

Adventures in Bibliography

McGill-ASECS 2008 Fellowship Report

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First editions of Frances Burney's works are relatively easy to locate, except for her first novel *Evelina: Or a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* (1778), which had a print run of only five hundred. Most major research libraries hold firsts of her other novels *Cecilia: Or the Memoirs of an Heiress* (1782), *Camilla: Or a Picture of Youth* (1796), and the *Wanderer: Or Female Difficulties* (1814); her philanthropic tract *Brief Reflections Relative to the French Emigrant Clergy* (1793); and her biography the *Memoirs of Doctor Burney* (1832). Because scholars and collectors of the past have sought out the "prized" first editions of authors' works, later editions have often not been collected or preserved and can be much more difficult to locate and access today. Due to the assiduous collecting of its Head and Curator of Manuscripts, Richard Virr, McGill University's Rare Book and Special Collections Library not only has its requisite first editions of Burney's later three novels and the *Memoirs*, but it is also especially rich in foreign editions, translations, and rare non-first editions of her works. These hard to find books help document Burney's global reception and reputation *and* provide insight into printing and publishing practices in various locations at different historical moments. During my one month tenure as the McGill-ASECS fellow at the Burney Centre and the McGill Rare Book and Special Collections Library, I had the opportunity to examine and describe in detail fourteen distinct editions of works by Frances Burney, each of which provided its own bibliographical adventure. The following

paragraphs will touch on the highlights of my adventures in bibliography in the collections at McGill University.

McGill has the distinction of owning the only known copy of an English language 1818 Dresden edition of Burney's *Evelina*. Although the standard Burney bibliography by Joseph Grau lists two earlier Dresden editions, one dated 1788 and another 1805, it does not include the 1818 edition; While the earlier two are from the publishing firm C. and F. Walther, the 1818 is from G. M. Walther, probably a family member who succeeded into the business on the death or retirement of his or her relatives. A comparison of the 1788 with the 1818 edition reveals that the latter is indeed descended from the former. C and F. Walther also published Burney's *Cecilia* in 1780 and offered a short list of English language works to German readers who wished to read them in their original language. This list also included Nicholson's *Village of Martindale* (1787), Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749) and *Joseph Andrews* (1742), and Keate's *Sketches from Nature* (1779). If the number of editions is any indication of popularity, then Burney's first two novels were very popular in Germany with *Evelina* appearing in at least four and *Cecilia* in at least six editions. It must be remembered that many educated German readers would have read Burney's novels in French too of which there were numerous editions and which may have provided the source text for some or all of the German translations. A small number of German readers preferred to read foreign texts in their original languages, and in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Walther had been one supplier of these.

Although it may be indicative of *Evelina*'s popularity with German readers that G. M. Walther would publish it again in 1818, more work awaits to be done on Walther's publishing ventures in the early nineteenth century. A search in WorldCat yields only one other title attributed to G. M. Walther, for the years 1812-1823, but a number to just Walther, which could be the same firm. None of these entries represent English titles, and the McGill copy of *Evelina* is not yet recorded in WorldCat.

McGill also owns a copy of another surprisingly scarce edition of *Evelina* from Ward and Lock. Although the McGill copy is undated, Chester W. Topps's *Victorian Yellowbacks & Paperbacks, 1849-1905* informs that Ward and Lock published editions of *Evelina* in 1874 and 1881. This edition with its colorful printed papers wrappers and pages of advertisements--not just for books, but also for items like cocoa, machinery, and medicine--offers a wonderful glimpse into nineteenth century popular culture. One of these advertisements suggests a date of 1882 for this copy which would differ from Topp's dates and could indicate a third Ward and Lock printing. The advertisement for "Chas. Churchill & Co. importers of American Tools and Machinery" appears on the front pastedown and promotes its "New and Complete Illustrated Catalogue for 1882" which can be sent "for 1s. in stamps." Although this advertisement may be for an 1882 edition of the catalogue, it could have been published at the end of 1881 with Churchill promoting the firm's catalogue for the upcoming New Year. It is also possible that this *Evelina* was printed in 1881, but bound in batches, as needed to supply distributors, and that this copy was bound in 1882 with ads that were contemporary with its binding rather than its printing. Presently further research is required to sort out the dates for Ward and Lock printings if possible. Certainly

having more copies of *Evelinas* published by Ward and Lock available to researchers would assist in this endeavor. WorldCat lists only three other libraries that own copies of Ward and Lock's *Evelinas*, only one of those is in North America. It is thanks to Virr's keen eye as a collector that this copy has been preserved where students, scholars, and interested individuals may access it and ponder questions like the ones discussed here.

A now rare two-volume Irish edition of Burney's third novel, *Camilla* (1796) was published in Cork by John O'Connor the same year as it appeared in London and Dublin. Virr conjectures that O'Connor was trying to outpace the Dublin publishers with this edition. Of especial interest in the McGill copy are two pages of advertisements which follow the text of the first volume and help to contextualize this edition in the milieu in which it was read and circulated. As the first advertisement reveals, O'Connor operated a circulating library at which he stocked a number of novels including *Anna or the Memoirs of a Welsh Heiress* by Agnes Bennet; a novel titled *Georgina*, which could have been one of several late eighteenth-century novels with Georgina in the title; *Melissa and Marcia: Or the Sisters*, by Elizabeth Hervey; and *Angelina* by Mary Robinson, among others. A one-page advertisement for *Camilla* faces O'Connor's ad for his library. From it we learn that readers could purchase this edition of *Camilla* by the volume as O'Connor informs purchasers that "the second [volume] (which will complete the work) is now in the press and shall be published in a few days." He offers these volumes for 4s. 4d. each, or 8s. 8d. for the entire novel, which was considerably less than the 21 s. sewn for which it sold in London when it was first published in 1778. Advertisements like these with such valuable information for historians of the book often do not survive because they were usually discarded when the book was bound. The

advertisement for O'Connor's library will have a higher survival rate because it is printed on the verso of the final leaf of the text of the novel, but this is not the case of the *Camilla* advertisement because it is printed on the recto of the final leaf of the volume with its verso blank. Only two other institutions are known to hold copies of this edition, the Philadelphia Athenaeum and the National Library of Ireland.

American editions of Burney's novels also have a low survival rate, possibly due to low print runs, although exact figures for these have not yet been discovered, and also due to the quality of eighteenth-century, American-made paper which has not held up well over time. Fortunately, McGill owns at least two American editions of *Camilla*, one published in Boston and the other in New York, both dated 1797, the year following this novel's initial publication in London. The New York edition holds special interest because it is a mixed set. While volumes one through four display the imprint "John Bull 115 Cherry St.," volume five's imprint differs, reading "Samuel Campbell 124 Pearl St." The recto of the front free endpaper in each volume bears an early inscription which indicates that these volumes were originally purchased as a mixed set: "Rebecca Heister's Presented by her affectionate sister Catherine Heister. R. C. Muhlenberg."

Another fortuitous circumstance sheds light on the possible relationship between the Campbell and Bull imprints. McGill also holds a copy of volume one with the Campbell imprint, which could be of the same edition, in other words the two may have been printed from the same setting of type, but altered slightly to be issued by separate publishers. Since the addresses of Bull and Campbell were located close to another in downtown New York,

the two may have collaborated on this edition. A comparison of the first volume from each of these publishers reveals that both follow the same imposition scheme--duodecimos in sixes with two signatures or two-half-sheets of duodecimo worked together--and typographical style. The *A* gathering has been reset for the copy with the Campbell imprint to remove John Bull's advertisement which occupied pp. iii-iv or the recto and verso of *A2*. Some variations in the lineation in the *B* gathering have also been noted. Since the book is imposed as two half-sheets of duodecimo, it is possible that these two gatherings were printed on the same forme and were both reset when the *A* gathering was adjusted. *A* is only a four-leaf gathering, but the volume ends with a two-leaf gathering, *X*, which could have completed this forme. The exact relationship between the two publishers and volumes bearing their imprints will have to wait to be sorted out until more copies can be examined. Yet it is to Virr's credit that McGill owns two copies of volume one that represent the two different publishers. Many libraries would not purchase a partial set, but when an edition is as hard to come by as this one (or these two), partial sets can provide valuable bibliographical evidence.¹

The 1797 Boston *Camilla*, published by S. Hall and a group of seven other publishers, also offers insight into printing house practices. Although the imprint in all three volumes of this edition reads "printed by Manning and Loring," evidence in the books themselves suggests that this printing job was shared between two different houses. One could assume that Manning and Loring were separate printers who collaborated on the production of this book,

¹ The ESTC lists only seven holding institutions for the Bull imprint and eight for the Campbell; however, mixed sets may not always be identified as such in the ESTC. For example it notes a copy of the Campbell edition at Harvard. Yet an examination of this copy reveals a partial mixed set. Volumes one and two are missing, three and four bear the Bull imprint, and five the Campbell imprint.

yet the Boston directories of the period list them as one business entity, operating from the same address on Spring Lane. Volumes one and three of this set employ a slightly different signing alphabet than volume two. During the eighteenth century, the usual signing alphabet would include only 23 letters, omitting J, V, and W. Sometimes signing began with a B gathering leaving the preliminaries, which were usually printed last, to be inferred as A. The printers of volumes one and three of this edition deviate from this practice by including W, while volume two deviates even more by including V and W. In addition volume two uses slightly different typographical formats for its chapter openings and footnotes. Whereas, volumes one and three set the footnotes above the direction line, volume two sets them below it. While volumes one and three use decorative rules of type ornaments to begin new chapters, volume two uses swelled rules. These kinds of variations, as I have noted elsewhere, often indicate the work of more than one printing house on a book.

The order of these two or three American editions has not yet been established; newspaper advertisements however suggest that the Bull edition may have preceded the Boston edition at least in part. The Hall conglomerate of Boston began advertising its edition as in press in December of 1796 and as complete in April of 1797. Bull, however began advertising his plans a month earlier in November of 1796 when he announced New York's *Daily Advertiser* that he would publish his edition by subscription, issuing a volume each fortnight. In January of 1797 another advertisement in Philadelphia's *Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser* informs readers that the first volume of the Bull edition "is come to hand, and the second hourly expected." On the following February 1, an advertisement that appeared in New York's the *Diary or Loudon's Register* states that the first two volumes have already been printed and anticipates the third in two or three days with the remaining two to follow

“as speedily as possible.” This same advertisement appeared regularly at least through the first week in April. It has not yet been determined when the printing of the five volumes was completed, yet completed it was, since five-volume sets survive today.

Newspaper advertisements also suggest some trade networks that may have operated together in the marketing of *Camilla* in the United States. Preliminary research shows that while John Bull advertised his edition extensively in New York and Philadelphia, while the Hall et al. edition was advertised in Boston and Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Interestingly the Portsmouth advertisement offers the set for sale by S. Larkin, who may have been related to E. Larkin whose name appears in the imprint of this *Camilla* (probably Ebenezer Larkin, the publisher of the Boston edition of Burney’s earlier novel *Cecilia*). An advertisement for the Bull edition in Philadelphia’s *Claypoole’s American Daily Advertiser* mentions that “subscriptions are received and books may be had of J. Ormrod at No. 41 Chestnut St.” According to the ESTC, in 1797 John Ormrod and Ephraim Conrad published an edition of *Camilla* in three volumes in Philadelphia, an edition which may be related to the Bull and Campbell edition(s). As of April 1797, Ormrod was still advertising a five-volume set for sale. It is possible that he and Conrad simply printed their own title pages to replace the Bull (or Campbell) title page and bound the set as five volumes in three. The pagination in cataloguing records negates this scenario; however, cataloguing records can be misleading. It is more likely that, when their supply of Bull editions ran low, Ormrod and Conrad, who were both printers, printed their own. In August of 1797 Ormrod advertised “a new, neat, and cheap edition, handsomely bound and lettered, with rolled gilt edges, Five volumes in three—price 3 dollars only.” Grau complicates this matter even further by listing a

Baltimore edition in 1797 from Ormrod and Conrad for Birdsall and Wynard. Hopefully the future examination of actual copies of these editions will help to determine the relationship between these editions.

In April of 1797 two other advertisements appeared for a five-volume edition of *Camilla* in the *Philadelphia Gazette & Universal Daily Advertiser* which may also be for the Bull edition. One reads “CAMILLA. THIS DAY IS PUBLISHED BY ROBERT CAMPBELL & Co.,” which could suggest yet another edition or imprint. Robert Campbell should not be confused with Samuel Campbell whose name appears in one of the New York imprints, although the two may be related. The other advertisement reads similarly though perhaps less confusingly “just published, and for sale by H. & P. Rice.” No editions are known to exist with either of these firms named in the imprint. Since “to publish” had a slightly different definition in the eighteenth century than it does today, meaning “to make public” a bookseller who makes a work available to the public could claim to “publish” a work even if his or her name does not appear in the imprint. Both businesses Robert Campbell and H. and P. Rice give addresses on South Second Street at numbers 40 and 16 respectively which may point to yet another collaboration in bookselling ventures.

The advertisements for the American editions of *Camilla* also offer insight into marketing techniques if not additional insight into printing and publishing tactics. Not unlike today, the advertisements make appeals based upon the author’s reputation, the quality of the physical book, and the price. One advertisement lauds “Mrs. D’Arblay (late Miss Burney)” as needing “no eulogy to add to her laurels.” Another in August of 1797 inaccurately reports

that the Queen of England presented Mrs. d'Arblay with a thousand pounds sterling, after perusing this work. The same advertisement claims that the book has “run through several editions in Europe, three in America, has been translated into French, and is now read with avidity and delight, in the literary and polite circles of Paris.” These claims bear slightly more truth since there may have been three American editions by this date. The first French translation only appeared in 1797, and the German and Swedish translations are not dated until 1798 and 1801 respectively; therefore it would be difficult to estimate how widely *Camilla* was read in France by 1797. Some hyperbole must also come into play here.

With respect to the Bull edition, the quality of the physical book is linked to the price as one advertisement demonstrates when it announces that “this new and interesting work, . . . is now delivering to subscribers, printed on fine wove paper, with a beautiful new type, so extraordinary low as half a dollar per volume stitched.” However, it explains later in the same advertisement that:

to afford every advantage to the early subscriber . . . the Publisher has been induced to offer it uncommonly cheap, considering the quality of the paper, type &c. But he is obliged to announce, that to those only who subscribe before the publication of the third volume can it be furnished at so low a rate. After that the fine copies will rise to *five shillings* per volume. At the same time he informs the public he shall be provided with a sufficient number of sets at the present price, on an inferior paper, of by no means bad quality.

The pricing of this edition is complicated because the United States did not have a standard currency in 1797. Bull's earliest advertisements, as well as the one quoted above, offer the set at one half dollar per volume. Yet the advertisement above switches to British currency with no explanation. At 5s. per volume, the total cost for late subscribers would have been 4s. more than what shoppers in London paid. Some Philadelphia advertisements offer the entire set for \$2.50 while other list it at 18s. 9d. stitched or 26s. 3d. neatly bound and lettered. Furthermore, whether or not this edition was indeed issued on both "fine" and "inferior" paper remains to be verified. The copies examined thus far have been printed primarily on hand-made laid paper, although one volume contains a few sheets printed on wove paper.

Several of McGill's copies of Burney's novels provide insight into the kinds of aberrations that can occur during a book's production. In volume four of the 1797 Bull edition of *Camilla* P3v and P4r have not printed; therefore the facing pages 162-163 remain blank. Apparently the forme was not properly adjusted on the bed of the press and these two pages sat too low to leave an impression on the sheet when it was printed. Since the book was imposed as two half-sheets of duodecimo worked together, these two conjugate pages would have occupied one corner of the forme. In a copy of the same edition held by the Houghton Library these pages have printed properly. The accident that produced the blank pages may have occurred after the printing process was underway; perhaps the forme came loose or for some reason had to be adjusted—as could happen if the printing process had been interrupted. In the McGill copy an owner has left his response to this printer's error in pencil on the blank pages: "Oh I wish Old Nick had you Mr. Printer for your infamous, infernally, infamous negligence."

Mistakes could also occur when the sheets of a printed book were folded. McGill copies provide two examples of mis-folded sheets. In its 1798 Paris edition of *Camilla*, part of the the I gathering is mis-folded so that the sequence of leaves is 6,5,8,7 resulting in the following pagination: 188 191-192 189-190 195-196 193-194 197-198. Since the book is imposed as a common duodecimo, leaves 5-8 would have been at the end of the sheet, cut off, folded and then bound into the middle of the gathering. In this case the person doing the folding simply folded the insert backwards. McGill's copy of the 1796 Dublin edition of *Camilla* provides an example of another kind of folding error. In this instance the folder has mistakenly picked up two sheets on which the six-leaf R gathering in volume one was printed and folded them together so that each leaf is followed by a duplicate.

Aberrations in a text like the ones discussed here may be puzzling or even comical to present-day readers, especially when an earlier reader has left his or her commentary for posterity. These mistakes become understandable when one is aware of the processes by which books were produced during different time periods. They also serve to remind us that books are *not* the artistic creation of an author's mind, but the *embodiments* of that creation, which have lives of their own. These physical embodiments help us to understand what happens to the works of art that they represent once they leave the authors' minds and go into the world where they become the property of others, often first of the publisher, but then of the readers who purchase the books. These books provide insight into the paths that the work of art traveled as its text was reproduced in various places and at different moments in history. They also provide some of the context in which they were read and understood,

whether it was purchased one volume at time through a subscription, like the 1797 Bull edition of *Camilla*; borrowed via a circulating library which featured many novels, like O'Connor's 1796 edition of *Camilla*; read in a foreign language, albeit the original for the text, like the 1818 Dresden *Evelina*; or while traveling on a railway train a century after its initial publication, like the undated Ward and Lock *Evelina*. Although my research at McGill University may have raised more questions than it answered, as this report demonstrates, "The Publication History of the Works of Frances Burney" is a work in progress and many of the answers will be discovered as work on it continues. I am grateful for the support of McGill University and its kind and generous staff members in the Rare Book and Special Collections Library and the Burney Centre.