Anne; theatre songs; historical/legendary stories (the King and the Miller of Mansfield); the wars in Ireland and Europe; anti-Catholic propaganda; female soldiers; a number of 'answer' songs responding to songs already in print. The

---

*Ramble* (London: printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Giltspur Street, near Pye[Corner]) [ESTC R179000].

44 *The Low-Country Soldier; or, His Humble Petition at his Return into England after his Bold Adventures in Bloody Battels* (printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R233282]; *The Low-Country Soldier; or, His Humble Petition at his Return into England after his Bold Adventures in Bloody Battels* (printed C. Bates [sic], at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R235743].

political ballads supportive of the Protestant settlement are fairly evenly divided between black- and white-letter. In other words, the subject matter *per se* remains quite similar, regardless of typography.

Thematic continuity is exemplified by *The Unconstant Shepherd*, which was published several times: (a) in white-letter, in two columns in portrait orientation without either music notation or illustration, from next door to the Crown Tavern in 1690; (b) from the Sun and Bible in black-letter, in landscape orientation with woodcut illustrations, in two issues with different woodcuts (but not differentiated in ESTC); (c) by Sarah Bates at the Sun and Bible in white-letter, in landscape orientation, with different woodcuts which look surprisingly crude compared with those printed for her husband.<sup>45</sup> Charles Bates also published *An Answer to the Unconstant Shepherd* twice: (a) in black-letter, in landscape orientation with woodcut illustrations, from next door to the Crown Tavern; (b) in white-letter, in two columns in portrait orientation with (meaningless) music notation, again from next door to the Crown Tavern.<sup>46</sup> As a further example, Richard Rigbey's ballad of *The Shoemaker's Triumph* survives in two issues printed in white-letter, in portrait orientation with (different) woodcuts, while another of his songs about shoemakers, *The Cobler's Corrant*, was printed in black-letter, in landscape orientation with woodcuts, and all were published from the Sun and Bible.<sup>47</sup> Rigbey (or Rigby) was an artisan poet responsible for

45 *The Unconstant Shepherd; or, The Forsaken Lasses Lamentation* (printed for Charles Bates, next door to the Crown Tavern, near Duck Lane end, in West Smithfield, 1690) [ESTC R234520]; *The Unconstant Shepherd; or, The Forsaken Lass's Lamentation* (London: printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R185854, Glasgow University Library, Euing Ballads 365]; *The Unconstant Shepherd; or, The Forsaken Lass's Lamentation* (London: printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner, near West Smithfield) [ESTC R185854, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Crawford.EB.933]; *The Unconstant Shepherd; or, The Forsaken Lasses Lamentation* (printed for S. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC T206951].

46 *An Answer to the Unconstant Shepherd; or, Fair Cynthia's Grief and Care Crowned with Joy and Happiness by her Lover's Return* (printed for Charles Bates, next to the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R170327]; *An Answer to the Unconstant Shepherd; or, Fair Cynthia's Grief and Care Crowned with Joy and Happiness by her Lover's Return* (printed for Charles Bates, next to the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC T219525].

47 Richard Rigbey, *The Shoemaker's Triumph, being a Song in Praise of the Gentle-Craft* (printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R227583]; Richard Rigbey, *The Shoemaker's Triumph, being a Song in Praise of the Gentle-Craft* (printed for Charles Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R234535]; Richard



a number of ballads, some of which were mildly political, published by different booksellers in both black- and white-letter.<sup>48</sup>

The subject categories outlined above are really quite imprecise, but if thematic distinctions were to be drawn between Bates's black- and white-letter ballads, they would be of three kinds: (i) the ballads of love in white-letter are more heavily weighted towards pastoral conventions, and some might reasonably classify as so-called 'Scotch songs' which became fashionable after the Restoration; (ii) rather more of the white-letter ballads originated in the theatre; (iii) rather more of the black-letter ballads, often on legendary/historical subjects, had been published previously in the seventeenth century and would be published again as 'old ballads' in roman type in the eighteenth century. Some of the familiar titles that fall within this last category would be *The Blind Begger's Daughter of Bednal-Green*, *David and Bersheba*, *The Fair Maid of Islington*, *The Gelding of the Devil*, *A Godly Warning for All Maidens*, *The Life and Death of Sir Andrew Barton*, *The Norfolk Gentleman's Last Will and Testament*, *Queen Eleanor's Confession*, *Robin Hood's Rescuing Will*. *Stutly*, and *The Woful Lamentation of Jane Shore*.

Equally, though, a title such as *Bonny Dundee*, which was probably not quite so old but would still turn up later in lists of 'old ballads', was printed in white-letter. Looking back from the present day, a number of the earliest identified versions of folk songs collected at a much later date have been attributed to Charles Bates, among them the following: *Devol's Last Farewel*, in landscape black-letter with woodcut illustrations ('The Flash Lad', Roud 30101);<sup>49</sup> *The Loyal Forrister; or, Royal Pastime* ('King William and the Keeper', Roud 853), in black-letter with woodcut illustration;<sup>50</sup> *The Noble Funeral of that Renowned Champion the Duke of*

---

Rigby, *The Cobler's Corrant; or, The Old Shooemaker Metamorphos'd* (London: printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner, near West Smithfield) [ESTC R187232].

48 Angela McShane Jones, "'Rime and Reason": The Political World of the English Broadside Ballad, 1640-1689' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Warwick, 2004), pp. 65-67.

49 *Devol's Last Farewel* (London: printed for C. Bates, in Pye Co[rner]) [ESTC N69453, London, British Library, C.40.m.9.(47.)]; *Devol's Last Farewel* (London: printed for C. Bates, in Pye Co[rner]) [ESTC N69453, Glasgow University Library, Euing Ballads 77]. On Claude Duval, highwayman, executed 1670, so it is likely there were earlier versions that have not survived.

50 *The Loyal Forrister; or, Royal Pastime* (printed for C. Bates, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R180199]. Exemplar at Glasgow University Library, Euing Ballads 156, cut up and

*Grafton* ('The Duke of Bedford', 'Six Dukes Went a-Fishing', Roud 78), in portrait white-letter with woodcut illustration;<sup>51</sup> *The Unkind Parents* ('The True Lover's Farewell', 'Ten Thousand Miles', 'The Turtle Dove', 'Fare Thee Well, My Dearest Dear', Roud 422), in portrait white-letter with (meaningless) music notation.<sup>52</sup>

## V

One reason for the portrait orientation of white-letter ballads is that it was more amenable to the printing of music notation (contemporary song-sheets with engraved notation and text would also be in portrait orientation), although that can hardly be considered the only reason, given that there are examples without notation. It is well known that for a brief period towards the end of the seventeenth century some broadside ballads were printed with music notation, albeit the numbers were never large, but that in the majority of examples the music is meaningless. In the Pepys collection, for example, fewer than 10 per cent of the ballads have printed notation, and for more than 60 per cent of those that do, the music is meaningless, while some others have a tune that does not fit the words. The Pepys catalogue records eighty-five ballads with the name of Charles Bates in the imprint, of which thirty-four have printed music notation, which is meaningful in only nine instances, and in three of those the music does not fit the words. The music for these broadsides was printed from moveable type (most apparent from unevenness in the stave lines), and these sheets are quite distinct from song-sheets of much the same period with both notation and text printed from engraving on copper-plates, which would have been more expensive both to produce and to buy.

Claude Simpson postulated that the brief appearance of music notation on broadsides was driven by the increasing importance of

---

rearranged.

- 51 *The Noble Funeral of the Renowned Champion the Duke of Grafton* (printed for Charles Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Py Corner) [ESTC R235386]; *The Noble Funeral of that Renowned Champion the Duke of Grafton* ([printed for Charles Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Py Corner]) [ESTC R219024]. On Henry FitzRoy, 1st Duke of Grafton, illegitimate son of King Charles II, killed at the siege of Cork in 1690.
- 52 *The Unkind Parents; or, The Languishing Lamentation of Two Loyal Lovers* (printed for C. Bates, next the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R227522].

new stage songs and was intended to promote the ballads, perhaps by implying that they enjoyed the same sort of popularity.<sup>53</sup> Richard Luckett inferred that it reflected the emergence of a new and musically literate public, and marked the beginning of a cleavage between engraved song-sheets on the one hand and broadside ballads set with moveable type on the other.<sup>54</sup> There is likely to be something in both of these arguments, but they do not really explain why music was only occasionally included, or why (more often than not) it was meaningless. McShane suggests instead that it was a publishing experiment, designed to signal that these were things that could be sung when many sheets were being displayed together on a stall or outside a shop.<sup>55</sup>

Some playhouse songs will illustrate the difficulty of interpreting what exactly was going on here. 'Celia, that I once was blest' was sung in John Dryden's comedy *Amphitryon* (1690), at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, with music by Henry Purcell.<sup>56</sup> Bates issued the song on white-letter broadsides twice, under the title *Coy Celia's Cruelty; or, The Languishing Lovers Lamentation, being the Last New Play-Song Sung at the Theatre-Royal, in a New Play Called Amphitryon*, 'To an excellent new play-house tune'.<sup>57</sup> As printed, in the play the song has just three stanzas, but the broadsides each run to ten stanzas, with some minor textual variants, and are headed with different sets of meaningless notation which bear no resemblance to Purcell's tune. Much the same is found with another song from *Amphitryon*, 'For Iris I sigh and hourly dye', which was extended from two to eight stanzas and again issued twice on white-letter broadsides, with different but equally meaningless notation.<sup>58</sup> 'If love's a sweet passion' was sung in Elkanah Settle's

53 Claude M. Simpson, *The British Broadside Ballad and its Music* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1966), p. xii.

54 Luckett, 'The Collection: Origins and History', p. xv.

55 McShane, 'Typography Matters', pp. 24–25.

56 [John] Dryden, *Amphitryon; or, The Two Socia's [...] to which is added, the Musick of the Songs Compos'd by Mr. Henry Purcel* (London: printed for J. Tonson, at the Judge's Head, in Chancery Lane, near Fleet Street; and M. Tonson, at Gray's Inn Gate, in Gray's Inn Lane, 1690) [ESTC R16963].

57 *Coy Celia's Cruelty; or, The Languishing Lovers Lamentation* (printed for Charles Bates, next the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R176388]; *Coy Celia's Cruelty; or, The Languishing Lovers Lamentation* (printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R171579]; Simpson, *British Broadside Ballad and its Music*, pp. 89–90.

58 *The Indifferent Lover; or, The Roving Batchelor* (printed for Ch. Bates, near Duck Lane end, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R234500]; *The Indifferent Lover; or, The Roving*

*The Fairy-Queen* (1692), performed at the Queen's Theatre in Dorset Garden, again with music by Purcell, which was published separately.<sup>59</sup> As printed, the stage song has two stanzas, but Bates published two white-letter broadside versions with text of seven stanzas, under the title *The Young Lover's Enquiry; or, The Batchelor's Question to Cupid*, 'To an excellent new ayre, sung at the play-house'.<sup>60</sup> One of these is headed with meaningless notation, but the other has the notation for Purcell's music. A sequel ballad, *An Answer to the Young Lover's Enquiry*, 'To an excellent new tune', was published with meaningless notation.<sup>61</sup>

These broadside versions look like opportunistic publications, rushed out in order to take advantage of the popularity of songs from the theatre. One wonders whether the sheets were actually sold in the vicinity of the playhouses? It would presumably have been fairly easy for a poet to expand upon the verses, but the music probably required the bookseller or printer to have access to a published copy, and if that was not available they had to make do with notation made up from pieces of type to hand in order to give the impression of a playhouse tune. Possibly, too, not all compositors were even capable of setting meaningful music. The Pepys catalogue records several instances where scraps of notation have been used more than once.

A handful of ballads were published both in black-letter with woodcuts and in white-letter with music notation. *An Answer to the Unconstant Shepherd*, *An Answer to Unconstant William*, *The Loyal Soldiers of Flanders*, and *The Merry Bag-pipes* were issued in both formats from next door to the Crown Tavern.<sup>62</sup> *Unconstant William* was issued in

---

*Batchelor* (printed for Ch. Bates, at the White Hart, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R227610]; Simpson, *British Broadside Ballad and its Music*, pp. 223–24.

59 *Some Select Songs as They Are Sung in the Fairy Queen, Set to Musick by Mr. Henry Purcell* (London: printed by J. Heptinstall; for the author; and are to be sold by John Carr, at the Inner Temple Gate, near Temple Barr; by Henry Playford, at his shop in the Temple; and at the Theatre, in Dorset Garden, 1692) [ESTC R183754].

60 *The Young Lovers Enquiry; or, The Batchelors Question to Cupid* (printed for C. Bates, next door to the Crown Tavern, near Duck Lane end, in West Smithfield, 1692) [ESTC R187781]; *The Young Lover's Enquiry; or, The Batchelor's Question to Cupid* (London: printed for C. Bates, at the White Heart [sic], in West Smithfield, near Pye Corner) [ESTC R187782]; Simpson, *British Broadside Ballad and its Music*, pp. 359–61.

61 *An Answer to the Young Lover's Enquiry* (printed for C. Bates, at the White Hart, in West Smithfield, near Pye Corner, 1693) [ESTC R172380].

62 *An Answer to the Unconstant Shepherd* (printed for Charles Bates, next to the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R170327]; *An Answer to the Unconstant Shepherd* (printed for Charles Bates, next to the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC

white-letter with music from near Duck Lane end and in black-letter from the White Hart.<sup>63</sup> The tunes named are always the same in both versions, but for only one of these ballads is the notation actually meaningful — that is, ‘March Boys’, printed with *The Merry Bag-pipes*. This looks like more or less simultaneous marketing of these five ballads, presumably directed at different groups of potential purchasers in the manner suggested by McShane. While the printed music might have flattered those who thought themselves fashionably musically literate, in most cases the flattery would actually have been quite ironic. In any case, the experiment did not last more than a couple of decades, and during the eighteenth century (meaningful) notation was more typically to be found on engraved song sheets.

## VI

Charles Bates ran the bookselling business for something like twenty-six years. Sarah Bates presumably took over on his death in 1716, and she is recorded as having taken on an apprentice in 1717.<sup>64</sup> She ran the business until at least 1735, which is the latest date at which her name is found in an imprint.<sup>65</sup> The modest estate she inherited left her little option but to continue in business.<sup>66</sup>

---

T219525]; *An Answer to Unconstant William; or, The Young-Man's Resolution to Pay the Young Lasses Home in their Own Coin* (printed for C. Bates, next door to the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC T92374]; *An Answer to Unconstant William; or, The Young-Man's Resolution to Pay the Young Lasses Home in their Own Coin* (printed for C. Bates, next the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R170328]; *The Loyal Soldiers of Flanders* (printed for C. Bates, next the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Crawford.EB.106]; *The Loyal Soldiers of Flanders* (printed for Ch. Bates, next door to the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R180260]; *The Merry Bag-pipes* (printed for C. Bates, next door to the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R227298]; *The Merry Bag-pipes* (printed for C. Bates, next door to the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R234497].

63 *Unconstant William; or, The Damosels Resolution to Love Indifferently All Men Alike, from her Experience of his Disloyalty* (printed for C. Bates, at the White Hart, in West Smithfield) [ESTC T71269]; *Unconstant William; or, The Damosels Resolution to Love Indifferently All Men Alike, from her Experience of his Disloyalty* (printed for C. Bates, near Duck Lane end, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R185855].

64 *Stationers' Company Apprentices, 1701–1800*, p. 26 (no. 592).

65 *The New History of the Trojan Wars and Troy's Destruction* (London: printed for Sarah Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Giltspur Street; and James Hodges, at the Looking Glass, on London Bridge, 1735) [ESTC T66387].

66 Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories*, pp. 89–90.

Sarah Bates sold ballads, eight- and 24-page chapbooks, and some longer books. By her time, everything was being printed in roman (and italic), with the occasional use of gothic for display purposes, and the experiment with music notation was in the past. There are fewer titles than from the Charles Bates period, which is in large part attributable to his activity having coincided with Samuel Pepys's period of ballad collecting. Imprints include titles printed by Thomas Norris at the Looking Glass on London Bridge, but the variable wording leaves room for uncertainty as to who actually covered the printing and paper costs (printed by Norris for S. Bates, printed by Norris and sold by S. Bates, printed by and for Norris and sold by S. Bates), albeit it is indicative of a close business relationship, probably much like that of Charles Bates and William Onley. Some longer books were published in collaboration with other booksellers, including Norris, Arthur Bettsworth, Hannah Tracy, Charles Hitch, John Osborn(e), James Hodges, Richard Ware, and Samuel Birt.

Some of the ballads published by Sarah Bates had previously been published by Charles Bates. Husband and wife both issued *Bonny Dundee* in white-letter, in portrait orientation, with the subtitle ('Jockey's Deliverance') in black-letter.<sup>67</sup> *The Merry Hay-makers* was published by Charles Bates in black-letter with four woodcuts, and then by Sarah Bates in white-letter, with two of the same woodcuts and two different ones.<sup>68</sup> *Queen Eleanor's Confession* survives in four different issues, three in black-letter and one in white-letter, from Charles Bates, with a single woodcut showing the two friars at the queen's bedside, followed by a Sarah Bates edition in white-letter with a good deal of italic, apart from the first line of the title ('Queen Eleanor's Confession') which is in

---

67 *Bonny Dundee; or, Jockey's Deliverance* (printed for Charles Bates, at the White Hart, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R176430]; *Bonny Dundee; or, Jockey's Deliverance* [sic] (printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R171867]; *Bonny Dundee; or, Jockeys Deliverante* [sic] (printed for S. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Guiltspur Street) [ESTC T206291].

68 *The Merry Hay-makers; or, Pleasant Pastime between the Young Men and Maids in the Pleasant Meadows* (printed for C. B., in Pye Corner) [ESTC R180553]; *The Merry Hay-makers; or, Pleasant Pastime between the Young-Men and Maids in the Pleasant Meadows* (printed for S. Bates, in Guiltspur Street) [ESTC N69902].

black-letter, with the two friars woodcut as well as another, smaller one, apparently showing the queen poisoning Fair Rosamond.<sup>69</sup>

Sarah Bates also published some eight-page song chapbooks. As an example, *The Languishing Lady's Garland* took its title from the first song in the chapbook, which was one that Charles Bates had already published twice as a white-letter broadside with (meaningless) music notation.<sup>70</sup> She sold both *Chevy-Chase* and *A Godly Warning to All Maidens*, which Charles Bates had sold as black-letter broadsides, in 24-page chapbooks where the ballads are printed along with the corresponding prose stories.<sup>71</sup> There are also Sarah Bates ballads that had been printed in the previous century but that are not extant with a Charles Bates imprint. Examples include *Joyful News for Maids and Young Women*, *The Bloody Murther of Sir John Barley-corn*, and *Saint Bernard's Vision*. The Sarah Bates broadside of *Fair Margaret's Misfortune* is the earliest known version of the ballad later collected as 'Fair Margaret and Sweet William' (Roud

69 [Queen Eleanor's Confession] (printed for C. Bates, at the White Hart, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R227376]; *Queen Eleanor's Confession* (Londou [sic]: printed for C. Bates, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R221280, London, British Library, C.40.m.9.(33.)]; *Queen Eleanor's Confession* (London: printed for C. Bates, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R221280, Glasgow University Library, Euing Ballads 291]; *Queen Eleanor's Confession* (London: printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Giltspur Street, near Pye Corner) [ESTC R236038]; *Queen Eleanor's Confession* (London: printed for S. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Giltspur Street, near Pye Corner) [ESTC T206809].

70 *The Languishing Lady; or, The False-Hearted Lovers Unspeakable Cruelty* (printed for C. Bates, next the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R234515]; *The Languishing Lady; or, The False-Hearted Lovers Unspeakable Cruelty* (printed for Charles Bates, next door to the Crown Tavern, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R227617]; *The Languishing Lady's Garland, containing Four Excellent New Songs: I. The Languishing Lady; or, The False-Hearted Lover's Unspeakable Cruelty; II. An Answer to the Languishing Lady; or, The False Hearted Lover Turn'd Loyal; III. The Happy Pair; or, The Loving Shepherd and Shepherdess; IV. The Bath Toast* (printed for S. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Giltspur Street) [ESTC T491830].

71 *An Unhappy Memorable Song of the Hunting in Chevy-Chase* (London: printed by and for W. Onley; and are to be sold by C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC N69452]; *The Famous and Renowned History of the Memorable but Unhappy Hunting on Chevy-Chase* (London: printed by Tho. Norris, at the Looking Glass, on London Bridge; and sold by S. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Giltspur Street) [ESTC T203263]; *A Godly Warning for All Maidens, by the Example of God's Judgement Shewed on Jerman's Wife* (London: printed by and for W. O.; and are to be sold by C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [ESTC R177460]; *Bateman's Tragedy; or, The Perjur'd Bride Justly Rewarded* (London: printed by Tho. Norris, at the Looking Glass, on London Bridge; and sold by S. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Giltspur Street) [ESTC T67470].

253).<sup>72</sup> An eight-page chapbook with the title *The Female Sailor's Garland* is the earliest known version of 'William Taylor' (Roud 158).<sup>73</sup>

The 24-page chapbooks are either three-sheet quartos, typically the format for older titles (*Bateman's Tragedy*, *Hercules of Greece*, *Chevy-Chase*, *Valentine and Orson*, *Guy of Warwick*, *Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Essex*), or 1½-sheet octavos (*Canterbury Tales* by Chaucer Junior, *The Comical Cheats of Swalpo*, *Fair Rosamond of Scotland*, *The Merry Piper*, *The Frolicksome Courtier and Jovial Tinker*, *The Tryal of Wit*). Where the Charles Bates 24-page *Valentine and Orson* and *Guy of Warwick* are in black-letter, the Sarah Bates equivalents are in white-letter, but both of them sold *Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Essex* in white-letter. *Bateman's Tragedy* and *Chevy-Chase* correspond with titles listed in the Brown and Norris Stationers' Register entry of 1712 (as do the ballads *Sir John Barley-corn* and *Saint Bernard's Vision*). Again, the business relationships and possible ownership of titles remain equivocal, although the presence of an advertisement page — at the end of the *Chevy-Chase* chapbook printed by Thomas Norris and sold by Sarah Bates — for books printed by Norris suggests he may have been the dominant partner.

As an example of the longer works, *A New Academy of Complements*, a miscellaneous etiquette book which strays into humorous dialogue and songs and dances, survives as a fourth edition printed for Charles Bates and Arthur Bettesworth (1715), ninth and tenth editions printed for Sarah Bates and Arthur Bettesworth (1727, 1731), and an eleventh edition printed for Arthur Bettesworth, Charles Hitch, James Hodges, and Sarah Bates (1734), all in white-letter but with black-letter in the running-heads.<sup>74</sup> The edition and licensing statements were in black-

72 *Fair Margaret's Misfortune; or, Sweet William's Frightful Dreams on his Wedding Night* (printed for S. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Giltspur Street) [ESTC N69850].

73 *The Female Sailor's Garland* (printed for S. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Pye Corner) [Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce PP 183 (20)]. The 'S.' in the imprint is far from clear, but looks more like an 'S.' than a 'C.'. The Bodleian Library catalogue does not record publication details for this and other items bound together under this shelfmark, and neither are they listed in ESTC, which is a salutary reminder of the uncertainties involved in studying this kind of cheap print.

74 *A New Academy of Complements; or, The Lover's Secretary* [sic], 4th edn (London: printed for C. Bates, in Giltspur Street; and A. Bettesworth, on London Bridge, 1715) [ESTC T86876]; *A New Academy of Complements; or, The Lover's Secretary*, 9th edn (London: printed for S. Bates, in Giltspur Street; and A. Bettesworth, in Paternoster Row, 1727) [ESTC T199982]; *A New Academy of Complements; or, The Lover's Secretary*,



letter in 1715 but subsequently in roman and italics. The pattern right across the Bates family business is quite consistent with a gradual and essentially pragmatic transition to roman type.

## VII

A good number of the Charles and Sarah Bates publications were 'licensed according to order' or 'licensed and entered according to order'. Strictly speaking, these were two different things. The requirement for the licensing of printed works by a state official dated back to Tudor times and was intended to prevent the publication of seditious or otherwise offensive matter. It was written into the post-Restoration Printing Act of 1662, which lapsed in 1679 and was not renewed until 1685, after which it remained in place until efforts either to renew it or to replace it with something else failed in 1695. Although technically applicable to every printed work, in practice licensing was not rigorously enforced and could be ignored by publishers of non-contentious works. While failure to license a work could be used as a convenient means of prosecuting a publication deemed offensive, the law of seditious libel was increasingly used for such purposes after 1695.

Separately, it was also required under the act that a title should be entered in the Register of the Company of Stationers before it could be printed. Entry in the Register would confer the right of ownership in a title. Large entries of ballad titles in 1624, 1629, 1656, 1675, and 1712 can be presumed to have been concerned with the transfer and maintenance of printing rights from one generation to the next. Nevertheless, numbers of titles were never entered at all. Entry incurred a cost for the bookseller, and the decision whether or not to enter a particular title was presumably a function of its perceived commercial value and of the perceived authority of the Company of Stationers.

---

10th edn (London: printed for S. Bates, in Giltspur Street; and A. Bettesworth, in Paternoster Row, 1731) [ESTC T206486]; *A New Academy of Complements; or, The Lover's Secretary*, 11th edn (London: printed for A. Bettesworth and C. Hitch, in Paternoster Row; J. Hodges, at London Bridge; and S. Bates, in Giltspur Street, 1734) [ESTC T131313].

I have not found any titles entered in the Stationers' Register under the names of Charles or Sarah Bates. Neither is there any reason to think that any of their titles would have fallen foul of the authorities. In so far as any of them can be considered political, they were very much in a support of the monarchy and the Protestant settlement. Accordingly, the licensing statements found with nearly half of the Charles Bates titles — and a slightly smaller proportion of the Sarah Bates titles — require some explanation.

The phenomenon is not unique to this firm, and 'licensed and entered according to order' continues to appear with some street literature titles right up to the end of the eighteenth century, so it is a much larger question than can be addressed here, and one to which scholars have not been able to provide an entirely satisfactory answer. There are clues, though, from the activities of the ardent royalist Roger L'Estrange, who as Surveyor of the Press was the official responsible for licensing between 1662 and 1679, and in some degree continued his work up until 1688.<sup>75</sup> There are many ballads and other publications, many of them quite innocuous, with wording to indicate that they had been licensed, or 'allowed', by L'Estrange. Later, John Dunton wrote that he would provide 'a brief Character of all the Licensers, for (if the *ACT FOR PRINTING* passes) those Men will be courted afresh, and are so necessary a part of the *Stationers Company*, that no Book can be Printed, but with their *Imprimatur*'.<sup>76</sup> This must have been written while efforts were still under way to renew the Printing Act after 1695, and when there was still a strong sense of uncertainty hanging over the book trade.<sup>77</sup> So, it is not unlikely that there was a wariness that prompted booksellers like Charles and Sarah Bates to continue to advertise the legitimacy of their wares even after 1695.

Most of their ballads cannot be dated precisely, but a good example would be one on the Duke of Marlborough's victory at Ramillies in 1706,

---

75 John Feather, 'Controlling the Press in Restoration England', *Publishing History*, 74 (2014), 7–48; Harold Love, 'L'Estrange, Sir Roger (1616–1704)', *ODNB* <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16514>.

76 *The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Late Citizen of London* (London: printed for S. Malthus, 1705), p. 346 [ESTC T75140].

77 George Kitchin, *Sir Roger L'Estrange: A Contribution to the History of the Press in the Seventeenth Century* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1913), p. 427, gives this reason for the deferential tone of Dunton's remarks on the licensers ('no man could tell when their services might be again requisitioned').

'licensed according to order'.<sup>78</sup> Among the longer works, the editions of *A New Academy of Complements* from 1715 up to 1734 (mentioned above) all carry a licensing statement. Another form of permission statement is 'This may be printed, R. P.', which is found with two Charles Bates ballads, *The Hackney Damsells Pastime* and *The Mistaken Lover*, but was commonly used elsewhere (with ballads printed for James Bissel, for example).<sup>79</sup> The 'R. P.' stands for Richard Pocock, one of the successors to Roger L'Estrange, who was licenser c.1685–89, but remains an elusive figure. That was before Charles Bates was freed from his apprenticeship in July 1690, but *The Mistaken Lover* had previously been printed for Charles Dennisson (whose datable works fall within the 1685–89 period), and it carries the same statement that it had been authorized by Pocock.<sup>80</sup> Possibly Charles Bates, or his printer, simply followed the wording of the earlier edition, but when Sarah Bates came to publish the same ballad the licensing statement had been dropped.<sup>81</sup>

The presence of licensing statements after 1695 is inconsistent and potentially confusing, and they certainly cannot be used as evidence to date particular publications. It is probably unsurprising that they continued to appear for a time after the lapse of the Printing Act given the uncertainty about what, if anything, might replace it, and arguably the uncertainty persisted until the introduction of the 1710 copyright act. It is, however, less easy to explain why Sarah Bates (and others) continued to use wording such as 'licensed according to order'. One possibility is that there was simply a significant element of print trade tradition, and even direct copying, involved in the practice.

78 *The Paris Gazetteer; or, A Dialogue between the English and Paris Gazette* (printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Guiltspur Street) [ESTC N11028].

79 *The Hackney Damsells Pastime; or, A Summer Evening Frolick* (printed for Charles Bates, at the White Hart, in West Smithfield) [ESTC R227541]; *The Mistaken Lover; or, The Supposed Ungreatful [sic] Creature Appears a True Pattern of Loyalty* (printed for C. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Guiltspur Street) [ESTC T206444, Cambridge University Library, Madden Ballads 2.552].

80 *The Mistaken Lover; or, The Supposed Ungrateful Creature Appears a True Pattern of Loyalty* (printed for C. Dennisson, at the Stationers' Arms, within Aldgate) [ESTC R227306].

81 *The Mistaken Lover; or, The Supposed Ungrateful Creature Appears a True Pattern of Loyalty* (printed for S. Bates, at the Sun and Bible, in Guiltspur Street) [Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce Ballads 2(146b)].

## VIII

While the ability to draw general conclusions is restricted by the concentration here on a single firm of booksellers, it does invite a balancing of details across their output, and in particular it sets the typography of ballads alongside that of eight- and 24-page chapbooks. Both were staples of the street literature trade, and Margaret Spufford inferred that chapbooks were actually more important to the booksellers than ballads, the evidence skewed by the interests of collectors and later scholars.<sup>82</sup> Be that as it may, it is difficult to make a comprehensive argument from the Charles and Sarah Bates corpus that black-letter represented either conscious cultural conservatism or typographical nostalgia, or that ballads in white-letter were perceived as being especially modern or politically engaged. If older titles were marginally more likely to be in black-letter, that can be attributed to print trade precedent and itself helps trace the transition in progress. Whichever was the predominant typeface, different fonts were still being employed to distinguish or enhance certain textual elements in the early decades of the eighteenth century. By the 1690s, longer works were more likely to be set in roman type, and by the time Sarah Bates took over the business in 1716 all of the printing was in roman and italic, but still with the occasional paratextual use of black-letter for display elements in titles, licensing statements, running-heads, refrains, and so forth. The transition to white-letter did accord with wider developments in the visual aesthetics of print, but the most straightforward explanation is the replacement of one set of fonts with another over time.

---

82 Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories*, pp. 99–100.