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A Bibliographical Enquiry into Thomas Johnson's *A Collection of the Best English Plays*

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Declaration

This thesis is a resubmission of my own *Imagining a Canon: Thomas Johnson and the Representation of English Drama, 1710-1790*, submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Warwick in July 2018, and examined by Professors Abigail Williams and Christina Lupton. It represents my own work, and has not been submitted for examination at any other university.

Chapter Two of this thesis is a revised and augmented text of Emil Rybczak, 'Thomas Johnson: The Publisher as an Agent of Enlightenment', *Dutch Crossing* (December 2017) <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03096564.2017.1377372>.

The material contained in '*The Drummer; or, The Haunted-House*', in Chapter Three of this thesis, is an expanded version of Emil Rybczak, 'Authorship of The Drummer; or, the Haunted House', *N&Q*, 63.4 (2016), 588-90.

Chapter Six of this thesis is a revised version of Emil Rybczak, 'Perceptions of England: The Production and Reception of English Theatrical Publications in Germany and the Netherlands During the Eighteenth Century', in *Pen, Print, and Communication in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Caroline Archer-Parré and Malcolm Dick (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press), forthcoming 2020.

Abstract

This thesis investigates Thomas Johnson's *A Collection of the Best English Plays*, arguing that Johnson and his *Collection* deserve a more prominent position in the history of eighteenth-century publishing. This principally bibliographical investigation into a single publisher and his work supports a range of fields of enquiry, and provides a foundation for future study on the wider significance of Johnson and his work.

Major areas of research on Johnson are: his biography; the nature of his *Collection*; his work as an editor; and the circulation and impact of the *Collection*. Examination of previously unknown letters by Johnson, and of more copies of his works than other critics, allows me to extend their findings considerably. I reveal the international scope of Johnson's market for his plays, and argue that future histories of the publication and reception of English drama must take greater account of works produced by non-copyright-holding publishers, such as Johnson. I suggest that examination of multiple copies of these publishers' works is crucial when gauging the full range of people's access to such books.

I begin by mapping Johnson's role and contacts as an Enlightenment publisher, before explaining the scope and development of his *Collection* as both a single unified project, and as multiple individual works. By examining the *Collection*'s Shakespearean plays I suggest editorial principles that are applicable across Johnson's work, and which provide valuable insights on his practice.

In detailing the circulation and influence of Johnson's *Collection*, I record the organisation and provenance of extant copies of his plays, showing who was reading them, where, and why. I reveal a previously unknown market for English drama in Europe by cataloguing the reissue of Johnson's plays by later publishers, and demonstrate the influence of Johnson's works on other publishers' design strategies.

Abbreviations

Most libraries referred to in this thesis are named in full. Those referred to most frequently follow STC location codes, as described in ‘STC Location Codes’ <meaghan-brown.com/stc-location-codes>. These are:

The British Library	L
Cambridge University Library	C
Edinburgh University Library	E^2

Introduction

Overview

This thesis examines the work of Thomas Johnson, a Scottish expatriate who worked as a publisher and bookseller in The Hague and Rotterdam between 1705-35. Existing scholarship on the early eighteenth-century English-language publishing trade is heavily weighted towards the study of publishers working within the Worshipful Company of Stationers, the London booksellers' guild. Within these analyses, the work of Jacob Tonson the Elder is a more frequent subject of study than that of any other publisher. Tonson's involvement in the Whig society known as the Kit-Cat Club, and his editions of the works of Shakespeare, provide, in many cases, the focus for histories of drama publishing in this period.[1] My investigation of Thomas Johnson's publications and trade practice, and of the afterlife of his books, widens our understanding of the early eighteenth-century book trade. It provides detailed information on the social and business networks within which Johnson operated, and an analysis of the material form and reception of his multi-volume *A Collection of the Best English Plays*.[2]

B. J. McMullin provides the most comprehensive study of Johnson and his work to date.[3] Describing Johnson's work as an editor, McMullin tells us: 'Here was, it seemed to me, an unusual phenomenon: a pirate who was clearly concerned to reproduce an accurate text. In my own mind I now dubbed him "the punctilious pirate".'[4] Whilst 'dubb[ing]' can be understood as literally naming Johnson 'the punctilious pirate', it might also be taken as 'invest[ing] with a dignity or title', which is appropriate for a publisher who has been relatively marginalised by publishing history.[5] McMullin identifies several areas of enquiry to which this thesis responds:

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[1] See, for instance, Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print: A History and Chronology of Shakespeare Publishing* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003). Although Murphy undertakes some work on Johnson, which is referred to throughout this thesis, much of the eighteenth century is covered by the author's chapters 'The Tonson era 1' and 'The Tonson era 2'. Such categorisation of this period, whilst justified to an extent, under-reports the significant innovations and contributions to the reproduction of Shakespeare in print made by many other publishers, including Johnson.

[2] *A Collection of the Best English Plays*, *c.* 10-16 vols ([The Hague and Rotterdam], [Thomas Johnson], *c.* 1710-31). The ambiguous bibliographical status of this collection is one of the principal subjects of this thesis.

[3] B. J. McMullin, 'T. Johnson, Bookseller in the Hague', in *An Index of Civilisation: Studies in Printing and Publishing History in Honor of Keith Maslen*, ed. by R. Harvey, W. Kirsop and B. J. McMullin (Clayton, Victoria: Centre for Bibliographical and Textual Studies, Monash University, 1993), pp. 99-112.

[4] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 103.

[5] 'dub, *v.*1', *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (Oxford: OUP, December 2019) <http://www.oed.com/> [accessed 5 December 2019].

> 'T. Johnson, bookseller in [*or* at] the Hague' is, I suggest, a figure worthy of further study. His skeletal biography needs more flesh on it […]. The nature of his retail bookselling business needs to be established […]. The full extent of his publishing, both overt and covert, needs to be established, especially the full range of editions of individual titles among the English plays […]. And a more exhaustive study might profitably be undertaken of his editorial activities[.][6]

My research into the work of Thomas Johnson, organised around a bibliographical analysis of his *Best English Plays*, has revealed just how extensive and ambitious McMullin's aims are. Nevertheless, by studying Johnson's surviving and mostly unpublished correspondence in conjunction with his extant publications, I provide – if not a full biography – a deep understanding of the social context in which Johnson worked. As will be made apparent, this is of fundamental importance when interpreting the history of his publications. I also provide new information on the scope of his bookselling and publishing enterprises, although a 'full' investigation of these again exceeds the possibilities of this single thesis. Whilst I only gesture towards the broad range and editorial ambition of Johnson's many non-Anglophone titles (such as his edition of Pierre Bayle's *Oeuvres Diverses*), the discussion of these in Chapters Two and Four affords considerable new information to that which has been available previously.[7] I provide a full catalogue of the titles and editions of Johnson's English plays, which McMullin identifies as the most urgent undertaking. I provide case studies of Johnson's editorial activities, augmenting the relatively isolated studies of individual texts that have hitherto been undertaken with an overview of his treatment of the several Shakespearean plays he published. This reveals Johnson's detailed work on, especially, *The Tempest* – in which he synthesised Dryden and Davenant's adaptation with work by Thomas Shadwell and Nicholas Rowe – but is perhaps of greatest value in demonstrating the sensitivity of Johnson's editorial policies, adjusted for each work according to its presentation on the stage and the merits of existing editions.[8]

Moving forward from an analysis of Johnson's business practices and the bibliographic and editorial form of his *Collection*, this thesis also charts new territory by investigating his

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[6] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 111.
[7] Pierre Bayle, *Oeuvres Diverses de Mr. Pierre Bayle, Professeur en Philosophie, et en Histoire, a Rotterdam: Contenant tout ce que cet Auteur a publié sur des matieres de Theologie, de Philosophie, de Critique, d'Histoire, & de Litterature; excepté son Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*, 4 vols (La Haye: Chez P. Husson, T. Johnson, P. Gosse, J. Swart, H. Scheurleer, J. Van Duren, R. Alberts, C. Le Vier, F. Boucquet, 1727-31).
[8] John Dryden and William Davenant, *The Tempest: or, The Enchanted Island. A Comedy* (London [The Hague]: [Thomas Johnson], 1710); John Dryden and William Davenant, *The Tempest: or The Enchanted Island. A Comedy* (London [The Hague]: Printed for the Company [Thomas Johnson], [n.d.]).

works' circulation in the world at large, both as they were treated by his customers and subsequent owners and as they were repackaged by or influenced the work of other publishers, including Robert Dodsley, George Risk of Dublin, and Jacob Tonson himself. So far as one can tell from the evidence of absence, the omission of Johnson from most current studies of eighteenth-century publishing must mostly be because of his continental residency and, therefore, *apparent* exclusion from publishing developments in England. This neglect is unwarranted. Furthermore, since so many of Johnson's works were published in languages other than English, study of his English works only (to which most critics have restricted themselves) can give a deceptively modest impression of the size of his business. This was, in fact, considerable, and Johnson operated at the centre of his own extensive networks. Not only were Johnson's books purchased and read by a range of readers both in Britain and mainland Europe, but his manner of presenting his plays – particularly the monogram he used as a frontispiece device – had a significant impact on the presentation of literature by several publishers within the British Isles. Thus, whilst he was not resident in Britain, Johnson's English books are entirely relevant to the history of English dramatic publishing. Moreover, the resale of Johnson's English plays by later European publishers, like Hendrik Scheurleer the Younger, and Gottlob Richter of Altenburg, suggests Johnson's importance in providing continental readers with access to such works for many years after his decease, an access that does not seem to have been readily available through other channels. Although I cannot provide a comprehensive handbook of Johnson's life and work, my considerable additions to knowledge of this single underexplored publisher and his works contributes to our total understanding of what is usually described as pirate publishing and its significance within wider publishing history and the developments of the book trade.

Rationale, Precedent, and Situation within the Critical Field

Conceived as a response to McMullin's call, this thesis fulfils two broad functions, addressed respectively in its first and second halves. Firstly, Chapters One to Four provide a much-needed addition to our knowledge of the life and work of Thomas Johnson and so increase our understanding of the early eighteenth-century publishing trade. Secondly, Chapters Five to Seven show that it is important that we have this greater understanding of Johnson, and particularly his *Collection*, because of their direct impact on how dramatic literature was encountered in the eighteenth century. Although I engage with the work of a variety of critics, this thesis is principally in dialogue with other commentators on Thomas Johnson,

commentators whose work is considered in detail below. More broadly, the thesis should be situated in the field of biographies and histories of, primarily, individual publishers and publishing houses. It adds a study of the work of one particularly remarkable man at the geographical fringes of the English trade to the large number of studies of those at the centre of its development.

William St Clair's *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* represents an enviable compilation of research, but also perpetuates a history of publishing in English which too often ignores or misrepresents the importance of geographically and socially peripheral contributors.[9] His emphasis on the ending of perpetual copyright as precipitating a fundamental shift in what and how people read, as a consequence of the effect of copyright on the price and availability of books – whilst most probably true – downplays the circulation of cheap pirate editions throughout the eighteenth century.[10] As this thesis demonstrates, these cheaper editions seem to have been purchased and read by many readers with more limited access to London editions long before the ending of perpetual copyright. Mark Towsey's *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment: Books and Their Readers in Provincial Scotland, 1750-1820* demonstrates the value of considering such markets beyond London as distinct and important subjects of research.[11] Towsey offers new insights into how readers engaged with books that are not necessarily apparent within other studies. Although Towsey is focussed primarily on readers (whereas my study uses readers to discuss a particular publisher's markets), there is a considerable overlap between my work and his. Where Towsey demonstrates that analysis of provincial reading habits reveals different readers with different concerns to those encountered

[9] William St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004). Despite the length and scope of St Clair's book, Johnson is mentioned in just one footnote, apparently because St Clair believes 'there is little evidence that [English-language books printed abroad] reached Great Britain in significant numbers' (p. 104). This does, however, seem to be contradicted by the author's treatment of Johnson in his appendices, where his plays are classified under 'Examples of books available for illegal importation to England, and later Great Britain, showing the changing nature of the unsatisfied demand at home', 'when many of the English editions were only available in expensive folio' (p. 476). This, in contrast to St Clair's earlier statement, implies that Johnson's plays *were* for sale within Britain. Johnson's markets are discussed throughout this thesis.

[10] On the ending of perpetual copyright see especially St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, pp. 103-21. For other means by which people had access to cheaper literary materials see Abigail Williams, *The Social Life of Books: Reading Together in the Eighteenth-Century Home* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2017), especially pp. 95-96. The author highlights: 'newspapers and periodicals, second-hand stalls and shops, circulating libraries, abridgements, adaptations, books sold in numbers, and old-fashioned sharing, borrowing, and lending.' James Raven, in *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade 1450-1850* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 130, also attests to the vigorous market in second-hand books across the eighteenth century. For an extended (and penetrating) commentary on St Clair's own study see Thomas F. Bonnell, 'When Book History Neglects Bibliography: Trouble with the "Old Canon" in *The Reading Nation*', *Studies in Bibliography*, 57 (2005-06), 243-61.

[11] Mark R. M. Towsey, *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment: Books and Their Readers in Provincial Scotland, 1750-1820* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010).

in less localised histories of reading, my analysis of the circulation of internationally-published books reveals different trade networks and channels of access to literature than those encountered in histories of London-based publishers. By uncovering the life and afterlife of the works of a publisher largely dismissed from history on account of his apparently peripheral position, I also suggest that certain important innovations within the mainstream publishing industry may in fact have originated outside of the London guild, and that histories of publishing that focus on that centre, such as St Clair's, cannot tell the whole story.

As will be made apparent, the traditional characterisation of Johnson as a marginal pirate is in fact highly misleading. By studying an offshore English-language publisher within a European as well as a British context we discover different parameters for piracy, and a different perspective on what might be the margins or centre of the book trade. Johnson was, in fact, fully embedded in European intellectual, social and commercial networks, and was in contact with a wide range of European intellectuals. Previous commentators on Johnson, such as Teresa Grant, and Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, as well as McMullin, all have much that is positive to say about Johnson but, by placing his work within a primarily British context, give themselves only limited facility to appreciate the full scope of his business.[12] Whilst Esther Mijers places Johnson more squarely within his appropriate European context, it is symptomatic of this repositioning that she is the only critic who engages with Johnson at length who does not, also, focus her study on some or all of his *A Collection of the Best English Plays*.[13] This thesis evaluates, synthesises and extends the findings of Milhous and Hume, McMullin, Grant, and Mijers, amongst others, in order to afford Johnson a fuller and more in-depth study than has previously been attempted. This study, being the first such study of Johnson, identifies four key areas of enquiry (his biography, *Collection*, work as an editor and the circulation of his texts) that may, in their turn, also warrant further investigation. Although this thesis is focussed on Johnson's trade in English books, like several other critics' work, it provides a better understanding of these by placing their production alongside knowledge of other branches of Johnson's business.

In order to situate Johnson and his works within the wider critical landscape, this thesis engages with a range of fields of enquiry, including (but not restricted to) publishers' social

[12] Teresa Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson: Making the "Vernacular Canon" in the Early Eighteenth Century', in *The Oxford Handbook of Ben Jonson*, ed. by Eugene Giddens (Oxford: OUP, 2015) <10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199544561.013.004>; Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London 1660-1800: Playwrights, Publishers and the Market* (London: The British Library, 2015). See Chapter One, below, for a full assessment of these authors' work, and that of other critics on Johnson.
[13] Esther Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters": Scottish Students, Charles Mackie and the United Provinces, 1650-1750* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

and business networks, and the manner in which they edited, presented and advertised their books. It also engages with how information can be garnered from the distribution, provenance and physical arrangement of extant copies of these books, and the reissue of English texts in Europe and the history of printers' marks. Whilst this inevitably means that the focus and critical context of each chapter can be read independently, they together make a sustained argument for the importance of Thomas Johnson to the history of publishing in the eighteenth century, but cannot provide full historiographies of each of the critical areas with which they engage. Such a survey approach is absolutely essential for establishing a broad foundation for future studies, and to highlight the several critical angles from which Johnson and his books might be approached.

Like those critics who have engaged with Johnson previously, my interest in a practical assessment of his innovations in and influence on publishing necessitates what is overall a more bibliographical, as opposed to biographical, methodology. Although a year-by-year account of Johnson's activities would also be a valuable contribution to the field, my analysis focuses on the history of the *Collection of the Best English Plays* itself. Such a bibliographical focus provides compelling evidence for the importance of Johnson, especially when held against what are sometimes relatively hagiographic accounts of other publishers, most frequently of Jacob Tonson.[14] My study of the copytexts and editing of Johnson's Shakespearean texts issued in his *Collection* – as well as throwing further light on Johnson's practices – broadens our understanding of the editing of drama at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Where such important works as Andrew Murphy's *Shakespeare in Print*, and Gary Taylor's *Reinventing Shakespeare* – which take various editions into account but are often focussed on the House of Tonson – reveal how the editing of literary texts was undertaken by an external party brought in for the task (such as Nicholas Rowe), my analysis of Johnson's practice shows that this particular publisher undertook his own textual editing, and this to a surprisingly high standard.[15] Unlike with Tonson, our perception of Johnson as a pirate has blinded us to the

[14] See, for instance, Kathleen Martha Lynch, *Jacob Tonson: Kit-Cat Publisher* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1971), or Harry M. Geduld, *Prince of Publishers: A Study of the Work and Career of Jacob Tonson* (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1969). Compare also studies of Robert Dodsley or John Murray, who might be seen as occupying similarly dominant positions in the publishing trade in the middle and final years of the eighteenth century as Tonson had enjoyed at its beginning: Ralph Straus, *Robert Dodsley: Poet, Publisher & Playwright* (NY: Burt Franklin, 1910); Harry M. Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley: Creating the New Age of Print* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996); William Zachs, *The First John Murray and the Late Eighteenth-Century London Book Trade: With a Checklist of his Publications* (Oxford: OUP for The British Academy, 1998).

[15] Gary Taylor, in *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (London: Vintage, 1991), p. 70, suggests: 'The Tonsons were sole or part publishers of all the great Shakespeare editions of the first two-thirds of the eighteenth century […]. The Tonsons decided who would edit Shakespeare, in the

potentially interesting textual and presentational decisions he made. His decision to offer an extensive range of plays by different dramatists for sale individually, but also to invite his customers to collect these together under his *Best English Plays* volume titles, was revolutionary. As an editor, he seems to have chosen his copytexts carefully, and to have supplemented these with other materials from other editions. The specific examples of Johnson's editorial work offered in Chapter Four, below, suggest his concern to present his plays as both literary and theatrical. His Shakespearean texts are most frequently taken from Rowe's 1709 *Works* edition but, also, incorporate titles, stage directions and songs from contemporary adaptations.[16]

Whilst several of the most important studies dealing with Tonson and his fellow members of the London guild were written many years ago, they have established a critical background for these publishers that would-be historians of Thomas Johnson are lacking – and which this thesis seeks, in part, to provide. Although Ralph Straus and, much more recently, Paul Baines and Pat Rogers, have provided highly engaging accounts of the pirate Edmund Curll, it is hoped that a solid focus on Johnson's books rather than the man himself prevents Johnson emerging as the 'quasi-mythological' anti-hero that Curll can seem – a 'muck-raking, scandalous, sex-obsessed rogue'.[17] Straus had gone even further, asking 'Why trouble yourself [about] the most rascally of "pirates"?'[18] His reply is essentially biographical and concerned with personalities, arguing that Curll 'was a much bigger man than even his few apologists believed him to be.'[19] Despite enjoying such rhetoric, Baines and Rogers are careful to expound the value of more temperate, historical-biographical and bibliographical study of those trading 'on the fringes of legality', its facility to 'tell us a good deal about the practice of bookselling in the early eighteenth century' and – although not attempted in this thesis – the importance of such publishers to literary history.[20] Baines and Rogers provide a direct precedent for this thesis in identifying the intellectual rewards of studying a figure working outside the guild of booksellers, and wishing 'to present a more sober record of his activities, in the belief that the

period that cast the mold of all future editions of his work.' For a study that provides an alternative perspective on earlier Shakespeare publications – and reveals editorial practices that in some ways anticipate Johnson's – see Sonia Massai, *Shakespeare and the Rise of the Editor* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007).

[16] William Shakespeare, *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear; in Six Volumes. Adorn'd with Cuts. Revis'd and Corrected, with an Account of the Life and Writings of the Author. By N. Rowe, Esq*, 6 vols (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1709).

[17] Ralph Straus, *The Unspeakable Curll: Being Some Account of Edmund Curll, Bookseller; to Which is Added a Full List of His Books* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1927); quotations from Paul Baines and Pat Rogers, *Edmund Curll, Bookseller* (Oxford: OUP, 2007), pp. 1, 2.

[18] Straus, *The Unspeakable Curll*, p. 3.

[19] Straus, *The Unspeakable Curll*, pp. 4-5.

[20] Baines and Rogers, *Edmund Curll*, pp. 4, 5.

most pressing need is for a reliable account of factual matters – what precisely he published, for instance, and what form his encounters with major players in the book trade and literary world took.'[21] For Johnson as much as Curll, 'Detailed attention to his career should […] illuminate some forgotten and misunderstood episodes in the history of the book.'[22] By studying Johnson, this thesis can also 'reveal quite a lot about the way bookselling went on'.[23] Even less work has been done on Johnson than on Curll, and this thesis fills a significant gap in our knowledge of early eighteenth-century publishers, especially of English drama.

The Structure of the Argument

Chapter One of this thesis lays out a literature survey of existing work on Thomas Johnson, introducing key debates, themes and biographical and historical details. It is organised into the four main areas of enquiry I have identified in studies of Johnson: his biography, the *Collection*, his work as an editor, and the circulation and impact of the *Collection*. This chapter introduces my own position relative to that of other critics, and examines how far the definitions of 'pirate' and 'piracy' may be applied to Johnson and his publications.

Chapter Two offers a detailed survey of Thomas Johnson's correspondence, which no previous critic has examined in full. I use this, amongst other sources, to supplement the biography of Johnson as it is framed in Chapter One through an exploration of Johnson's contacts and retail networks. The chapter demonstrates that, whilst Johnson may have been a pirate from the British perspective, he was a significant and legitimate member of the trade from his own European standpoint. This chapter also highlights Johnson's roles in producing and disseminating major Enlightenment texts and as a cultural agent connecting Scotland with continental learning. The only previous author to discuss these aspects of Johnson's trade in any detail is Mijers, whose work I build on in this chapter.[24]

Chapter Three provides the first in-depth bibliographical account of Johnson's *A Collection of the Best English Plays*, such as McMullin proposed. My ability to provide a much fuller explanation of the form and printing history of this work has been facilitated by the study of a large number of copies held at multiple libraries. My exploration of this work is prefaced by a critical discussion of Johnson's Dedication to the *Best English Plays*, and concludes with

[21] Baines and Rogers, *Edmund Curll*, p. 5.
[22] Baines and Rogers, *Edmund Curll*, p. 5.
[23] Baines and Rogers, *Edmund Curll*, p. 5.
[24] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*.

a case study of his paratextual additions to Addison's *The Drummer*.[25] These supplement the much more descriptive itinerary of the actual form of the *Collection* with possible interpretations for Johnson's aims and capabilities in publishing it. Furthermore, where the bulk of the chapter sets out what Johnson printed and how this was presented, its beginning and end show why *Best English Plays* must be studied both as a single coherent work *and* as a variety of components which are each significant in themselves. Together, these sections demonstrate the importance of marrying bibliographical with biographical and historical forms of analysis.

Chapter Four supplements Grant's and McMullin's work on Johnson as an editor, by considering his editorial interests in Bayle's *Oeuvres*, and in plays by or adapted from Shakespeare. It thus provides a counterpoint to studies of the editing of Shakespeare in the Tonsons' publications, such as appear in Taylor or Murphy's work, for instance.[26] Although Murphy does make mention of Johnson (see Chapter One, below) his work implies that there is something absolutely extraordinary in Jacob Tonson's editions of Shakespeare. This chapter reveals alternative ways in which the editing of drama could be approached at the beginning of the eighteenth century. It uncovers Johnson's choice of copytexts for his Shakespearean publications and provides an extended case study of his work on *The Tempest*. This research reveals his sensitivity to the presentation of each individual work in the theatre when deciding on their copytexts.

Chapter Five moves away from the production of Johnson's books to consider their circulation in the world. By detailing the provenance of individual copies of his plays it documents their distribution throughout Europe and the United Kingdom, and assesses the implications of this for their popularity and accessibility to readers relative to alternative editions. Johnson offered individual plays either singly or as part of the larger *Collection*, and these seem to have been collected differently depending on their purchasers' wealth, gender and country of residence. By considering manuscript marks left by readers and the binding arrangements of these texts – in which methodology I draw on Jeffrey Todd Knight's *Bound to Read* – I suggest that the study of readers' interactions with Johnson's publications reveals

[25] Joseph Addison, *The Drummer; or, The Haunted-House: A Comedy* (London [The Hague]: Printed for the Company of Booksellers [Thomas Johnson], [*c*. 1722]).
[26] Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*; Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print.* For a recent survey of Shakespeare editing in the eighteenth century – which is also much concerned with the Tonsons – see Marcus Walsh, 'Editing and Publishing Shakespeare', in *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Fiona Ritchie and Peter Sabor (Cambridge: CUP, 2012), pp. 21-40. Frans De Bruyn's 'Reference guide to Shakespeare in the eighteenth century', pp. 349-436, in the same volume, provides a good checklist of the many more specialised works on this subject (pp. 359-64).

how he catered to different readers, and different ways of engaging with books, to those implied by authorial complete works editions published in London.[27]

Chapter Six provides a much-needed explanation of the reissue of Johnson's plays by later publishers, which subject no critic has adequately addressed. Although his works achieve only limited treatment in the majority of histories of English dramatic publishing, they were a significant resource for European publishers interested in English drama throughout the eighteenth century. These publishers include Hendrik Scheurleer the Younger of The Hague, and Gottlob Emanuel Richter of Altenburg. In assessing the afterlife of Johnson's publications in Europe, this chapter also provides an analysis of Scheurleer's collaboration with the London-based Robert Dodsley on William Whitehead's *The Roman Father*, which deliberately imitated Johnson's house style.[28] It also addresses *The British Stage*, which was an another reissue of Johnson's old stock with title pages printed in London, and a further recycling of his work on the continent, the anonymous *Best Tragedie's and Comedie's* (1761-81).[29]

The final chapter, Chapter Seven, suggests the direct impact that Johnson's frequent use of a monogram device had on the later publication of English drama, and English letters more broadly. By tracking the legacy of Johnson's device this chapter reinforces the arguments of preceding chapters for the circulation and influence of Johnson's *Collection.* Devices that appear to derive from Johnson's monogram appear in publications connected with Tonson, Curll and John Darby; in the plays of George Risk of Dublin; in novels and other works by Thomas Lowndes; and finally in the works of Robert and James Dodsley, including *The Roman Father* but also in many other texts, most importantly in their *The Annual Register*.[30]

Following a survey of existing literature, Chapters Two to Four of this thesis thus take up McMullin's call for a more comprehensive study of Johnson and his publications, in particular of his networks, his *Collection of the Best English Plays*, and his editorial practices. Chapters Five to Seven are concerned with the circulation and impact of his texts, both directly and through the work of other publishers. By focussing on Johnson's publications rather than the

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[27] Jeffrey Todd Knight, *Bound to Read: Compilations, Collections, and the Making of Renaissance Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

[28] William Whitehead, *The Roman Father, A Tragedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane, By His Majesty's Servants* (London: Printed for R. Dodsley; and sold by M. Cooper, 1750); William Whitehead, *The Roman Father, A Tragedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane, By His Majesty's Servants.* […] *The Second Edition* (London: Printed for R. Dodsley; and sold by M. Cooper, 1750).

[29] *The British Stage. In Six Volumes. Being a Collection of the Best Modern English Acting Plays*, 6 vols (London: Printed for J. Brindley, 1752); *The Best Tragedie's and Comedie's Selected from the Works. of Addisson* [*sic*]. *Banks. Shakespear. Philips. Rowe. Thomson. Howard. Farquhar. In Four Vol*, 4 vols (London [*sic*]: Printed for A Company of Booksellers, 1761; 1762; 1765; 1781).

[30] First issue *The Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politicks, and Literature, Of the Year 1758* (London: Printed for R. and J. Dodsley, 1759).

man himself, this thesis seeks a balanced assessment of his contribution to the book trade. It also suggests that the study of other publishers who have been understood as peripheral to the history of English literary publishing might shed additional new lights on the mechanisms of the trade, the supply and availability of texts, and the development of publishing history.

Chapter One: A Survey of Current Literature on Thomas Johnson

Introduction

There are several existing studies that engage with Thomas Johnson at length, of which this chapter first provides a survey. It then undertakes a thematic discussion of the various strands of work on Johnson, and the contribution that each author has made to these fields. These strands are the biography of Johnson, the material form of his *Collection of the Best English Plays*, his editorial endeavours, and the circulation of his *Collection* and its influence on other publishers and/or public reception. These broadly correspond to the various chapters of this thesis, so that his biography might be read alongside Chapter Two, the *Collection* section alongside Chapter Three, his editorial work alongside Chapter Four, and the circulation of his *Collection* alongside Chapters Five to Seven.

H. L. Ford's *Shakespeare 1700-1740* (1935) provides the foundational Johnson biography and first extensive analysis of *Best English Plays*.[1] The largely bibliographical and Anglophone concerns of Ford are next picked up by McMullin, in 'T. Johnson, Bookseller in the Hague' (1993); McMullin does not engage with Margaret Jacob's hints regarding Johnson's Francophone activities in her controversial *The Radical Enlightenment* (1981; 2006).[2] This represents a split in critical treatments of Johnson that is perpetuated in later studies of the publisher, with Mijers' *"News from the Republick of Letters"* (2012) and Warren McDougall's 'Gavin Hamilton' (1974) also standing to some degree independently of the work undertaken by Murphy (2003), Dugas (2006), Milhous and Hume (2015) and Grant (2015).[3] Where Mijers' principal interest in Johnson is as a 'cultural agent' (discussed below), and that of McDougall in Johnson's influence on Scottish publishing, Murphy, Dugas, Milhous and Hume, and Grant follow Ford and McMullin's lead in being more concerned with the material and editorial form and influence of, primarily, his English publications. Furthermore, where these seven authors focus most of their attentions on the *Best English Plays*, Jacob, Mijers and McDougall spread their nets in a different direction and consider the European scope of Johnson's business and

[1] H. L. Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740: A Collation of the Editions and Separate Plays with some account of T. Johnson and R. Walker* (Oxford: OUP, 1935).
[2] Margaret C. Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1981); Margaret C. Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans. Second Revised Edition* (Lafayette, LA: Cornerstone, 2006).
[3] Warren McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton, John Balfour and Patrick Neill: a study of publishing in Edinburgh in the 18th century' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1974); Don-John Dugas, *Marketing the Bard: Shakespeare in Performance and Print 1660-1740* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2006).

the more academic publications with which he was also involved. Owing to this division in the critical field, whereas Ford, McMullin, Murphy, Dugas, Milhous and Hume and Grant are treated together in this literature survey – because their work has implications for the entirety of this thesis – the contribution of Mijers is discussed in Chapter Two, which extends her claims and sets *Best English Plays* within the context of Johnson's wider activities. McDougall's survey of Johnson's letters is also discussed in Chapter Two, as is Jacob's work showing Johnson's contribution to the history of the Enlightenment.

In summary, Mijers' *"News from the Republick of Letters"* charts connections between members of the Scottish intelligentsia and the European Republic of Letters. Whilst Johnson is not the focus of Mijers' study, he emerges as a key player in facilitating such intellectual and cultural exchanges. The author argues that, in addition to his work as a publisher, Johnson established himself as a cultural agent and middle-man connecting individuals across Scotland and Europe. Whilst I largely agree with Mijers' claims, I reconfigure, contextualise and supplement these with new evidence from my own archival research. McDougall's arguments are less developed than those of Mijers, but they do run along similar lines; McDougall suggests that as an important Dutch publisher Johnson was a key facilitator of the transfer of developments in publishing from the continent to Scotland. Jacob's work on the Francophone Enlightenment in the Dutch Republic contains less information that is directly about Johnson, but much that concerns him. Her discussion of the relation of Enlightenment societies to the publishing industry introduces many men who were associates of Johnson, and provides much-needed background for the non-Anglophone side of his business. Although several of the wider claims for intellectual history made by Jacob have been challenged, much of the groundwork of her thesis – in exposing the connections between various early eighteenth-century writers and publishers – is indisputable, and provides valuable hints for Johnson's involvement in such circles.[4] Chapter Two again builds on rather than emends much of what Jacob has to say, but I also argue that we should place even greater emphasis on the agency of Johnson, and his importance as a distributor of texts, than critics have hitherto afforded him. Knowledge of such agency and importance is central to understanding the conception and distribution of his *Collection of the Best English Plays*, and is largely absent from existing accounts of this work.

[4] For a critique of Jacob's work see, for instance, Christiane Berkvens-Stevelinck, 'Les *Chevaliers de la Jubilation*: Maçonnerie ou libertinage? A propos de quelques publications de Margaret C. Jacob', *Quaerendo*, 13.1 (1983), 50-72. See also G. C. Gibbs, 'Review: *The Radical Enlightenment*', *British Journal for the History of Science*, 17 (1984), 67-81, and Margaret C. Jacob, 'The Knights of Jubilation – Masonic and Libertine – A Reply', *Quaerendo*, 14.1 (1984), 63-75. Jacob undertook revisions between the 1981 and 2006 editions of her book; where she is referred to subsequently the second edition is cited.

Authors

Ford's *Shakespeare 1700-1740* lays the groundwork of our first two areas of study: Johnson's biography, and the *Collection* itself. Ford's purpose is 'enumerating and collating' the various editions of Shakespeare published between 1700 and 1740, and his survey contains much of intellectual merit.[5] The implication of Ford's study – in including Johnson at all – is that the plays he printed abroad are as legitimate a part of the history of English dramatic publishing as those printed in England. Ford is the first to make the suggestion – repeated in varying forms by several later commentators – that Jacob Tonson's 1714 duodecimo reissue of Rowe's 1709 octavo Shakespeare was a response to Johnson's Shakespearean publications, 'recognizing a further outlet for the sale of the works in a more convenient and less expensive form to a play-going and reading clientele'.[6] His opening paragraphs nevertheless repeat the understanding, inherited from even earlier studies, that the elder Tonson was 'the doyen publisher of the Augustan Age, [and] merits some fitting recognition as the undoubted arouser of the public to an interest in these long-lying neglected but peerless dramas [i.e. of Shakespeare].'[7] There emerge in Ford's study two assumptions that lurk in the background of much subsequent work on Johnson, and which this thesis seeks to interrogate. Firstly, that any analysis of Johnson's dramatic publications necessitates comparison with those of Jacob Tonson (principally the Elder, but also the Younger).[8] Such comparison with Tonson, appearing in most studies of Johnson, also relates to the second peculiarity of discussion of the *Best English Plays*, that the plays by or adapted from Shakespeare contained in this collection are somehow more interesting, or more worthy of investigation, than the rest of its contents. Ford provides a collation of volumes one and two of the *Collection*, containing Shakespeare, but only a summary of the rest of its volumes. Grant, by contrast, stands out by focussing on Johnson's *Volpone*.[9] Whilst this thesis aims much of its editorial investigation at Johnson's Shakespeare

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[5] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 1.

[6] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 3; William Shakespeare, *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear; in Eight Volumes. Adorn'd with Cutts. Revis'd and Corrected, with an Account of the Life and Writings of the Author, By N. Rowe, Esq*, 8 vols (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1714); Shakespeare, *Works* (1709).

[7] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, pp. 1-2. For an example of earlier criticism lauding Tonson see, for instance, Charles Knight's *Shadows of the Old Booksellers* (London and New York: Routledge and E. P. Dutton, *c.* 1865), p. 64: 'Tonson may be deemed the prince of booksellers'.

[8] There were of course three publishers of the name Jacob Tonson: Jacob Tonson the Elder (1655/6-1736); his nephew Jacob Tonson the Younger (1682-1735); and the younger Tonson's son, Jacob Tonson III (1714-67). Of the three, this thesis is most concerned with Jacob Tonson the Elder, although at many points the work of both Tonson the Elder and Tonson the Younger are referred to collectively. Tonson the Younger seems to have been heavily involved in his uncle's business from 1708 at the latest: see Stephen Bernard, ed., *The Literary Correspondences of the Tonsons* (Oxford: OUP, 2015), p. 42.

[9] Ben Jonson, *Volpone: or, The Fox. A Comedy* ([The Hague]: Printed for T. Johnson, 1714).

editions – perpetuating the imbalance but, also, providing a fuller overview of Johnson's editorial strategies than has previously been available – Chapters Three and Five, on the form and reception of the *Collection*, demonstrate that the full scope of Johnson's dramatic publications must be considered for the *Collection* to be properly understood.

Although Ford makes valuable inroads into Johnson's biography and the format of his *Collection*, McMullin is the first author to make any sustained effort in close reading his publications and comparing these with other editions. Such work allows McMullin to explore Johnson's role as an editor in a convincing and persuasive way, as well as adding much to his biography and our knowledge of the *Collection*. McMullin tells us: 'The purpose of this paper is two-fold: first to look at Johnson's publishing activities in general and then to look more closely at some of his piracies, with a view specifically to recovering some of his editorial attitudes.'[10] McMullin's exploration of Johnson's editorial practices encompasses a variety of texts – most extensively Gilbert Burnet's *History of His Own Time* – and derives from McMullin's consideration of Johnson's version of John Crowne's *Sir Courtly Nice* when preparing a modern edition.[11] This study of Johnson's textual editing eventually gives way to a more general assessment of his treatment and framing of texts, and dealings with authors and other members of the trade. Providing an unusually moral, but also engaging exploration of Johnson's activities in this regard, this latter section of McMullin's work synthesises a history of editing with personal biography and includes valuable insights on Johnson's role in multiple other works, especially Aubry de La Motraye's *Voyages*.[12] Although Johnson's dealings with La Motraye seem to present him as having cheated this author, McMullin concludes with the suggestion that 'we have only La Mottraye's version of events to judge him by – perhaps we should suspend judgement.'[13]

Murphy's *Shakespeare in Print* ranges far and wide in its survey of editions. We are first introduced to Johnson in a comparative statement which underplays the credit Murphy later affords him: 'Editions [of Shakespeare] have ranged from the humble to the exalted, from Thomas Johnson's cheap pocket-book texts, clandestinely exported from the Netherlands' to presentation copies on vellum.[14] Murphy reiterates Ford's suggestion that by changing the

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[10] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 99.
[11] Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History Of his own time*, 6 vols (London [The Hague]: Printed for the Company of Booksellers [Thomas Johnson], 1725-34); John Crowne, *Sir Courtly Nice: or, It Can Not Be. A Comedy* (London [The Hague]: Printed for the Company of Booksellers [Thomas Johnson], [n.d.]); B. J. McMullin, ed., *The Comedies of John Crowne: A Critical Edition* (NY: Garland, 1984).
[12] Aubry de La Motraye, *Voyages du Sr. A. De La Motraye, en Europe, Asie & Afrique*, 2 vols (A La Haye: Chez T. Johnson & J. Van Duren, 1727).
[13] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 111.
[14] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 13.

format of Rowe's Shakespeare from octavo to duodecimo, Tonson 'may have been responding' to Johnson's octavo editions, which the elder Jacob 'may well have registered […] as indicating a potential broadening of the market and may have reconfigured his wares accordingly.'[15] Such claims for Johnson's influence on Tonson are important for the author's wider arguments regarding the broadening reception of Shakespeare in print, although the majority of Murphy's biographical discussion is drawn from Ford.[16] Murphy adds little to Ford's assessment of the material form of Johnson's *Collection*, or to debates regarding his editorial policies. Nevertheless, assuming Britain was Johnson's primary market for his plays – problematised throughout this thesis – Murphy does provide some interesting discussion of the legality of Johnson's trade. Whilst the author later repeats his belief that the 1714 Shakespeare 'was probably a response to Johnson', Johnson's influence is effectively sidelined by the Tonsons' return to quarto in Pope's edition of Shakespeare's works.[17]

Dugas' *Marketing the Bard* is similar to Murphy in that it gives an assessment of Johnson's work against the Tonson Shakespeare editions. Although Dugas' treatment of Johnson is relatively slight, and adds little to the biographical, bibliographical and editorial information of Ford and McMullin, his contribution is valuable for situating Johnson's plays in relation to others circulating in Britain, and for his speculation regarding Johnson's motivations in publishing the *Collection*. The author suggests it may have been a 'genre-based "Shakespeare's greatest hits" collection' intended to 'cash in' on interest in Shakespeare generated by the 1709 edition.[18] Dugas also notes that the quality of Johnson's books would have 'caught the eye of the more discerning play readers' with 'production values equivalent to the very finest English books'.[19] He assumes that the *Collection* was 'available in the shop of at least one London bookseller', and that 'Johnson's product offered customers interested only in Shakespeare's most theatrically popular plays an extremely attractive alternative to the Tonson editions.'[20] That Johnson *might* have sold his plays through one or more London booksellers is explored in Chapters Two and Seven, and the validity of Dugas' comparison between a collection of plays by different writers and an authorial works edition is an underlying theme throughout this thesis. Dugas' emphasis on Shakespeare ignores the many plays by other authors contained in Johnson's *Collection*, which in fact suggests different

[15] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 63.
[16] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, pp. 103-05.
[17] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 105; William Shakespeare, *The Works of Shakespear. In Six Volumes. Collated and Corrected by the former Editions, by Mr. Pope*, 6 vols (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1725).
[18] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. 167.
[19] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. 166.
[20] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. 167.

customers with different interests to those purchasing authorial works editions – certainly many of those readers discussed in Chapter Five of this thesis did not see the *Collection* as Dugas imagines, and collected plays by a variety of different playwrights. Although Dugas also oversimplifies things in assuming that it was legal for Johnson's plays to be sold in Britain (see below), the author's claim that 'Johnson selected the plays [in his *Collection*] based on their theatrical popularity' is validated in Chapter Four.[21] How Johnson is situated within the broader narrative of Dugas' book is also significant. The author affords principal responsibility for the growth of Shakespeare's reputation to the many editions of the Tonsons. Whilst he acknowledges that the 1714 Rowe edition may have been an indirect response to Johnson's plays, an attempt to increase 'market share' caused by 'competition' from Johnson, he does not afford such historical instrumentality to the *Best English Plays* as some other authors do, especially in terms of its format as a collection.[22] The Tonson-Walker price war is the watershed moment in Dugas' narrative.[23]

The broad scope of Milhous and Hume's *The Publication of Plays in London* makes it easy to miss their significant claims regarding Johnson, who makes a multitude of appearances. Although the authors add little to Johnson's biography, they reopen enquiry on the frontispiece device present in many of his plays.[24] This device, Johnson's monogram, appears on the cover and frontispiece to their own volume – alongside those of other publishers – and such placement suggests the authors' belief that Johnson is as worthy of consideration in the history of English publishing as any publisher working in the British Isles. The authors' earliest explicit claim regarding Johnson, that his works are 'identifiable' by this monogram, encompasses both readers in his time, and us today.[25] Although Milhous and Hume also highlight the variability of Johnson's imprints (and his use of 'for the Company of Booksellers' as one of these imprints), they do not connect this with his deployment of a consistent device – as I do – which they consider a 'brand[…]' and 'advertising'.[26] The authors explore both the price and scope of Johnson's series, adding much that is new to discussion.[27] Although Milhous and Hume undertake no new research regarding Johnson's activities as an editor, they make advances on Dugas' assumptions regarding the legality of his work, and offer the largest claims to date about the importance of his books to other publishers and publishing history: they suggest

[21] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, pp. 166, 167.
[22] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. 168.
[23] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. ix and *passim*.
[24] See also Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 55.
[25] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 37.
[26] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, pp. 108, ii, 37.
[27] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, pp. 245-48.

Johnson made the importation of books to Britain a 'major issue' and that he had an 'impact' on the format of plays published here, also enjoying 'importance' in the field of reprint series.[28] More specifically, the authors argue that Johnson's use of octavo was the singular and direct cause of the change across English dramatic publishing from quarto to octavo, and 'one of the major forces behind affordable distribution of Shakespeare.'[29] The authors also assume a significant impact by Johnson's *Collection* on the contents of later collections, and emphasise its status as the first of such collections.[30] In addition to such claims, what is perhaps most important about their study of Johnson is his presentation as fully embedded within the broader context of English-language publishing; the authors' tabular comparison of the contents of *Best English Plays* alongside other collections affords a variety of persuasive connections.[31]

Grant's 'Tonson's Jonson' explores the competition between the Tonsons, Henry Hills Junior and Thomas Johnson to publish various plays by Ben Jonson. The author not only makes apparent the interest and relevance of Johnson's work beyond Shakespeare, but undertakes the same kind of integration of Johnson within wider publishing history as is broached by Milhous and Hume. Grant links her history of Jonson editions to the wider struggles over printing rights precipitated by the 1710 Copyright Act, or Statute of Anne. She also provides compelling new information on Johnson's choice of copytexts and the quality of his editing.[32] The author characterises the period as one of experimentation in the format of dramatic texts, with Tonson editions in quarto and octavo, Hills' in duodecimo, and Johnson's again in octavo.[33] By identifying the pirate Hills' obfuscatory imprint – 'a society of stationers' – Grant throws implicit light on Johnson's use of 'the Company' in his imprints, and her exploration of Hills' small dramatic collections, 'printed in neat Pocket Vollumes on fine paper', invites further comparison with Johnson's work, 'neatly & correctly printed in small Volumes fit for the pocket'.[34] She also makes the compelling argument that 'only popular works are pirated', which justifies Johnson's range of texts as those making regular appearances in London

[28] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 71. On the legality of Johnson's work see p. 108.
[29] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, pp. 80, 108. The point regarding quarto/octavo format is reiterated on pp. 218 and 262.
[30] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, pp. 262, 362.
[31] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, pp. 264, 375-86 ('Appendix II: Plays Included in Major Multi-author Collections Published in London from T. Johnson (1710) to John Bell (1773-1778 and 1791-1797)').
[32] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson': for the editing of the earliest Tonson editions, see para. 7; for Hills, see para. 16; for Johnson, see paras 20, 22-23. Comparison between the choice of copytexts for each Jonson edition appears in para. 33, with Johnson, printing from Jonson F1, as 'the revelation.'
[33] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 10.
[34] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', paras 13, 15; Edmund Smith, *Phaedra and Hippolitus. A Tragedy* ([The Hague]: Printed for T. Johnson, 1711), F2r.

theatres.[35] The author stresses that Johnson's Shakespeare editions were a 'direct response' to the 1709 Rowe text, and that the Tonsons' smaller-format edition of 1714 may have been a consequence of Johnson's actions.[36] The questions Grant raises regarding Johnson's format, advertisements and the contents of his *Collection* are considered below.[37] Her suggestion that its contents were variable, with collections 'put together both by the bookseller and by the interested individual collector' is corroborated in Chapter Three, and its consequences for extant collections detailed in Chapter Five.[38] In terms of our broader categories of enquiry – biography, format, editing, and circulation – it is clear that although Grant is not concerned with Johnson's biography, she makes some acute observations regarding the format of the collection, important contentions about its circulation, and provides a focussed analysis of the editing of *Volpone* (the methodology of which I draw on in Chapter Four). In what might be categorised as, in part, a comparative essay, Johnson's plays, with 'compactness and portability but […] also upmarket' emerge favourably as an important contribution to the history of English drama in print.[39] Grant's suggestions that 'much more work needs to be done on *Best English Plays*', especially if it 'had the most profound effect on the publishing of plays in England since the invention of the printing press', are proposals which, echoing similar concerns to McMullin, this thesis responds to.[40]

The Life of Thomas Johnson

Ford tells us that much of his information for Johnson's biography was drawn from the knowledge of M. Nijhoff (presumably of the Hague publishing firm) and E. F. Kossman, whose work also includes an entry on Johnson.[41] Ford begins:

> Thomas Johnson, an important publisher at The Hague, was born about 1677 (and was possibly of Scotch extraction). He had to wife Jane Weems, and lived at the The Hague from 1701 until 1728, whence he

[35] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', paras 18, 21.
[36] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 26 (see also paras 19, 36). Grant later suggests (para. 33): 'it is well known that Tonson's response to Thomas Johnson's pirated Shakespeare editions was to bring out an updated Rowe Shakespeare in duodecimo to undercut his competitor, which would have taken much time and work to effect'.
[37] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', paras 21, 24.
[38] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 24.
[39] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 20. See also the author's comparison of the Tonsons' response to Johnson's and Hills' publications, para. 33.
[40] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', paras 24, 34.
[41] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 47; E. F. Kossman, *De Boekhandel te's-Gravenhage tot het eind van de 18de eeuw. Biographische woordenboek van boekverkoopers, eitgevers, boekdrukkers, boekbinders enz. Met vermelding van hun uitgaven en de veilingen door hen gehouden* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1937), p. 206.

> moved to Rotterdam […], where he continued his bookselling business till the time of his death in 1735.[42]

Ford's outline is skeletal but largely accurate; as is clear from Johnson's unpublished correspondence with Charles Mackie, Professor of Universal History at the University of Edinburgh, he was certainly a Scottish émigré.[43] McMullin confirms that Johnson was 58 in 1735 at the time of his burial, and suggests he married Jane sometime before 1704.[44] Also confirming Ford's account, in a letter of 27 July 1728, one John Mitchell told Mackie: 'Mr Johnson and his family (whom we left all in good health) ar[e…] to Roterdam to live, in a fine house of 1300. guld. a year.'[45] Johnson sent Mackie a letter from Rotterdam dated 19 October 1728:

> my removal to this place & getting things put in order here, as well as ordering all my affairs in the Hague before I left it, have occupied me prety much for about a year past. Now I am settled here with a very large shop & warehouse full of very good books to a considerable value, which I hope to find better occasion here to put off & send off than I had at the Hague.[46]

On the nature of Johnson's business, Ford suggests:

> Before he commenced publishing books in English in any quantity, his chief output had been in Latin and French, but when he left The Hague he disposed of these and retained his stock of English works. Probably the Copyright Act contributed to the development of this branch of his business.[47]

From beginning his plays in 1710 – which were Johnson's first English publications – the records of *ESTC* and *WorldCat* confirm that the English side of his business did increase as Johnson's career progressed, although he continued to issue some French publications into his final years, which presumably helped stock his 'warehouse' in Rotterdam.[48] McMullin fleshes

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[42] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 47.
[43] See, for instance, Johnson's knowledge of Edinburgh people and places, in Edinburgh University Library (hereafter E^2), La.II.91/B/26 (13 October 1719), or use of the Scots 'mercat' i.e. market in E^2 La.II.91/C/39 (24 July 1733). On 'mercat' see William Grant and David D. Murison, eds, *The Scottish National Dictionary*, VI (Edinburgh: Scottish National Dictionary Association Ltd, 1965), p. 251.
[44] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 99.
[45] E^2 La.II.90/1/22.
[46] E^2 La.II.91/B/62.
[47] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 47.
[48] *English Short Title Catalogue* <estc.bl.uk>; *WorldCat* <worldcat.org>. As a later French publication see, for instance, François Michel Chrétien Deschamps, *La Religion Defendue: Poeme. Contre l'Epitre a Uranie* (Rotterdam: T. Johnson, 1733). See also McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 99, and Mijers, *"News from the Republick*

out the earlier part of Johnson's life by citing Kossman on his first appearance in the historical records: Johnson was apparently associated with Gabriel Romondon and Charles Whitehead in 1701 'in an invention relating to touch-holes in cannons.'[49] McMullin is also more specific than Ford on Johnson's earliest publications, suggesting that his first venture was Johannes Colerus' *La Vie de B. de Spinosa* (1706), although by this date he had in fact already published works by G. Vautier and Claude de Vaugelas with Jonas l'Honoré.[50] Whilst Johnson published a variety of French texts with joint imprints throughout his career, all of his English books were independent ventures. Ford's suggestion that the Copyright Act contributed to Johnson's investment in these English texts, specifically the *Best English Plays*, is impossible to verify. The idea of the claim, reiterated by later commentators, is that since the act prevented the reprinting of copyrighted texts in England, this provided an opportunity for Johnson to import them from the continent without competition. Although we cannot know Johnson's private motivations, we can get a hold on the opportunities the act may or may not have afforded him by considering the precise legal status of his publications, which is discussed below in the context of the circulation of his books.

Another matter of confusion in accounts of Johnson, mentioned above, is his use of various imprints, especially 'Printed for the Company of Booksellers'; this led Ford to believe that Johnson 'was a member of "the Association of Booksellers at The Hague"', although no such organisation existed, at least as Ford imagined it.[51] The 'Company' was instead part of Johnson's marketing strategy, which is explored in Chapter Three. Ford also speculates on whether Johnson was a printer as well as a publisher. He suggests Johnson:

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of Letters", p. 137. The title and imprint for *La Religion Defendue* and other French works, below, where I have not had access to the originals, are taken from *Short-Title Catalogue, Netherlands (STCN)* <picarta.nl/xslt>. I have followed the idiosyncratic use of accents and spelling as they appear in the originals when I have seen these, or in the *STCN* where these are not available.

[49] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 99.

[50] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 99. Jean [Johannes] Colerus, *La Vie de B. de Spinosa, Tirée des Ecrits de ce Fameux Philosophe, Et du témoignage de plusieurs Personnes dignes de foi, qui l'ont connu particuliérement* (A la Haye: Chez T. Johnson, 1706); G. Vautier, *Sermon sur ces Paroles du Pseaume* [*sic*] *CXIX.v.51* (La Haye: J. l'Honoré et T. Johnson, 1705); Claude Favre de Vaugelas, *Observations de l'Academie Françoise* (La Haye: J. l'Honoré et T. Johnson, 1705). See also Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, pp. 135-36, on Johnson's collaboration with l'Honoré.

[51] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, pp. 47-48. The author elaborates: 'About 1720 he [Johnson] was a member of the Society of The Hague and London Booksellers, and must have worked in accord with some of the latter, seeing that, apart from the plays, "The | Works | of Mr. Alexander Pope." | [with imprint] "London. | Printed by T.J. for B.L. & other Booksellers. | = | M.DCC.XVIII", small 8vo, was vendible here: B.L. is assumed to be Bernard Lintott.' This is clearly a false imprint intended to promote sales and/or evade detection as a 'piracy', and the same work (Alexander Pope, *The Works of Mr. Alexander Pope* (London [The Hague]: Printed by T. J. for B. L. & other Booksellers, 1718)) was later reissued as *The Works of Mr. Alexander Pope* (London [The Hague]: Printed by T. J. for the Company, 1720).

> probably employed the same printer for most of his work, as the ornament used for the title of *Othello*, 1710, was used for his publication, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, 1709, and the head-piece to *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Julius Caesar*, 1710-11, was used to Joncourt's *Quatre Lettres sur les Jeux de Hazard*, 1713, and the tail-piece to *Hamlet* finds a place there as well.[52]

The typographical and decorative consistency across Johnson's publications – again noted by other writers – is most elegantly explained not by the use of the same printer, as Ford supposed, but by the fact that Johnson was his own printer.[53] There is an extraordinary consistency of style from the earliest to the latest of Johnson's books, and his status as a printer as well as publisher – at least for the majority of his solo publications – is suggested in his own words in his correspondence.[54]

Ford concludes his account with the afterlife of Johnson's business and plays:

> At his death his widow, conjointly with his son Alexander, carried on the business, but removed again to The Hague in 1741, where it continued until 1745. The remaining stock was purchased by Hendrik Scheurleer in 1750-1, who published under his own name a whole series of these plays in sixteen volumes containing about sixty-four plays, many of them bearing the imprints of the 1711-20 editions, possibly being actual remainders of the 1720 issue.[55]

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[52] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 49; William Shakespeare, *Othello, The Moor of Venice. A Tragedy* (London [The Hague]: [Thomas Johnson], 1710); Paul Rycaut, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, 3 vols (A La Haye: Chez T. Johnson, 1709); William Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. A Tragedy* (London [The Hague]: [Thomas Johnson], 1710); William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Macbeth* (London [The Hague]: [Thomas Johnson], 1711); William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar. A Tragedy* (London [The Hague]: [Thomas Johnson], 1711); Pierre de Joncourt, *Quatre Lettres sur les Jeux de Hazard; et une Cinquie'me* [*sic*] *sur L'usage de se faire celer, pour éviter une Visite incommode* (A la Haye: Chez T. Johnson, 1713).

[53] McMullin believes Johnson was a 'publisher and retailer […] commissioning from Dutch printers': 'T. Johnson', p. 99.

[54] Johnson told Mackie he was printing the eleventh and twelfth volumes of his *Journal Literaire*, 12 vols (A La Haye: Chez T. Johnson, 1713-22) and, in the same letter, 'I am now printing Addisons works & some other things, beside the great french Dictionary in 4 vols folio, & another large work we are about in Company.' (E^2 La.II.91/B/33 (23 January 1722)). Joseph Addison, *The Works of the Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq*, 2 vols (London [The Hague]: Printed for T. Johnson, 1722); Antoine Furetière, *Dictionnaire Universel, Contenant generalement tous les Mots François*, 4 vols (A La Haye: Chez Pierre Husson, Thomas Johnson, Jean Swart, Jean Van Duren, Charles Le Vier, La Veuve Van Dole, 1727); 'another large work' possibly Jean-Baptiste Labat, *Nouveau Voyages Aux Isles De L'Amerique*, 2 vols (A La Haye: Chez P. Husson, T. Johnson, P. Gosse, J. van Duren, R. Alberts & C. Le Vier, 1724), or Abraham George Luiscius, *Het Algemeen Historisch, Geographisch en Genealogisch Woordenboek*, 5 vols ('s Gravenhage and Delft: P. Husson, T. Johnson, J. van Duren, C. Le Vier, R. Boitet, 1724-27). On a more modest scale, Johnson later told Mackie 'I have had some thoughts of printing some such collection of Poems as you mention & shall perhaps go about it soon.' (E^2 La.II.91/C/39 (24 July 1733)).

[55] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 48; *A Select Collection of the Best Modern English Plays. Selected From. The Best Author's* [*sic*], *c.* 15 vols (The Hague: Printed for H. Scheurleer, Junior, 1750). On the scope and form of this collection see Chapter Six, below.

Considering those imprints that survive from Jane and Alexander's control of the business, this assessment of their career appears correct in essence, although would benefit from further investigation.[56] The only imprint I have found that makes specific reference to Jane and Rotterdam is extremely dubious, and going by the difference in its typography to any other publication by Thomas or Alexander this might in fact be a London piracy.[57] McMullin only adds that Jane died at The Hague in January 1756 aged eighty, although he suggests that the Scheurleers probably took over the Johnsons' stock closer to 1745; Alexander's biographer implies that he abandoned publishing shortly after this date following 'legal and financial difficulties'.[58] Scheurleer the Younger's reissue of the 'actual remainders' of Johnson's *Best English Plays* – with new, supplementary material – has been largely ignored by later scholars, and is explored in Chapter Six alongside the work of other publishers who also reissued Johnson's stock.

As is apparent from the foregoing discussion, McMullin is the only literary critic other than Ford to add significantly to our biographical knowledge of Johnson. Identifying Johnson (perhaps ambitiously) as 'familiar to students of eighteenth-century literature and the book trade', McMullin provides many hints regarding the personality of Johnson as well as the facts of his life.[59] For instance, he deduces Johnson's place of birth from, in part, 'his sensitivity about a perceived slight to the Scottish families of Burnet and Hamilton contained in published speculation about William III's "secret vice"'.[60] As is demonstrated in Chapter Two, Johnson's close associations with several Scottish families might also have encouraged such an interest in their reputations. McMullin suggests that Johnson 'seems to have been an agreeable person', although his account of Johnson's strained relationship with La Motraye does much to problematise this.[61]

Whilst my account of Johnson's business associations in Chapter Two offers no speculations regarding Johnson's character, he seems to have been both capable and well-

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[56] Alexander's publications include Alberto Radicati, *Recueil de Pieces Curieuses sur les Matieres les Plus Interessantes* (A Rotterdam: Chez la Veuve Thomas Johnson et Fils, 1736), and Thémiseul de Saint-Hyacinthe, *Recherches Philosophiques* (A Rotterdam & à la Haye: Chez Alex. Johnson, 1743). See also Carolyn D. Williams, 'Johnson, Alexander (*bap.* 1716, *d.* 1799), physician and advocate of resuscitation', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/57457> [accessed 12 December 2019].

[57] Gilbert Crokatt, *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence Display'd* (Printed for J. Johnson in Rotterdam, and Sold by J. Cooper in Fleet-Street, London [*sic*], 1738). Compare the also satirical *The Year of Wonders* (London: Printed, and sold by J. Johnson, and the booksellers of London and Westminster, 1737).

[58] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 99; Williams, 'Johnson, Alexander'. Mijers also places the sale of the Johnsons' business in 1745, in *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 136.

[59] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 99.

[60] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 99.

[61] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 99. For McMullin's full account of the La Motraye affair see pp. 109-11.

connected. This chapter, which catalogues Johnson's letters and uses these to explore his contacts, adds few new dates or life events to Johnson's biography. What it does do is situate him far more firmly amongst his contemporaries than previous commentators have attempted, and provides invaluable information on his trade links in Britain. Two insights on Johnson's more personal life that have emerged from studying his letters both concern his children. Referring to Alexander, Johnson told Mackie in a letter of 19 June 1731 'I keep him now most in the shop to train him up early in the business he must follow.'[62] Alexander (baptised 13 September 1716) was the only one of Johnson's six children to outlive him.[63] On 25 March 1729 Johnson had told Pierre Des Maizeaux 'I lost in Dec last my only daughter [at] 23 years of age & have now only one boy about 12 years old.'[64]

A Collection of the Best English Plays

Many commentators draw attention to the quality of Johnson's books, especially the *Best English Plays*, and Ford in no exception. He describes them as 'on exceptionally good paper, in good clear type, and not inferior to the best productions of the London printers'.[65] Grant emphasises 'the sheer quality of the physical book […] the collection's production values were significantly higher than all but the finest English books.'[66]

Despite this agreement, one factor which it seems may have stymied the collection's investigation is confusion over its extent, arrangement, and order of release – all of which are recorded in full for the first time in this thesis. As I demonstrate in Chapter Three, the first wave of forty plays were released by Johnson between 1710-12 and provided with ten volume title pages once printing was under way. Johnson then printed several further plays between 1712-19 – with additional volume titles – before printing many new plays, reprinting others, and printing a new range of sixteen volume titles *c.* 1720-22. After *c.* 1722 he then issued occasional new plays or editions, but no new volume titles. The first set of title pages 1-10 specified their contents and so the plays these preface are relatively consistent; the second set

[62] E^2 La.II.91/C/9.
[63] See also Williams, 'Johnson, Alexander'; and Kossman, *De Boekhandel te's-Gravenhage*, p. 206.
[64] British Library (hereafter L), Add. MS 4284: 1701-1745, ff. 180-81. Superscript here and throughout is as it appears in the correspondence.
[65] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 47.
[66] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 20.

1-16 did not specify their contents and so the plays contained therein are not consistent at all (figures 1 and 2).[67]

Ford recognised two versions of the *Collection*, broadly correspondent with those I have identified, and called these its first and second bibliographical 'states'; he called the collection re-released by Scheurleer in 1750 its third state.[68] Apart from the fact that Ford overlooks the true complexity of the publication history of Johnson's *Collection* – a result of studying only a small number of copies – reference to advances in bibliography argues for some revision of his terminology as well. Philip Gaskell writes that a bibliographical 'state' should only be used to describe 'variants from the basic form of the ideal copy', and that 'differences of state are generally the attributes of individual formes, or sometimes of individual sheets.'[69] Editions,

Figure 1

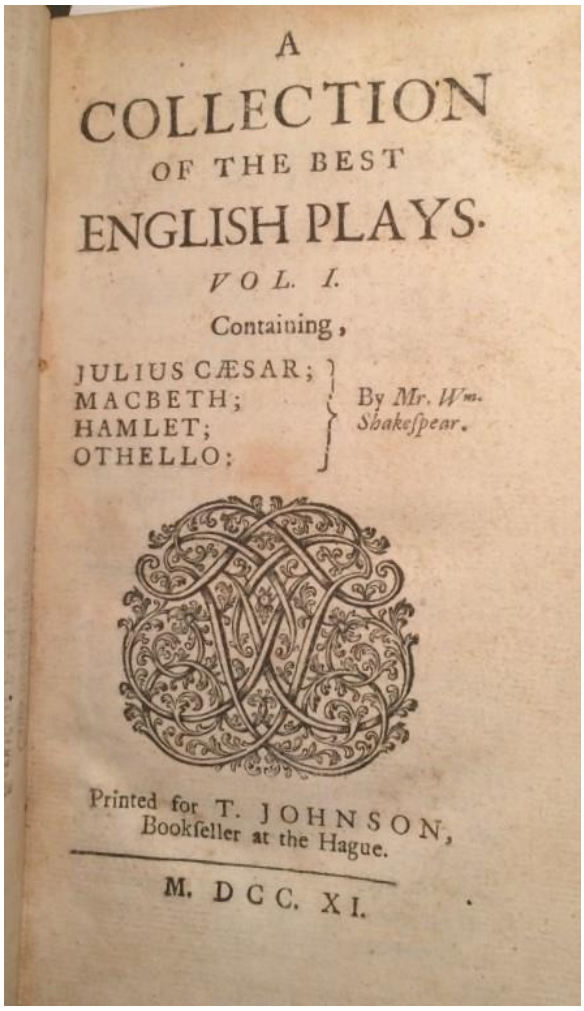
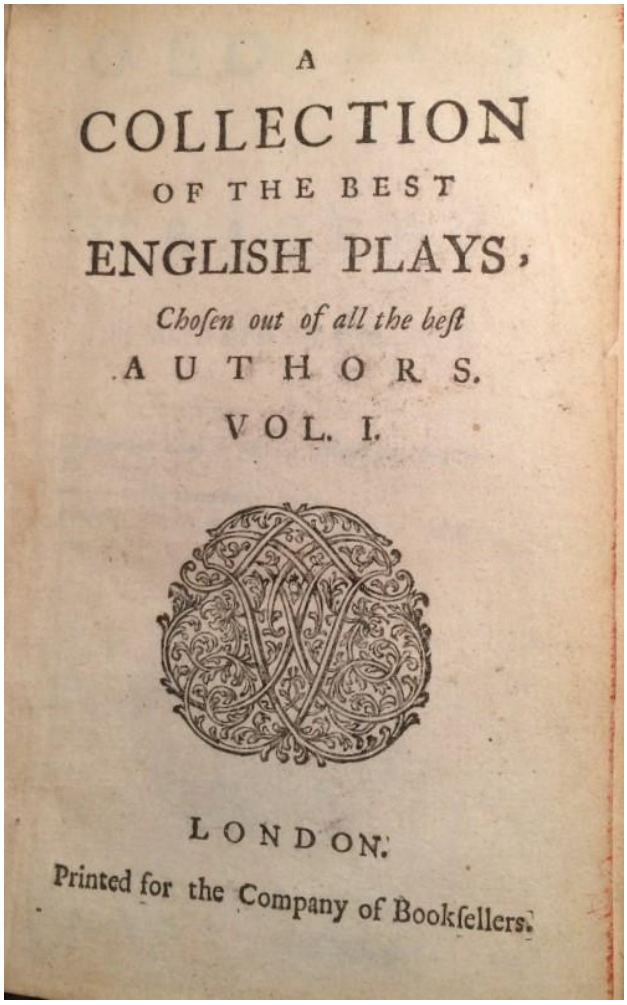

A
COLLECTION
OF THE BEST
ENGLISH PLAYS.
VOL. I.
Containing,
JULIUS CÆSAR;
MACBETH;
HAMLET;
OTHELLO;
By Mr. Wm. Shakespear.
Printed for T. JOHNSON, Bookseller at the Hague.
M. DCC. XI.

Figure 2


A
COLLECTION
OF THE BEST
ENGLISH PLAYS,
Chosen out of all the best
AUTHORS.
VOL. I.
LONDON:
Printed for the Company of Booksellers.

[67] *A Collection of the Best English Plays*, I, first-series title page. Image from Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.J6. *A Collection of the Best English Plays*, I, second-series title page. Image from Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.J61.
[68] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 51.
[69] Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (New York and Oxford: OUP, 1972), p. 316.

meanwhile, are defined by Gaskell as wholly new settings of already-extant texts, and issues as 'all the copies of that part of an edition […] identifiable as a consciously planned printed unit distinct from the basic form of the ideal copy.'[70] Whilst editions may therefore seem the most appropriate term to describe the various manifestations of the *Collection*, variation in contents limits its applicability. McMullin suggests that this problem of categorisation might by sidestepped if we take each individual play as a discrete bibliographical unit.[71] Whilst this is correct, I will nevertheless use the term 'series' to describe each version of the *Collection* as it was broadly conceived; this is essential if we are to comprehend its importance beyond being a conglomeration of individually less significant (although still interesting) publications. Although Gaskell does not provide an absolute definition of 'series', his linkage of the term with associated groups of reprints seems appropriate.[72] That said, such collections of Johnson's plays as were repackaged by Scheurleer (and other publishers) are sufficiently different from Johnson's *Collection*s to warrant independent classification, and these are itemised and discussed in Chapter Six.[73]

As part of his relatively detailed description of the first- and second-series collections, with much valuable information on how to distinguish them, their ideal order, and Johnson's use of devices, amongst other things, Ford also draws our attention to the collection's Dedication, appearing in just one surviving copy.[74] This fascinating resource seems to have been ignored by later scholars, but is discussed here in Chapter Three. Whilst the enumeration of extant copies of Johnson's books is important to Ford's discussion, this is not a line of enquiry that other commentators follow. Such methodology is nevertheless also key to my interpretation of the production and reception of *Best English Plays* in Chapters Three and Five – because of the collection's malleability, analysis of multiple exemplars is essential. The singular example of Shakespeare's *Merry Wives* with a cancel leaf that Ford draws our attention to is explored in Chapter Four on Johnson's editorial practices.[75]

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[70] Gaskell, *A New Introduction*, pp. 313, 315.
[71] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 101.
[72] Gaskell, *A New Introduction*, pp. 303-04.
[73] Despite the general omission from discussion of later reissues, McMullin notes how Johnson's plays were repackaged in *The British Stage* (1752), and also in William Congreve, *The Works of Mr. William Congreve. In Three Volumes. Consisting of his Plays and Poems. The Fifth Edition*, 3 vols (London [The Hague]: Printed for Tonson [Hendrik Scheurleer], 1752), in addition to their appearance in Scheurleer's *Select Collection* ('T. Johnson', p. 100).
[74] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, pp. 51-56; Dedication in L 1345.b.16-25.
[75] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, pp. 50-51; William Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor; with the Amours of Sir John Falstaff. A Comedy* (London [The Hague]: [Thomas Johnson], 1710). Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 2826 1710 Sh.Col.

McMullin adds much to Ford's discussion but is again too rigid in his application of a definite schedule of publication. He tells us that after the first forty plays were released between 1710-11 (although *Venice Preserv'd*, *Oroonoko* and *The Adventures of Five Hours* were all printed in 1712): 'Two further volumes, each containing four plays, were added, in 1714 and 1718; and in the early 1720s a 16-volume version was available, comprising 64 plays, some re-set, some re-issued and sixteen new to the collection.'[76] Since the first-series plays are dated 1710-12, but their volume titles 1711-12, it seems the volume titles may have only become available once printing was underway, perhaps after some plays had already been released, a point also made by Murphy and Dugas.[77] Whilst those extra plays released between 1712-19 frequently appear in two volumes, these were printed across several years and, in fact, twelve new plays were issued by Johnson during this period, with extant volumes varying in contents.[78] As already stated, the second series was also added to throughout the remaining years of Johnson's life, and although the maximum extent of any second-series collection is sixteen volumes, many exemplars are smaller than this, with a variable number and selection of plays per volume.[79]

McMullin's most significant contribution to our understanding of the *Best English Plays* is perhaps, at least for this thesis, a detailed itinerary of 'The bibliographical problems associated with the English plays and awaiting solution'; the first of these is 'the initial difficulty of establishing precisely which English plays Johnson actually published'.[80] Part of the problem arises from the plays contained in Johnson's advertisements not matching those that eventually emerged. McMullin suggests Johnson curtailed his ambitions since 'commercial prudence must have prevailed' i.e. he could not expect to sell so many plays.[81] Although many plays *were* left unsold at the time of Johnson's death, the evidence gathered

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[76] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 100. Thomas Otway, *Venice Preserv'd; or, A Plot Discovered. A Tragedy* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1712); Thomas Southerne, *Oroonoko: A Tragedy* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1712); Samuel Tuke, *The Adventures of Five Hours: A Tragi-comedy* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1712).

[77] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 105; Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. 167 n. 65.

[78] Of these inter-series plays, two were published in 1712, one in 1713, two in 1714, one in 1717, two in 1718, and four in 1719; see Chapter Three for a full schedule.

[79] New plays and editions were released in 1723, 1728, 1730 and 1731, alongside several undated texts which – based on the evidence of their ornaments – also appear to be from this period. Whilst Johnson was remarkably consistent in using his monogram as the frontispiece device for the second-series plays published *c.* 1720-22, later plays often bear other devices, such as William Grimston, *Lawyer's Fortune: or, Love in a Hollow Tree. A Comedy* (Rotterdam: Printed and Sold by T. Johnson, 1728), with two square floral ornaments, or John Banks, *The Unhappy Favourite: or, The Earl of Essex. A Tragedy* (London [*sic*]: Printed for the Company [Thomas Johnson], [n.d.]), with a single diamond-shaped floral ornament.

[80] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 100.

[81] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 101.

here suggests that Johnson changed his projected catalogue in response to readers' demands and to reflect changing tastes in the theatres.

McMullin's second bibliographical problem is determining 'what the precise contents of individual volumes of the *Collection* should be.'[82] Although there were some minor complications to the ordering of the first series, discussed below, it should in essence have been organised as specified by its volume titles. As I demonstrate in Chapter Five, McMullin is right to surmise that 'there appears to be no fixed order for the contents of the 16-volume version', which makes it an extraordinary resource for uncovering its readers' interests through their choice and organisation of titles.[83] The third problem identified by McMullin is that of assigning dates to many of Johnson's undated plays, pointing out that some exist in 'up to four settings'.[84] Whilst two 'settings' (i.e. editions) is more usual, the author is correct in suggesting that, in many instances, individual dates are irrecoverable. Although this thesis does not attempt to provide a comprehensive assignment of dates to Johnson's plays – which seems of limited value in itself – I do suggest a probable order of release for several of his publications when this is relevant to the evolution of the *Collection*.

McMullin follows these three points with the more general suggestion of establishing precisely what Johnson did or did not publish. Although McMullin believes this to be complicated by the fact that Johnson was not his own printer, this is probably a false assumption, as stated above, which simplifies matters considerably. Negotiating what McMullin characterises as 'a variety of imprints, some plausible, some suspect and others patently false', Chapter Three identifies a plethora of books that should be newly assigned to Johnson's *Collection*, and I identify others (such as Jane Johnson's *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*, above) which seem dubiously attributed.[85] Whilst McMullin is partially correct (see Chapter Seven) in his suggestion that the various forms of Johnson's 'TJ' monogram device, which appears on many of his plays and volume titles (see figures 1 and 2, above), cannot be used for the purposes of dating, since up to four were used concurrently, this has been invaluable in identifying his texts. McMullin's next suggestion that we need to establish which books were published (or printed) by Johnson and those he merely sold, is investigated

[82] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 101.
[83] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 101.
[84] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 101.
[85] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 102. See also Milhous and Hume on the proliferation of editions by multiple publishers, although primarily Johnson, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, in *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 71: 'Only by examining multiple copies of a great many plays can someone start to get a sense of just how many of them are not what they appear […] this is a subject the surface of which has hardly been scratched.'

throughout this thesis and, building on Mijers' work, my Chapter Two provides much new information on the retail side of his business.[86] McMullin's final words on the subject are somewhat flippant:

> And what is one to make of imprints such as this?: 'A La Haye chez P. Husson, T. Johnson, P. Gosse, J. Swart, H. Scheurleer, J. Van Duren, R. Alberts, C. Levier, & F. Boucquet' – is it a Johnson publication? At this point one might be forgiven for deciding to give up any plans one might have had for producing a bibliography of Thomas Johnson.[87]

Detailed investigation can provide answers to such questions. Johnson was deeply involved in this publication, the *Oeuvres* of Pierre Bayle, for many years, and my investigation of Johnson's letters concerning this work in Chapter Four sheds much light on Johnson's editorial methods and the international scope of his business.

Whilst Dugas' account of Johnson's *Collection* is fulsome, 'a new product and a new brand', he appears to be under the impression that Johnson regularly used both octavo and duodecimo formats, whereas octavo was predominant.[88] Whilst the author suggests that his account is taken largely from Ford, it is in many ways less accurate that the earlier author's, with a misleadingly reductive summary of the form of both the first- and second-series collections.[89] Despite these problems, Dugas does make the suggestive point that Johnson's use of octavo for his plays may have been inspired by continental practice which, as I explore in Chapter Seven, is also relevant to the history of his device.[90] Itemising Johnson's Shakespearean publications Dugas suggests that Johnson's *1 Henry IV* and *Merry Wives* both appeared in Betterton's revised versions, although in fact Johnson used Rowe's 1709 Shakespeare for his copytexts.[91] The author also fails to identify that Shadwell's *Timon of Athens* seems to have replaced Granville's *The Jew of Venice* in the second volume of most

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[86] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', pp. 102-03. That Johnson resold English books legitimately published in England is omitted from most authors' accounts, although Milhous and Hume make this point in *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 108.
[87] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 103.
[88] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. 166.
[89] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, pp. 166, 187. The author also omits Thomas Shadwell, *The History of Timon of Athens, The Man-Hater* (London [The Hague]: Printed for the Company [Thomas Johnson], [n.d.]), and William Shakespeare, *Othello, The Moor of Venice. A Tragedy* (London [The Hague]: Printed for the Company [Thomas Johnson], [n.d.]) from his itinerary of Johnson's second-series Shakespearean plays, p. 188.
[90] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. 166.
[91] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, pp. 166-67; William Shakespeare, *K. Henry IV. With the Humours of Sir John Falstaff. A Tragi-comedy* (London [The Hague]: [Thomas Johnson], 1710).

copies of the *Collection* assembled after 1712, and that although *The Tempest* was primarily Dryden and Davenant's text, it also incorporated several of Shadwell's revisions.[92]

Milhous and Hume suggest that Johnson's *Collection*, 'The first general play collection – an extremely important and influential one – has been mostly ignored or sneered at.'[93] Whilst the authors distinguish between collections such as Johnson's – available as both single plays and as a set – and those that were only available as a complete set at the point of purchase, they conflate its first- and second-series manifestations, making the incorrect claim that it was available in ten volumes with the first and last listing volume contents, and the rest volume numbers only. Their understanding of the collection appears to have been based on and therefore misled by the British Library copy (also containing the Dedication) made up of volumes one and ten from a first-series collection, and volumes two to nine from a second-series collection.[94]

Milhous and Hume reproduce one of Johnson's advertisements from the *Collection* which, as the authors point out, are more explicit about Johnson's production of the texts, and their origination in The Hague, than many of his title pages.[95] The authors surmise that his prices, with shorter plays retailing at six and longer ones at eight units of an unspecified currency, are in English pence. McMullin believes that Johnson's prices are listed in *sols*, which is the twentieth part of a *livre*.[96] Although it is impossible to infer a currency from the advertisement reproduced by Milhous and Hume, another of Johnson's advertisements for 'English Books' does list denominations, those of Dutch guilders and *stuivers* – of which there are twenty to the guilder – that I believe should be taken as the principal units for all of Johnson's advertisements.[97] Whilst the advertisement that precedes 'English Books' in the same play, a 'Catalogue of English Plays', is again without currency, the fact that it shares a leaf with 'English Books' suggests that the same denominations probably apply in both

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[92] Thomas Shadwell, *The History of Timon of Athens, The Man-Hater* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1712); George Granville, *The Jew of Venice. A Comedy* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1711). Milhous and Hume are far more accurate on Johnson's Shakespeare sources, identifying that Johnson's *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Caesar*, *1 Henry IV* and *Merry Wives* texts are taken from Rowe, with additional material added to *Caesar*. The authors nevertheless also largely overlook *Timon*, including it under plays that Johnson proposed to print but not those he actually did (*The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 247).
[93] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 245.
[94] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 245. L 1345.b.16-25, which copy is also reproduced on *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* <find.gale.com/ecco>.
[95] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 246. 'A Choice Collection, of all the best English Plays, neatly & correctly printed in small Volumes fit for the pocket, & sold by T. Johnson, Bookseller at the Hague', in Smith, *Phaedra and Hippolitus* (Johnson, 1711), F2r-v.
[96] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 100.
[97] 'English Books, Neatly printed in pocket volumes, to be sold by T. Johnson in the Hague', in Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest* ([Johnson], [n.d.]), G4v.

instances.[98] The same pattern of adjoining adverts is also visible in Johnson's *Guide for English Travelers, Through Holland*, which is primarily a timetable of transport and postal arrangements written by Johnson himself. In this there is a different advertisement for 'English Books' (in guilders and *stuivers*), followed by another variant (without currency) of 'English Plays'.[99] Johnson's invoices for books purchased by Mackie are also always in guilders, and the contemporary exchange rates given in Johnson's *Guide* are used throughout this thesis where necessary: 'An English shilling goes for 11 styvers Dutch, so 20 shill. in specie make 11 gild. Dutch, which is their full value'.[100] A play costing six *stuivers* would thus come out at just over six pence, and one at eight *stuivers* just over eight pence.

Despite my amendment to the supposed currency of Johnson's advertisements, Milhous and Hume's point that Johnson's prices represented an extraordinary discount against new English quartos of plays priced at 1*s* or 1*s* 6*d* still holds.[101] Making comparative judgements on the price of Johnson's (first-series) *Collection* if purchased in its entirety, the authors conclude:

> Assuming the listed prices to be in English pence, forty singletons at those prices would total somewhere between 20*s* and 26*s* 8*d* – not that much less than the 1709 and 1714 illustrated Tonson editions of Shakespeare's plays in six volumes. Of course at 1*s* each, the total would have come to 40*s* (£2). Looking at the price from that perspective, Johnson was offering the forty plays at very nearly a 50% discount, as against the normal English retail price.[102]

In fact, since Johnson lists the prices of individual plays, we can work out the actual total the original forty would have come to – 278 *stuivers* or, at eleven *stuivers* to the shilling, a very reasonable £1 5*s* 3*d*.[103]

Milhous and Hume conclude their discussion by stressing that Johnson's Shakespearean texts were Shakespeare as he was staged, since he 'wanted current theatrical

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[98] 'Catalogue of English Plays, Neatly & correctly printed, in small volumes fit for the pocket, & sold by T. Johnson, Bookseller in the Hague', in Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest* ([Johnson], [n.d.]), G3v-4r.
[99] 'English Books, Neatly printed in pocket volumes, & sold by T. Johnson, Bookseller in Rotterdam, at very low prices', and 'English Plays Neatly printed, in pocket volumes, & sold by T. Johnson, Bookseller in Rotterdam', both in Thomas Johnson, *A Guide for English Travelers, Through Holland, &c. &c.* (Rotterdam: Printed for T. Johnson, 1731), C2v-3v.
[100] Johnson, *A Guide for English Travelers*, A3r. For Mackie's invoices see E[2] La.II.91/B/32 (21 January 1721), La.II.91/B/47-48 (31 July 1725), La.II.91/B/62 (19 October 1728), and La.II.91/C/45 (22 December 1733).
[101] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 246. On play prices see also St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, pp. 698-700.
[102] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 248.
[103] Smith, *Phaedra and Hippolitus* (Johnson, 1711), F2r-v.

versions, not originals', an assessment which is complicated in Chapter Four.[104] Their claims for the correlation of Johnson's *Collection* with the repertory is backed up by quotation from a further Johnson advertisement where the prevalence of 'altered by' or 'adapted by' is conspicuous, presenting 'almost 100% a *modern* canon.'[105] Similarities in the contents of Johnson's and later collections are probably due as much to the plays' popularity in performance as to other publishers' direct imitation of Johnson, but Milhous and Hume's extension of their discussion of Johnson to the formation of the canon makes provocative reading: 'one has to be struck by the degree to which the heart of the canon of English drama is based on the selection T. Johnson made for his pioneering series.'[106] Although the authors' perusal of just one Frankenstein copy of the *Collection* means their analysis is not so full as one might have hoped, this does not prevent them from making large bibliographical claims for it as well as canonical ones. In outlining three 'innovations' that were 'crucial' to the development of dramatic collections, the first of these is attributed directly to Johnson: 'print cheap singletons and collect them into multi-volume sets at attractive prices.' Whilst their third innovation, illustrations, cannot be attributed to Johnson, their second innovation, that one might 'issue […] plays serially so purchasers could collect them one by one rather than having to lay out a lot of money all at once' is also visible in nascent form in *Best English Plays*, and only overlooked by Milhous and Hume because they did not engage with a variety of copies.[107] It is only by examining multiple copies of the *Collection*, and other arrangements of those plays appearing in it – as I have done – that one is able to provide a full account of its bibliographic form. Such a survey is also necessary to validate such claims regarding canonicity as Milhous and Hume make, providing as it does evidence of the circulation and reception of Johnson's texts.[108]

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[104] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 247.
[105] 'Other Plays now printing, or proposed to be printed, to make this Collection complete', in Smith, *Phaedra and Hippolitus* (Johnson, 1711), F3r-4v; Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 247.
[106] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 263.
[107] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 272.
[108] Bonnell, in 'When Book History Neglects Bibliography', p. 260, emphasises the absolute importance of 'bibliographical specifics' as a foundation for any wider work in the 'history of reading' and 'book history'. He also suggests that a prime method for establishing these specifics is to 'scrutinize […] multiple copies of the books themselves', alongside 'any records left behind by the publishers', including their 'correspondence'. Although Bonnell's focus here is on books' publication – as is my own in Chapter Three – the same foundations also apply to studying their reception, addressed in Chapters Five to Seven of this thesis.

Johnson as Editor

Johnson's editing has received less discussion than his biography or the material form of the *Collection*, which is perhaps unsurprising when so much work has yet to be done even establishing what Johnson printed, and how this fits into wider publishing history. Ford nevertheless provides a springboard for other writers in his admiration that 'taking into account that the bulk of [Johnson's plays] were printed in Holland, it is remarkable how few spelling mistakes occur therein' (which also accords with Johnson being his own printer).[109] McMullin and Grant are the only authors who undertake extensive and original research into Johnson's texts as serious editorial subjects comparing them with alternative editions, which provides the model for my own methodology. Although I have done less close reading of Johnson's Bayle texts, Johnson's comments on these in his letters provide telling insights into his textual policies which supplement my comparative assessments of his Shakespearean publications (Chapter Four).

Seeking to outline Johnson's 'editorial attitudes', McMullin raises important questions about how we understand non-Guild publishers and their work, specifically their contribution to the editorial tradition.[110] As previously stated, McMullin begins his discussion of Johnson as an editor with *Sir Courtly Nice*, which he seems to have encountered in preparing his own edition of the play. McMullin suggests that although 'it would have been easy to dismiss Johnson's edition' as derivative and 'textually insignificant', separated from the first by many editions, he found that Johnson had in fact based his text on a relatively early edition – which would not necessarily have been the case in a London edition, usually printed from the last – and made many 'needed' corrections. Whilst the author admits that some of Johnson's emendations were 'unnecessary smoothings-over of an original which was not manifestly wrong', the thrust of his assessment is that 'the nature of Johnson's attitude to his text was remarkable […] a pirate who was clearly concerned to reproduce an accurate text.'[111] By McMullin's argument, then, any editor of a play printed by Johnson would do well to take his edition into consideration when preparing their own. The author also draws our attention to the editorial stemma of Southerne's *Oroonoko*, where changes that Johnson made between his first

[109] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 47.
[110] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 99. Raven, in *The Business of Books*, p. 202, describes Guild and non-Guild publishers as 'the recognised and privileged and the unrecognised and less cautious members of the trade.'
[111] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 103. In an endnote McMullin clarifies his use of 'the terminology of piracy' being 'for convenience' sake', p. 112 n. 3. On the Tonsons' practice of printing each new Shakespeare edition from the previous one, as a means of maintaining their copyrights, see, for instance, Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. 190.

and second editions provide precedent for my own interpretation of his *Tempest* editions.[112] Extending his source material to Johnson's paratexts, McMullin explores Johnson's apologies for textual errors in his *Works* of Swift and *History* of Burnet.[113] This thesis provides parallel analyses of the intriguing 'Advertisement, Concerning the Author of this Play' in *The Drummer* (Chapter Three), and of Johnson's epistolary complaints regarding restrictions placed by his partners on revisions and additions to the *Oeuvres* of Bayle (Chapter Four).[114] McMullin provides further details on Johnson's textual emendations to corrupt passages in Burnet's *History* resulting from 'compositorial error' in the first edition, and changing 'pronouns whose antecedents were not immediately obvious'.[115] Johnson's concern with prose style seems to mark him out as something more than a proof-reader or, as McMullin has it, 'a slightly pedantic copy-editor with an over-riding passion for lucidity.'[116] McMullin also notes Johnson's use of cancels 'to improve the *appearance* of these pages'.[117]

Introducing the final section of his article, McMullin begins:

> To this point I have concentrated on Johnson the conscientious publisher, anxious to ensure the accuracy of the texts […]. But we cannot escape the fact that he was a pirate, bibliographically if not legally, since he was beyond the scope of British law. His activities might reasonably therefore be judged also from a 'moral' standpoint. I now turn to consider some specific moral infractions.[118]

These supposed moral infractions are concerned with various Johnson publications including works by John Sheffield, duke of Buckingham, Prior's *Poems on Several Occasions*, and La Motraye's *Voyages*.[119] We might note here that although, as McMullin says, Johnson 'was beyond the scope of British law', he was acting within local law. International literary piracy

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[112] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 103. Southerne, *Oroonoko* (Johnson, 1712), and Thomas Southerne, *Oroonoko: A Tragedy* (London [The Hague]: Printed for the Company [Thomas Johnson], [n.d.]); see also R. J. Jordan, 'Oroonoko: The First Fifty Years', *Bulletin (Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand)*, 6.2 (1982), 53-63 (pp. 57-58). Jordan suggests that Johnson used Thomas Southerne, *Oroonoko: A Tragedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal, By His Majesty's Servants* (London: Printed for H. Playford. B. Tooke. A. Bettesworth, 1699) (variant title page R. Bettesworth) as his copytext for the 1712 edition. He then used his own 1712 edition as the copytext for his later, undated edition, but made corrections to this from Thomas Southerne, *The Works of Mr. Thomas Southerne*, 2 vols (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson. Benjamin Tooke and Bernard Lintott, 1713). Jordan does not elaborate on what these corrections were.
[113] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', pp. 103-04; Jonathan Swift, *Miscellaneous Works, Comical & Diverting* (London [The Hague]: Printed by Order of the Society de propagando, &c [Thomas Johnson], 1720).
[114] Addison, *The Drummer* ([Johnson], [*c.* 1722]), B4r.
[115] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', pp. 104, 106.
[116] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 106.
[117] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 107.
[118] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 107.
[119] Matthew Prior, *Poems on Several Occasions* (London [The Hague]: Printed for T. Johnson, 1720).

is a matter of perspective, and whilst the importation of his English books into Britain was legally dubious, Johnson's printing and distribution of them on the continent was legitimate. There is nothing in his correspondence to suggest that he considered himself 'a hot and dirty producer of sloppy reprints', and much that instead implies a rigorous attention to textual accuracy and material quality.[120] Although some may find certain irony in Johnson's statement against piracy in Abraham de Wicquefort's *L'Ambassadeur et ses Fonctions*, as McMullin notes, he was the original and legitimate publisher of many of his French texts and, perhaps, saw no conflict of interest in such claims.[121] It is my contention that Johnson saw his English plays as of equal interest and value to his more esoteric Enlightenment texts, such as the *Oeuvres* of Bayle, and carried his concerns for textual accuracy from one to the other. In this regard he was more akin to the Tonsons – publishing a variety of prestige authorial works as well as singleton playtexts – than other reprinters, such as Edmund Curll or Henry Hills, who had less experience in elite formats and markets. Certainly, Johnson's *Tempest* suggests as much (and similar) attention as Rowe employed in his 1709 Shakespeare, and his concern with style is also reminiscent of Pope's edition of that author.[122]

Grant's 'Tonson's Jonson' largely limits its discussion of Johnson's texts to his 1714 *Volpone*. The author nevertheless draws attention to McMullin's work, and his identification of emendations by Johnson some of which 'might now seem obvious, but reveal flashes of real editorial inspiration.'[123] Grant notes that Johnson – unique amongst those printers she discusses – used the first Jonson folio (1616) as his copytext, and speculates that 'F1 might have been more readily available on the continent than the later folio editions.'[124] The author later suggests:

> Given that Johnson does have this strong interest in textual accuracy, it is just possible that he chose F1 because it offered the best text and not just because it was readily available. This, in itself, marks him out among competitors. It may be that being a foreign pirate encouraged a more informed choice of copytext for English books […]. Presumably,

[120] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 108.
[121] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 109; Abraham de Wicquefort, *L'Ambassadeur et ses Fonctions*, 2 vols (La Haye: T. Johnson, 1724). Johnson surely wished to protect his interest in the *Journal Literaire*, for instance (discussed in Chapters Two and Seven), where all the material contained therein was original and, it seems, organised if not commissioned by Johnson.
[122] As a recent essay focussing on Pope's editorial techniques in this edition see Jonathan H. Holmes, 'Alexander Pope, Interventionist Editing and *The Taming of the Shrew* (1725)', in *Canonising Shakespeare: Stationers and the Book Trade, 1640-1740*, ed. by Emma Depledge and Peter Kirwan (Cambridge: CUP, 2017), pp. 187-200.
[123] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 22.
[124] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 20.

> when tracking down English books his enquiries needed to be specific and were the result of research into what the best text might be.[125]

Although Johnson used Rowe as his principal Shakespeare source – and not a first folio – my researches into his Shakespearean publications, Bayle's *Oeuvres* and *The Drummer* all suggest that he did indeed take care when selecting his copytexts. Grant provides specific examples of Johnson's changes in *Volpone*, such as modernisation of spelling and, more generally, 'when he found difficulty in understanding words or sense, or when he thought the F1 printer had made a mistake.'[126] Whilst these authors' findings are not treated directly in this thesis, they certainly accord with my own, and Grant's project of situating a Johnson publication in conjunction with other editions of the same work by different publishers, conceiving these as competing within overlapping marketplaces, demonstrates one way he might be integrated within wider publishing and editorial history.

The Circulation and Influence of *Best English Plays*

Ford's *Shakespeare 1700-1740* lays the groundwork of subsequent narratives on the circulation and influence of *Best English Plays*. The author first identifies Johnson's innovation: 'In Great Britain, except in a few scarce instances, there were no plays of any author published separately in small 8vo or 12mo form until after Rowe's 1714 edition, whereas T. Johnson, bookseller at The Hague, by 1712 had published at least forty'.[127] My analysis of the distribution of Johnson's publications (Chapters Two and Five) supports Ford's next claim that many of these 'found their way here', which is a more modest and, perhaps, more accurate proposal than later authors' belief that they were intended primarily for the British market.[128] As a consequence of this seepage into Britain, Ford tells us 'the passing of the 4to and the advent of the 12mo may be largely attributed to the enterprise of this Dutch publisher', which is modified by McMullin, who says Johnson's plays 'occupy a minor but not insignificant niche in publishing history in that they established small octavo or duodecimo as the appropriate format for reprinted plays rather than the traditional quarto.'[129]

Being more specific in his argument, Murphy draws a direct link between the change in format between the Tonsons' 1709 octavo and 1714 duodecimo Shakespeares, and Johnson's

[125] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 23.
[126] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', paras 22, 23.
[127] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, pp. 46-47.
[128] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 47.
[129] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 47; McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 100.

continental example: 'Tonson may well have registered Johnson's move as indicating a potential broadening of the market and may have reconfigured his wares accordingly.'[130] Whilst this is impossible to prove, my comparison of Johnson's and Tonson's devices in Chapter Seven suggests that Tonson was aware of Johnson's plays, although it is my belief that Johnson had more of an influence on his title-page design than, necessarily, on his format. Considering that there was no major alteration in the *price* of the Rowe Shakespeare, it is hard to understand what exactly Tonson might have hoped to gain over Johnson in shrinking his books from octavo to duodecimo.[131] Dugas' interpretation is less specific: 'Reduced market share caused by competition [from Johnson] might account for the Tonsons' repositioning of their brand.'[132] It seems that for Dugas this 'competition' should be understood in terms of the sheer quantity of Johnson's books rather than their format, and the Tonsons' changes – in format, number of volumes, and editorial revisions – as precipitated by Johnson's actions rather than copying them.[133] How far Johnson and Tonson might be understood to be in direct competition or, conversely, how far they produced different sorts of books catering to different interests, is an implicit theme throughout this thesis, although warrants further direct analysis that goes beyond the scope of this study of Johnson's own works. Milhous and Hume agree with Murphy that Tonson's transition to duodecimo in the 1714 Rowe Shakespeare may have been a response to Johnson's octavos, 'a bargain, and […] a success', but disagree that this represented Tonson's acknowledgement of an economic 'broadening of the market' i.e. of his catering towards less wealthy customers.[134] Grant supplements this emphasis on Shakespeare with her argument as to how far Tonson's decisions regarding Ben Jonson were also influenced by Johnson's publications, identifying 'a very strong interrelation' between their respective editions, especially in terms of format.[135]

Grant also suggests that Johnson began his series of plays 'as a direct response' to Tonson's 1709 Shakespeare, stating further: 'where Tonson was hoping to persuade readers to invest in set after set of matching multi-volume works of great authors, Johnson decided to tap the market in pick-and-mix plays as well as offering the wealthy an opportunity to buy bound

[130] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 63.
[131] St Clair, in *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, pp. 700-01, suggests that the 1709 edition retailed at 30*s*, the 1714 edition at 27*s*. Grant, by contrast, suggests that the 1714 Rowe was intended to 'undercut' Johnson's plays ('Tonson's Jonson', para. 33).
[132] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. 168.
[133] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. 169.
[134] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 262.
[135] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 2.

editions.'[136] Following Ford, by contrast, McMullin (in a move reiterated by other writers, such as Milhous and Hume) suggests that the passage of the Copyright Act may have had some bearing on Johnson's decision to publish his plays, but reserves absolute judgement.[137] Although less explicit, the implication of Murphy's argument is also that the passage and terms of the act may have influenced Johnson's decision. Under this act, works already held by publishers were protected as monopolies for 21 years from the date of the act, and new works were protected for fourteen years, extendible for a further fourteen years if the author was still living at the time of expiry.[138] As Murphy describes it:

> The act, as John Feather has indicated, "implied, but did not state, that it was illegal to import any English-language books into England and Wales if they had been previously printed there", but it was "specific in permitting the import of books in classical or modern foreign languages".[139]

Murphy uses Johnson's correspondence to suggest Johnson 'brought a certain level of creativity to the business of giving the impression that he and the ships he hired sailed on the right side of legality.'[140] In Murphy's terms, such steering to the side of legality resided in the discretion of Johnson's haulage practices – hiding English-language books amongst those in other languages – although he gives a slightly misleading impression in referring to 'the ships [Johnson] hired'.[141] Although Johnson did send some sizeable shipments to certain, specifically Scottish, booksellers, these were only ever a small quantity of the ships' total cargo and generally consisted of non-Anglophone books. Whilst the evidence presented below *does* suggest that some copies were carried into England (as well as Scotland) it seems these were usually limited in number and for personal reading rather than distribution. Although – as demonstrated in Chapters Two and Seven – Pierre du Noyer and John Darby *may* have been retailing Johnson's English plays in London, Dugas' general characterisation of the legality of Johnson's books is essentially misconceived: this is evidenced by the surreptitious nature of

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[136] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 26; Dugas, in *Marketing the Bard*, p. 167, also suggests that Johnson's *Collection* was a response to Tonson's Shakespeare.
[137] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 100; Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, pp. 246-47.
[138] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 103.
[139] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 104.
[140] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 104.
[141] Murphy also suggests that the initial brevity of Johnson's imprints, including only 'London' and a date, gave way *c.* 1711 to more expansive information, including his name, as he became more confident that he could get away with his enterprise (*Shakespeare in Print*, p. 104). This is confirmed in my itinerary of Johnson's plays, but complicated by Johnson's later adoption of the 'Company of Booksellers' imprint (see Chapter Three).

Johnson's practices.[142] Furthermore, although Johnson advertised Burnet's *History* in the London-published *Country Journal*, 'sold for 7 s. 6 d. by Tho. Johnson, Bookseller at Rotterdam Where may be had; Both Parts of the said History', the advertisement is explicit that the book is actually available in Rotterdam, *not* London.[143]

Because the terms of the Copyright Act – according to Feather – were extraordinarily vague, Johnson was in ambiguous legal territory sending his books to Scottish ports, as he most usually did. Feather tells us:

> The printers and booksellers of Ireland (which in practice meant Dublin) and of Scotland (in Edinburgh and Glasgow) had little need to concern themselves with the Copyright Act. Indeed, the Act did not apply in Ireland, and in Scotland there was a good deal of legal opinion which was sympathetic to the idea that copyrights did not exist in Scots law.[144]

Although Milhous and Hume, by contrast, suggest that the act 'specifically include[d] Scotland', it seems that this meant little in practice until the passage in 1739 of a new act 'which forbade the import of any English books into Great Britain.'[145] Whilst McDougall suggests that 'The Scots, interested in buying cheap, well-printed books, were prepared to turn a blind eye to the [1710] Act that forbad the importation of piracies', Johnson nevertheless appears to have taken as few chances as possible.[146] Scotland was his principal point of entry and seems to have offered a more open market than London – if only because, at the beginning of the century, London copyright holders had few interests or means of influence north of the border.[147] By using a combination of quiet ports, sympathetic officials and surreptitious packaging, Johnson must have hoped to evade whatever restrictions happened to be in force on the day. Although similar in some regard to Milhous and Hume's tale of how Johnson imported his books, for

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[142] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. 166. See also Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 80: 'Legally speaking, these volumes [the *Collection*] could not be sold in England, but that is clearly the market they were intended for, and the number of surviving copies reported in the *ESTC* suggests that one way or another Johnson got a fair number of his books across the channel and into bookshops.'

[143] *The Country Journal: or, the Craftsman*, 455 (22 March 1734/35) (London: Printed by H. Haines, at R. Francklin's, 1735), p. 3. Also appearing in the same notice were Johnson's advertisements for 'All Milton's Poetical Works, in two Pocket Volumes, with a new Set of pretty Cutts, and Mr. Addison's Notes, for five Shillings. Or Paradise Lost, with the said Cutts and Notes for three Shillings.' These items are: John Milton, *The Poetical Works of John Milton*, 2 vols (London [Rotterdam]: [Thomas Johnson], 1731); John Milton, *Paradise Lost, A Poem, In Twelve Books* (London [Rotterdam]: Printed for the Company [Thomas Johnson], 1730); and Joseph Addison, *Notes upon the Twelve Books of Paradise Lost. Collected from the Spectator* (London [?Rotterdam]: Printed for the Company, [n.d.]), which has a separate register.

[144] John Feather, *A History of British Publishing* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), p. 77.

[145] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 87; Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, p. 79.

[146] McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton', p. 37.

[147] Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, pp. 77-78. On the legal situation in Scotland see also Raven, *The Business of Books*, p. 234.

which the authors 'are aware of no direct evidence', the evidence I present in Chapter Two sheds much additional light on Johnson's means of access to British markets.[148]

So, whilst the situation in Scotland was ambiguous, it was illegal for Johnson's English books to be transported into England. However, London publishers could take no legal action against Johnson for his infringement of their copyrights because he was beyond the jurisdiction of both English law and the Stationers' Company, and their only available response was in competing publications.[149] Nevertheless, where Murphy acknowledges that the 1714 Rowe might have been a response to Johnson, 'by 1723, they [the Tonsons] had returned to lavish Shakespeare publishing, with Pope's grand, expensive quarto edition', thus committing themselves to a wealthier sector of play readers.[150] It should however be recognised that Pope's edition was itself an anomaly, and that octavo certainly became the dominant format for plays across the eighteenth century, although not necessarily for authorial works editions.[151] Milhous and Hume, by turning their attention away from Tonson's works editions, attribute an enormous influence to Johnson's series, stressing its 'impact on format' and 'importance to reprint series', with Johnson being the 'inventor of the series concept'.[152] Extending their argument for the significance of Johnson's *Best English Plays* somewhat beyond the concerns of this thesis, Milhous and Hume further suggest that collections such as this, which have received 'little scholarly attention', 'represent the value judgements of their time, and they also

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[148] Milhous and Hume, in *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 108, suggest: 'In principle, imported goods had to enter through a customs house, and Excise officers kept an eye out for boats thought to have gone outside home waters […]. We would guess that Excise men were much more interested in wine and brandy than in books. We hypothesize that no great amount of attention would be paid to a fishing boat that routinely spent a couple of days out at a time. Such a boat might every now and then slip across to The Hague and return with some well-concealed parcels of books. Who distributed them to retailers, or how vulnerable a provincial bookseller was to legal action if he was discovered in possession of illegally imported books, is anyone's guess. Ours would be that the scale of this sort of chicanery was not large enough seriously to interest the authorities. Neither would the value of the books involved be likely to be sufficient to motivate an aggrieved London bookseller-publisher to initiate legal action against English venders [*sic*] of such books.' As I demonstrate in Chapter Two, it seems that instead of a hypothetical fishing vessel and dark lanterns in the dead of night, Johnson knew several captains (Howlatson, Dallas, Pidgeon and Conway) regularly crossing between Britain and the Low Countries and, although taking care to conceal the nature of his shipments, and who to trust in unloading them, he must have relied largely on, as Milhous and Hume understand it, relatively small fry in larger cargoes. Although there is no record of any legal action being brought against Johnson's distributors, we do have concrete evidence for who they were, and what sort of shipments they received. On the bulk of trade between Scotland and the Low Countries see Alastair J. Mann, *The Scottish Book Trade, 1500-1720: Print Commerce and Print Control in Early Modern Scotland* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000), pp. 67-93.

[149] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 105.

[150] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 105. See Shakespeare, *Works* (1725).

[151] In focussing on literary works editions rather than singleton plays, Grant suggests that the 1714 duodecimo Shakespeare (as a response to Johnson), set a precedent for the standard format of most subsequent Tonson collected works across the century ('Tonson's Jonson', 'Abstract', and paras 33-34).

[152] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 71 n. 86 ('impact' and 'importance'), p. 362 ('inventor').

contribute powerfully to canon formation, whether deliberately or unconsciously', and were 'unquestionably influential – on the public and on publishers of later collections.'[153]

To be more specific, Milhous and Hume propose a 'Format Revolution' in playbooks occurring sometime between 1713-18, in which quarto, after a period of experimentation, eventually gave way to octavo.[154] Explaining the underlying reason for this shift being the practicality of octavos from a publisher's perspective – that the short lines of plays were accommodated with less wasted paper than in quartos – the authors celebrate Johnson's *Best English Plays* as essentially foundational: 'Our best guess is that English booksellers who were publishing plays […] recognised the elegance and efficiency of the format; and decided that octavo was the wave of the future.'[155] As already suggested, Milhous and Hume put much more emphasis on the influence of Johnson's plays on the market in general, rather than Tonson in particular (as Grant does), and explore the relative importance of Johnson's and Tonson's octavo editions for publishing history:

> One might wonder if the six-volume Tonson *Shakespeare* of 1709 was part of the inspiration underlying the format revolution. We are inclined to doubt it. That was a luxury product priced at a stratospheric 30*s* and lavishly illustrated. T. Johnson's piracies were very decently done, but they are an altogether more pedestrian product, and they seem a likelier model.[156]

Whilst Johnson's plays probably did inspire imitation by other publishers, Milhous and Hume's understanding of the limited scale of his cross-channel trade does not sit entirely comfortably with the implication throughout their work that Johnson's books were a serious annoyance to the London booksellers, or a real threat to their markets.[157] Considering the current distribution of his texts, and contemporary references and inscriptions in copies, I would suggest that enough of Johnson's plays reached Britain for London publishers to see and be aware of them – and undertake some response in the format and presentation of their publications – but not

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[153] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 245.
[154] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 79.
[155] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 80. Grant explores the attraction of smaller formats to publishers at more length in 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 10: 'By using a much smaller font and narrower margins, printers could fit much more text […] at significantly less cost. Paper was still the most expensive part of printing in the early eighteenth century, so economizing on quality and maximizing coverage cut costs effectively. Furthermore, by the early eighteenth century the size of a sheet of paper had increased sufficiently to make books in smaller formats more practicable and desirable.'
[156] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 80.
[157] See Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 247: 'we would guess first that Johnson was happy to sell to booksellers well away from central London, and that when he sold to London dealers he did so in quantities small enough to make legal action against them hardly worth the bother. This is, however, mere speculation.'

for the *Collection* to encompass a share of the market that would constitute a serious threat to the Londoners' businesses.

Areas of Enquiry which this Thesis Develops

As can be seen from the foregoing discussion, there already exists a body of work on Thomas Johnson and his *Collection of the Best English Plays*, although some of this presents conflicting information, and certainly fails to do justice to the large claims for the historical importance of Johnson and the *Collection* made by, especially, McMullin, Milhous and Hume, and Grant. Ford lays the groundwork of all subsequent work on Thomas Johnson, including this thesis, and whilst his bibliographical investigation of *Best English Plays* has not been significantly extended prior to this thesis, much has been done to supplement his ideas on the (especially editorial) quality of Johnson's publications, and their circulation and influence. McMullin makes a huge contribution to the field, including an enormous amount of close reading of individual texts to uncover Johnson's editorial techniques and, in part through his exploration of Johnson's editorial 'attitudes', does much for his biography. The emphasis on Johnson's textual editing is picked up by Grant, who also makes significant headway in situating Johnson's plays in relation to other contemporary publications. Murphy and Dugas each make only relatively slight contributions to our material knowledge of Johnson and his works, but offer some significant ideas regarding the circulation and reception of his plays and the legality of his trade. Milhous and Hume provide a variety of speculations on similar subjects across their book. Whilst these authors make very large claims for the importance of Johnson to publishing history, there is much more work that needs to be done in providing evidence for such arguments.

Chapter Two of this thesis offers an introduction to Johnson's letters, his contacts, and to the wide portfolio of his business concerns, and thus augments his biography considerably. Chapter Three provides a much fuller investigation of the contents and form of *Best English Plays* as it was conceived and published than was attempted by Ford, and Chapter Five uses extant copies to explore what this meant to readers, and how these plays exist in such a bewildering variety of arrangements. Chapter Four supplements Grant's and McMullin's investigations of Johnson's editorial practices. The circulation and influence of the *Collection* is addressed in several parts of this thesis. In Chapter Two, which discusses Johnson's contacts in Britain and on the continent, I provide a concrete base as to how his books might have been sold into Britain at the time of their publication. In Chapter Five, on individual copies, I

supplement this by showing who was reading the plays, where they were doing so, and what they were reading them with. In Chapter Six, which tracks the reissue of Johnson's plays by later publishers (a topic only slightly touched on by the above critics), I tell the story of a vibrant afterlife to the plays which has so far been unappreciated. In Chapter Seven, which discusses the influence of Johnson's work, and particularly his device, on later publications, I provide the first hard evidence for his reception by publishers in Britain. This is suggested in much existing work but often based on a general sense of the shift from quarto to octavo (or duodecimo) rather than the presentation of individual volumes.

This thesis thus addresses a multitude of gaps visible in the foregoing literature review. Firstly, as already suggested, many critics have focussed on Johnson's Shakespearean publications, and have compared the *Collection* to Jacob Tonson's authorial works editions of Shakespeare. Although this is interesting, I move discussion away from this comparison between a collection and works (at least until we have a better knowledge of Johnson's *Collection*) as the two forms of publication are essentially distinct. Johnson's *Best English Plays* included works by a variety of authors and must therefore have fulfilled a different demand amongst readers to the works of a particular author.

Most commentators have assumed that Johnson's books were intended principally for the British market. I show that whilst a significant number were read in Britain, Johnson also had links with many customers residing in mainland Europe. There has been considerable dispute over the legality of Johnson's books in Britain. I suggest that Johnson also acknowledged their ambiguous legal status. He was happy to send English books to Britain, but did so in a manner that kept them below the radar of port authorities, thus seeking to avoid any potential difficulties. Precisely how he did this, and who handled the books, has been a source of speculation, but this information is supplied in Chapter Two. I also provide several other previously unknown details regarding Johnson's life, such as confirmation from his letters that Johnson's move to Rotterdam was undertaken in order to expand his business. I argue that Johnson was the printer of his English plays (and many of his other works), rather than just their publisher.

All previous authors have noticed the quality of Johnson's books. My survey of extant copies casts some light on how many readers might have agreed with this assessment, or how far quality was important to them, considering what other texts they bound Johnson's plays with, the cost of those bindings, and what other English publications might have been available to them based on their location. Several authors have commented on the price of Johnson's books, and have assumed a variety of currencies for his advertisements, but I demonstrate that

Dutch guilders and *stuivers* are the most likely denominations used in his advertisements. This affords us a means of accurate comparison between the price of his books and those by other publishers. Several writers have noted the variable contents of the *Collection*, but Chapters Three, Five and Six reveal exactly how the *Collection* changed and developed (in part responding to the popularity of various plays) and the full range of ways it was organised by readers and publishers in different countries across several decades. One example of this is in Johnson's development of the 'Company' imprint which is not, as Ford supposed, evidence of any actual partnership, but rather a means of unifying his plays that simultaneously protected Johnson's identity.

Grant and McMullin have explored the copytexts for several of Johnson's plays and other works, and offered compelling evidence for his editorial concerns. I extend our knowledge of Johnson's editorial choices to all his Shakespearean texts (which have received very mixed treatment in the past) and offer compelling new evidence for his editorial attitudes from Johnson's letters to Pierre Des Maizeaux, as well as uncovering the implications of his *Collection* Dedication, and 'Advertisement' in *The Drummer*. I propose that Johnson treated his plays as just as serious editorial subjects as his other, more esoteric publications.

Johnson may have had a significant influence on the format of works subsequently published in Britain – as is argued by Grant and Milhous and Hume in particular – but he also had an important influence on their presentation, especially in the use of a frontispiece monogram device. That British publishers copied his device provides strong evidence for the circulation of his books in Britain. Whether or not Johnson began publishing the plays as a result of the passage of the 1710 Copyright Act, or in response to Tonson's 1709 Shakespeare, is a moot point. What is important is that whatever his motivations, Johnson's plays found an interested readership across the British Isles (and mainland Europe) and that his plays must have been a visible presence in collections of English drama for a significant portion of the eighteenth century.

Chapter Two: Johnson as an International Publisher

Critical Background

This chapter provides a survey and exploration of Thomas Johnson's extant letters. This represents my own reading in the archives, and should serve as a starting point for other scholars interested in Johnson's work. Milhous and Hume, for instance, have much that is interesting to say about Johnson, but their misunderstanding of the precise means by which he transported his books into Britain, and with whom he was dealing, is owing to a lack of awareness of these letters and their contents.

The bulk of this chapter contributes to Johnson's biography by exploring the connections that formed Johnson's trade network, and which are evidenced by these letters. It reveals biographical details that have hitherto been unavailable, and provides substance for critics' arguments regarding the circulation of Johnson's texts. It maps Johnson's contacts in Britain, and with Britons travelling in Europe, thus giving us a much fuller context in which to understand the probable markets for *Best English Plays*. Although Johnson has sometimes been taken to be marginal to publishing communities and publishing history by those who have written about him to date – and indeed by the majority of critics who do not mention him at all – it is clear that he was fully embedded in his own social and business networks, and was an important conveyor of books and information for a significant number of customers. This chapter builds principally on Mijers' exploration of Johnson and Charles Mackie's relationship in *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, and on my own 'Thomas Johnson: The Publisher as an Agent of Enlightenment'.[1] Jacob's exploration of Francophone Enlightenment communities also informs my discussion of the implications of Johnson's work for Enlightenment studies, although a full assessment of these, and of Johnson's extensive non-Anglophone enterprises, must await their own study.[2] In brief, the chapter is organised into four parts: a survey of Johnson's letters; a discussion of Johnson's role as an Enlightenment publisher; an exploration of Johnson's relationship with Charles Mackie and his wider interests in Britain; and an analysis of Johnson's responsibilities as a contact for Scottish students travelling in Europe. Although I draw evidence from a variety of sources, I lean heavily on the unpublished (and extremely extensive) Charles Mackie correspondence – much of it from Johnson but also with

[1] Emil Rybczak, 'Thomas Johnson: The Publisher as an Agent of Enlightenment', *Dutch Crossing* (December 2017) <http://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/qem9Ub6qQZvqVkDDshpF/full>.
[2] Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment* (2006).

much referring to him – and the likewise unpublished letters of Johnson to Pierre Des Maizeaux. Some of the Mackie letters have been used by Mijers for her own narrative purpose, although she does not provide any full survey of their contents; just one or two of the letters have been noticed by the other major critics of Johnson. To my knowledge, the letters in the Des Maizeaux archive have not been read by any other critic of Johnson.

Mijers' *"News from the Republick of Letters"* provides a detailed survey of the intellectual relationships between Scotland and the Low Countries, and their citizens, at the turn of the eighteenth century. It focuses particularly on 'Scottish students in the United Provinces' and one of their tutors, Johnson's long-term correspondent Charles Mackie, whom Mijers describes as Johnson's 'agent'.[3] Whilst Mijers' emphasis is more on the demand for books than their supply, and thus more on readers (Mackie and his students) rather than publishers (Johnson), she engages throughout her work with the importance of the book trade to the development of Scottish education, describing the book trade as 'the channel *par excellence* which provided the Scots access to the wider world of learning'.[4] She further characterises the Republic of Letters – within which Johnson was Mackie's chief contact – as offering the Scots 'access to encyclopaedic knowledge in the form of books and learned journals, and an entire world of learning, and subsequently academic and self-improvement.'[5] Nevertheless, for these Scots situated at Europe's geographical edge, contact with the Low Countries – a 'cultural and educational crossroads […] the center of the world of learning' – was a 'one-sided relationship', their trade in books a 'one-sided affair' and 'highly reliant on the personal contact between a small number of bookseller-merchants and their friends.'[6] Certainly this is the implication of Johnson and Mackie's relationship. Citing Johnson and his fellow Scotsman Alexander Cunningham of Block as key figures in Scottish-Dutch exchanges, Mijers suggests they 'were active players in the international world of books […]. They acted as agents for both authors and buyers, and were clearly learned themselves.'[7] She notes that whilst Mackie might also be understood as a literary 'gatekeeper', this position was facilitated by his relationship with Johnson, and dwindled with the latter's death in 1735.[8] Mijers

[3] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, pp. 9, 20.
[4] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 22.
[5] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 18. The author later suggests (p. 183) that Johnson in particular 'was concerned with introducing radical and enlightened scholarship into Scotland'.
[6] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, pp. 6, 10, 126, 132.
[7] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 132.
[8] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, pp. 20 ('gatekeeper'), 21, 147 (Johnson's death). The author also writes of Mackie (p. 147): 'he was at the center of a circle of Scots but at the same time he was clearly dependent on his correspondents and especially on Thomas Johnson […] who had far more direct access to the learned world than Mackie.'

describes how Mackie 'assisted' Johnson in 'importing', 'taking orders' and, in the special case of the *Oeuvres* of Bayle, 'maintaining subscription lists.'[9] She describes Johnson, by contrast, as a 'primary agent, whose network was far wider than his Scottish contacts suggest', 'a true agent of change […] operating on an international stage'.[10] This thesis provides important new evidence towards proving such claims. The broader argument of Mijers' work is that whilst Scottish contact with the Dutch contributed to the development of the early Scottish Enlightenment – emphasising the role of students (and the book trade, including Johnson) in this development – the humanist and, in Mackie's case, encyclopaedic ideals it promulgated turned out to be a dead end in Scotland's own contributions to intellectual history.[11]

Mijers' discussion of Johnson himself is highly informative, and her findings are extended in my more detailed treatment of his trade associations, below. She suggests Johnson's principal publishing interests were in 'the new French scholarship', although notes that he also 'specialized in English publications'.[12] My own assessment is that Johnson's non-Anglophone texts were the bread and butter of his business, but in the English ones – as solo publications – he shows a more personal interest. Mijers provides a brief outline of Johnson's biography, speculating that his business probably 'benefited greatly from an increase in Scottish and English Grand Tourists and visitors', and cites his *Guide for English Travelers* as a direct exploitation of this market.[13] She also highlights an advertisement in this publication:

> Gentlemen may be furnished by the said Thomas Johnson, with all sorts of French, as well as Latin and Greek Books, whether printed in Holland, or in France or Germany, or any other forrein [*sic*] Country: and likewise with many Italian and Spanish Books […]. And on writing to the said bookseller, or to any Merchant in Rotterdam, they may have Books sent for them to any Sea port of Great Britain or Ireland, or to any of the English Islands or Plantations, or Factories abroad […].[14]

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[9] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 153. Mijers also describes the Bayle partnership as the 'high point of their cooperation' (p. 154). Readers should refer to pp. 152-56 for Mijers' full and compelling discussion of Mackie and Johnson's friendship, business associations and shared interests.
[10] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 156.
[11] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, *passim*, especially pp. 181-84.
[12] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, pp. 135, 136. Although excellent in many regards, Mijers' work – like that of Ford – misreads Johnson's 'Company' imprint (p. 136): 'He [Johnson] even appears to have acted as printer for the London Company of Booksellers from 1717 to 1730.'
[13] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 135.
[14] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, pp. 135-36. This boast may not have been entirely unfounded, since Johnson clearly found ways to distribute his *Journal Literaire* internationally: 'Les Journaux Litéraires se distribuent réguliérement chez Antoine Urbain Coustelier, Libraire sur le Quay des Augustins à Paris.' *Journal Literaire*, 6.2 (1715), Ll2v (see also 7.1 (1715), p. 232). I have been unable to find the advertisement to which Mijers refers in any copy of the *Guide for English Travelers* I have examined.

The author characterises Johnson's shop as a 'meeting place for both Scottish and English travelers [*sic*] and students who were an important part of his international clientele', and identifies several of Johnson's publications, drawing an implicit link between his move into English-language works and the passage of the 1710 Copyright Act.[15]

The evidence of Johnson's letters given in this chapter proves Mijers' suggestion that Johnson 'exported frequently to Scotland', but implies a multitude of contacts in Europe as well.[16] This assessment is supported by my analysis of the distribution of his plays in Chapter Five. I also offer further evidence for Mijers' claims that Johnson supplied various Edinburgh booksellers, sold by subscription, and sent orders directly to customers, and identify many new receivers and owners of Johnson's books.[17] Mijers revisits Johnson in the final paragraphs of her work:

> Thomas Johnson was a Republican player of considerable importance […] And his role was truly international. While Scotland occupied a special place, there must be a similar story for England – the English deists and freethinkers, who convened in his shop, and famous clients such as Joseph Addison and Isaac Newton confirm this – and for the United Provinces.[18]

The booksellers and customers who received books from Johnson and who are discussed in this chapter resided in England, Scotland and the Low Countries, and many of these people have not been previously acknowledged. The copies of his plays discussed in Chapter Five, and their reception by other publishers explored in Chapters Six and Seven, reveal the presence of his works in Ireland as well, in addition to a completely overlooked and extremely important area of reception in the German states, and indeed scattered appearances in many of the countries of north-western Europe.

The only work other than Mijers' that provides a detailed exploration of Johnson's letters to Mackie is Warren McDougall's 'Gavin Hamilton, John Balfour and Patrick Neill: a study of publishing in Edinburgh in the 18th century'. This work is primarily concerned with 'the partnership of Gavin Hamilton and John Balfour, and the association they formed with the printer Patrick Neill.'[19] It sits outside the general field of studies of Johnson and has been noticed by no other critic of this publisher. McDougall argues that Balfour and Hamilton (who

[15] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 136.
[16] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 137.
[17] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, pp. 137-38.
[18] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 190.
[19] McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton', p. iii.

enjoyed considerable political and civic influence in Edinburgh) 'deserve to be thought of as central figures in the story of the Edinburgh book trade.'[20] McDougall also emphasises the continental influences on Hamilton's work, and gives considerable importance to a trip to Amsterdam by Hamilton – to buy books for the Advocate's Library – in 1729.[21] Since the first Johnson letter that mentions Hamilton, with whom he traded, does not appear until 19 June 1731, one wonders if they might have become known to one another on this trip.[22]

Johnson takes on an extremely prominent role in the second chapter of McDougall's work, 'Books from Holland'.[23] The majority of the chapter is given over to a survey of Johnson's letters to Mackie, illustrated with expansive (although occasionally inaccurate) quotations. Whilst the presence of McDougall's discussion of Johnson is at first hard to understand, the author suggests 'Books and Holland were synonymous at this time', and that 'The Scots admired the standard of the Dutch printers'.[24] He identifies 'The Dutch […] supplied Scotland with books, through exports, at auctions at The Hague and elsewhere, and through the friendly contact their booksellers made with Scottish travellers', for which Johnson's letters to Mackie, 'a compound of friendship, business, and accounts of publishing and literary endeavours on the Continent', are the author's primary example.[25] McDougall provides a potted biography of Johnson, and adds some details to Ford's account from the evidence of Johnson's letters. When Hamilton himself eventually returns to the story, McDougall discusses his visit to Europe in 1729 in more detail, and his apparent realisation 'that the Continent was a kind of university for a publisher of ambition'.[26] Overall, the presence of Johnson in this work seems somewhat overplayed, with Hamilton mentioned in just two of Johnson's letters (see below), and most of those works Hamilton brought back from the Netherlands were by publishers other than Johnson.[27] Nevertheless, McDougall's summary of Hamilton's debts to Dutch bookselling practices seems in large part attributable to Johnson's work:

> the spirit of Dutch bookselling and publishing would have encouraged him [i.e. Hamilton] when he formulated his own policies, which were, to raise the quality of Scottish printing, to publish the work of native men of letters, to produce fine editions at the Edinburgh University

[20] McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton', p. iv.
[21] McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton', p. 11.
[22] E^2 La.II.91/C/9.
[23] McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton', pp. 32-47.
[24] McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton', p. 32.
[25] McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton', p. 33.
[26] McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton', p. 42.
[27] McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton', pp. 45-47.

> press, to reprint English literature legitimately (and cheaply), and to export more newly printed books from Scotland than he imported.[28]

This passage seems to refer to the quality of Johnson's books, as attested by Ford and Grant; Johnson's patriotism (discussed below); his establishment of a distinctive house style (discussed in Chapters Three and Seven); his *Best English Plays* (explored throughout this thesis); and his considerable trade in exports to Scotland (also discussed below).

Johnson's Letters

Although important, McDougall's account of Johnson's activities offers only very limited interpretation of the bookseller's work, and is thus excluded from my survey of literature in Chapter One, above. Being concerned with Johnson's letters and his trade *in general* (rather than his plays) it is also, of course, more attuned to my own concerns in this current chapter.

As is identified by McDougall, the most significant archival resource on Johnson is the unpublished correspondence of Charles Mackie, held in the Laing Collection at Edinburgh University Library.[29] The thirteen letters from Johnson to Mackie are indeed well summarised by McDougall: 'a compound of friendship, business, and accounts of publishing and literary endeavours'. These letters range in date from 13 October 1719 to 22 December 1733 (thus averaging about one letter per year), and there are several hundred other letters contained in this archive from a variety of students to Charles Mackie (which are unmentioned by McDougall). Some of these letters provide further information about Johnson and his work and are detailed below.

Johnson's letters to Mackie are useful to us for a variety of reasons. Most importantly, they explain how some of his books were transported into Britain, and what sort of works were contained in these deliveries. They also offer us an astounding glimpse into the sheer range of Johnson's contacts in the publishing and intellectual worlds, which is the focus of Mijers' study. They afford a variety of relatively anecdotal biographical details. They suggest the prices and dates of impression of all manner of texts – by Johnson and by others – that certainly warrant much fuller investigation than can be afforded them in this thesis; this information would provide significant material for a historian of the Enlightenment book trade. They suggest what continental books were of interest to an eighteenth-century Scottish intellectual and his circle (which topic is again explored by Mijers) and tell us much about the interplay of

[28] McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton', p. 47.
[29] Charles Mackie, Correspondence, E^2 La.II.90-91.

business and sociability in Scotland, the Netherlands, and between these two areas at the dawn of the eighteenth century.

It is clear from references in Johnson's letters that a number of his earliest communications to Mackie are now missing. His first surviving letter (13 October 1719, from Johnson at The Hague to Mackie in Edinburgh) thanks Mackie for four previous letters, and also offers gratitude for the 'good news' Mackie gives of himself and Alexander Leslie (1695-1754), fifth Earl of Leven and fourth Earl of Melville, and godfather to Alexander Johnson.[30] This letter introduces such key themes as are visible throughout the correspondence – most importantly involving the delivery of books – and also describes how 'the English books are put between the leaves of the latin & french ones in such a way as they'l not be easily seen at ye Custom house', which is about the only fact that most other writers seem to have taken from Johnson's letters.[31]

Johnson's next two letters, dated 6 August 1720 and 23 August 1720, are addressed to Mackie in London.[32] They are primarily concerned with Mackie's 'design of coming to Holland for stock-jobbing', which Johnson discourages with a variety of financial and political details, noticing 'all these litle things must fall like bubbles.'[33] In the second of these letters, Johnson is more amenable to Mackie's plan, suggesting 'its as good being idle here as at London.'[34] Both letters discuss books that Johnson hopes Mackie might bring with him from London (see below), and the financial news contained in these letters would be valuable to research on British investment in Dutch stocks.

Johnson's next surviving letter (21 January 1721) is addressed to Mackie in Edinburgh, as are all those that are subsequently cited.[35] Like most of Johnson's letters, the ostensible reason for his writing at this time is as a cover for a consignment of books for Mackie. In this instance, 'Y^r bound books are most at the bottom of the box & the unbound above, the English books are in the middle I hope you'l receive all safe & to your contentment.' The following letter (23 January 1722) has similar themes, although specifies that several of the books being delivered were presents from Alexander Cunningham of Block.[36] It concludes with a variety of social comments and queries – again common – in this instance noticing 'These young

[30] E² La.II.91/B/26. On Leslie see William Fraser, *The Melvilles Earls of Melville and the Leslies Earls of Leven*, 3 vols (Edinburgh: 1890), I, pp. 309-36.
[31] See, for instance, Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 104.
[32] E² La.II.91/B/29; La.II.91/B/30.
[33] E² La.II.91/B/29.
[34] E² La.II.91/B/30.
[35] E² La.II.91/B/32.
[36] E² La.II.91/B/33.

sparks t'other day are now all turn'd grave married men'. The next letter, of May 1722 (n.d.) contains Johnson's first suggestion that Mackie might assist him gathering subscriptions for his *Oeuvres* of Bayle (see below), which is a common theme in the later correspondence.[37] It also thanks him for a bill of 220 guilders (which is just one of many payments referred to), and this illustrates the bulk of Johnson and Mackie's trade in books. Johnson's discussion of 'what I can think of that's most material from the Repub. of Lettres here at present' is typical of the 'accounts of publishing and literary endeavours' that McDougall refers to.

The next letter that survives from Johnson comes considerably later than this group, being dated 31 July 1725.[38] Although there are these breaks in the correspondence, Johnson's salutations acknowledge such gaps; if some of the later letters from Johnson to Mackie are missing, this does not appear to be a significant quantity. Johnson writes: 'You have reason to find fault with my not writing so often to you as I would with pleasure doe if I had some spare time but I hope ^{your} goodness & friendship will procure me pardon.' The books delivered this time (including copies of Bayle's *Oeuvres*) are for James Melville of Balgarvie as well as Mackie, and a quantity of literary news is included, since 'The printing presses were never so busy as at present in Holland.' Again preceded by a significant break, Johnson's following letter (19 October 1728) suggests 'Our correspondence has been now so long interrupted that I think it is full time to renew it', which implies that here as well we may not be missing too many letters.[39] It is in this letter than Johnson tells Mackie about his move to Rotterdam, alongside the usual news of 'what I now think of most material about books.' The regular parcel of books (and maps) are accompanied in this instance by more books and a letter for the solicitor John Erskine of Carnock (1695-1768). Johnson concludes with the plea 'Let us exchange letters at least twice a year', which confirms that their correspondence was probably irregular. Despite this ambition, the next letter from Johnson in the Mackie archive is dated 19 June 1731.[40] Johnson told Mackie that he had been waiting for the fourth volume of Bayle to be finished, copies of which were sent with the letter. This letter contains all the usual subjects, and the same is true of that following, of 11 December 1731, although a significant portion of this second letter has been torn away.[41]

On a different topic, a long letter of 12 August 1732 provides considerable discussion of the military career of one 'General Melville', an acquaintance of Johnson and Mackie and

[37] E^2 La.II.91/B/34.
[38] E^2 La.II.91/B/47-48.
[39] E^2 La.II.91/B/62.
[40] E^2 La.II.91/C/9.
[41] E^2 La.II.91/C/17.

relative of Alexander Leslie.[42] The publishing news that follows includes discussion of an edition of Catullus by the Wetsteins of Amsterdam (see Chapter Seven) which was aborted 'because of the noise of pæderastie then in the Country, which some pieces in Catullus smell too much of.' A letter of 24 July 1733 returns us to the usual subjects, including references to letters Johnson was forwarding for Mackie, in this instance to one 'Abbinas', Willem Jacob 's Gravesande [*sic*], and Herman Boerhaave.[43] Alexander Johnson is reported to be 'a brave lusty young lad not much less than myself I dont know but he may be taller in a year's time.' Johnson's final surviving letter to Mackie (22 December 1733) repeats the usual topics (and accompanies more books) but also provides the tantalising report that 'We are heartily sorry for the Desastres [*sic*] brought on good E.W. by contracting allyance with base blood. The desire of getting money engageth men often into foolish steps: & if it comes at last, it seldom answers expectation, & brings many troubles along with it.'[44] The identity of 'E.W.' surely invites further investigation.

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[42] E^2 La.II.91/C/31. 'General Melville' is invisible in all of the usual records. Although he cannot be the famous army officer Andrew Melville (1624-1706), this Melville's daughter, Charlotte Sophia Anna (1670-1724), married the Hanoverian general Alexander von Schulenburg-Blumberg (1662-1733) (see J. G. Alger and Timothy Harrison Place, 'Melville, Andrew (1624-1706)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2008) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18544> [accessed 14 February 2020]). Charlotte and Alexander's first son, Ernst August von der Schulenburg (1692-1743), had an illustrious career in the Brunswick-Lüneburg military, and might possibly have been referred to as General Melville. Ernst August's uncle, Georg Ernst von Melville (*d.* 1742), the second surviving child of Andrew, also had an extended military career in the German states, and might likewise be the subject of this letter. Both men were associated with the Celle or Zelle region, which Johnson refers to. On balance – and in the anticipation of further research – Johnson's description of the 'young' gentleman, and the general tone of his letter, seems to indicate Ernst August as the most likely candidate, although I have not determined the age of Georg Ernst (who also has the correct name), and either man is possible. For further information see 'The Scotland, Scandinavia and Northern European Biographical Database' <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/history/ssne/> [accessed 14 February 2020]. The relevant text of Johnson's letter is as follows: 'I was favoured about the beginning of this year with your Letter & one from the Earl of Leven [i.e. Alexander Leslie] with an inclosed for General Melville, which I sent forward by post directed to him at Zelle where it could not miss to come to him. I accompanied it with a letter desiring in the most civil manner that he would direct his answer to me that I might transmit it safe to the Earl of Leven, but having never had any return from him I imagined he might have sent his answer some other way, till I found by your last letter that he has not. Perhaps he has delay'd till he might have occasion to speak to the King about it, which he now may have [had] opportunity to doe. But if he take that way I doubt it would not be approved, & the K. might say that as employing any of his German subjects in the English troops would give discontent to the English, so the employing of British in his German Troops might displease the Germans. This is only my conjecture, but if you find it has any foundation in reason you'l perhaps think that there is but little certainty of pushing the young Gentleman's fortune that way, & that if my Ld. can find any way of placing him decently in the British troops it may be better; that service being the most advantageous of any, & preferment being as hard to be got in any other service as in that. But I am perhaps going too far in offering my advice where it is not wanted, I therefor desire this may remain entre nous; for I should be [very] sory to give any offense to one I have so great a respect for as the E. of Leven, & to whose person & family no man can be a more hearty wellwisher or a more humble servant. I have delayed thus long writing to his Lo. & perhaps too long, still expecting some answer might come from Gen. Melville, but finding that none does come, I'm afraid there's little to be expected that way.'

[43] E^2 La.II.91/C/39.

[44] E^2 La.II.91/C/45.

All of the above letters have also been examined by McDougall, although he does not provide a full report of these. The following letters (excluding that of Andrew Fletcher) are each identified for the first time in this thesis. There is a letter from Johnson to David Melville (1660-1728), Alexander Leslie's father, at Edinburgh, of 25 November 1719, which is essentially a cover for one from 'Brigadier Melvill'; this must be the same Melville discussed in the letter to Mackie of 12 August 1732.[45] This, and the other letters I have found, demonstrate Johnson's role as an important social agent; they reveal his services as a bookseller, but also in providing introductions or passing on messages, and each of these topics are treated below. Additional letters that discuss Johnson include one from Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun at Paris to his nephew at Leiden (2 November 1715).[46] There are French and English copies of the same letter from David Melville to 'Monsieur Hamm' (8 July 1720).[47] Of the large number of letters from students to Mackie that mention Johnson, John Mitchell wrote to him from London on 4 October 1720, and Alexander Leslie from Leiden on 2 May 1721.[48] Further letters from Mitchell at Leiden are dated 2 December 1721, 28 April 1722 and 17 November 1722.[49] The tutor Robert Duncan wrote to Mackie from Groningen on 29 July 1724, and Mitchell again, this time from Utrecht, on 27 November 1725 and 31 May 1726.[50] Mitchell wrote from London on 27 July 1728 and 22 May 1729, and Alexander Boswell, Lord Auchinleck from Leiden on 10 September 1728.[51] The student Thomas Calerwood of Polton wrote to Mackie from Leiden on 22 November 1730 and 16 July 1731, and James Alston sent his and Sir Hew Dalrymple, second Baronet's 'most hearty thanks' for a letter of introduction to Johnson, from Mackie, on 1 November 1731.[52] Johnson was an invaluable contact for each of these students; far from being peripheral, he was an important facilitator of their encounters with the European learned world.

Another group of seven letters that I have found by Johnson himself – recorded by no other critics of Johnson – are those sent to Pierre Des Maizeaux in London between 18

[45] National Records of Scotland, Papers of the Leslie Family, Earls of Leven and Melville, GD26/13/546/1: 'I have this day received the inclosed from Brigadier Melvill in answer to your Lo: letter to him. He says he was from home when that letter arrived which has occasioned his answering it so late tis likely he writes the same to y^{r} Lo^{p}.'
[46] Irene J. Murray, 'Letters of Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun and his Family 1715-1716', *Miscellany of the Scottish History Society*, 10 (1965), 143-73 (p. 151).
[47] National Records of Scotland, GD26/13/546/2, and GD26/13/546/3.
[48] E^{2} La.II.90/1/8, National Records of Scotland GD26/13/546.
[49] E^{2} La.II.90/1/9, La.II.90/1/10, La.II.90/1/11.
[50] E^{2} La.II.91/B/43, La.II.90/1/18, La.II.90/1/19.
[51] E^{2} La.II.90/1/22, La.II.90/1/25, La.II.91/B/61.
[52] E^{2} La.II.91/B/76, La.II.91/C/10, La.II.91/C/16.

December 1727 and 22 April 1732.[53] These are almost wholly concerned with Johnson's edition of Bayle's *Oeuvres* (and provide a valuable resource on this author), and are discussed most fully in Chapter Four, on Johnson's editorial work, below. The second of these letters, dated 16 January 1728, is in French.[54] The third letter (25 March 1729) contains a very extensive list of manuscript sources that Johnson had found for the Bayle *Oeuvres*, and of further items that Johnson was aware of but unable to source.[55] Johnson's final letter to Des Maizeaux, of 22 April 1732, makes various enquiries regarding Matthew Tindal's *Christianity as Old as the Creation*, which Johnson hoped to publish, but which in fact never appeared. Unlike McMullin's description of La Motraye's *Voyages*, which characterises Johnson's edition as 'a scheme to defraud', Johnson's desire to solicit Tindal's help with his translation suggests a more sensitive relation to his authors: 'I intend to publish in french D'. Tyndaes book Christ old as Creation & have got a good part of it translated. The inclosed letter I write, to give him notice of it, & desire him if he would add or alter any thing to send it me over.'[56]

Other isolated letters from Johnson survive in the correspondence of Sir Hans Sloane at the British Library, and of John Keill at Cambridge University Library.[57] Neither of these have been previously identified by critics of Johnson. The letter to Sloane appears to be dated 16 July 1739, although this date seems to be in a different hand, and 1719 may have been intended. The letter is a solicitation for Sloane's subscription to a forthcoming 'poetical Works'. Johnson's letter to Keill is a copy by John Adams (1819-1892), but carries the original date of 9 February 1714, and concerns Keill's contributions to the *Journal Literaire*, described by Jacob as 'most important because it became one of the earliest vehicles for the dissemination of Newtonian science on the Continent.'[58] Johnson also asked: 'P.S. Let me beg of you, as often as you favour me with any letter, to add what new books &c are coming out in your University [i.e. Oxford].'[59] I have identified two further copies of letters in the Cambridge archive from Keill to Isaac Newton (26 April 1714 and 2 May 1714) which discuss Johnson

[53] L Add. MS 4284, ff. 177-91.
[54] L Add. MS 4284, ff. 178-79.
[55] L Add. MS 4284, ff. 180-81.
[56] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 111; L Add. MS 4284, ff. 190-91. 'D'.' i.e. Doctor.
[57] L Sloane MS 4056, f. 106; Cambridge University Library (hereafter C), MS Add.4007.40.521-23.
[58] Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment* (2006), p. 153.
[59] For further information on Keill see John Henry, 'Keill, John (1671-1721)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2010) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15256> [accessed 14 February 2020].

and the *Journal Literaire* directly, and I suspect that further perusal of Keill's correspondence in this collection might reveal other references to Johnson and his work.[60]

An Enlightenment Publisher

The majority of this chapter has previously appeared as my own 'Thomas Johnson: The Publisher as an Agent of Enlightenment'. This article uses Johnson's business as a case study to develop our understanding of the Enlightenment, as experienced by its participants and as a historical phenomenon, by cataloguing Johnson's creation and exploitation of communications and retail networks. His significant contribution to the publication of French works, held alongside his facilitation of Scottish engagement with the Republic of Letters, suggests the falsity of Jonathan Israel's belief that the Enlightenment was fundamentally divided between moderate and radical camps.[61] The study of Johnson's trade, status, and control of textual dissemination also reveals publishers' power in mediating who could participate in the Enlightenment, and does much to supplement Anne Goldgar's work on the importance of communication in defining the Enlightenment as a participatory community, and Siskin and Warner's characterisation of the Enlightenment as the material forms such communication took.[62]

Over the last two decades, Jonathan Israel has generated an extraordinary body of work in support of his thesis that the Enlightenment can be divided into Radical and Moderate camps. He distinguishes between moderation, enacting political reforms through existing structures of power, and radicalism, reforming those structures based on political ideals. By understanding the Enlightenment as an event in the history of ideas, Israel suggests that even when such contradictory ideas as radicalism and moderation might be held by a single thinker, they provide the most important means for understanding the Enlightenment.[63] Anne Goldgar provides an alternative model of the Enlightenment. She suggests that it was, above all, a community, but one 'that existed only in the minds of its members.'[64] Unlike Israel, Goldgar

[60] C MS Add.4007.40.524-25; MS Add.4007.40.526-28. Articles connected with the academic debate these letters are concerned with appeared in multiple issues of the *Journal Literaire*, including 2.2 (1713), 4.2 (1714), 5.2 (1714), 7.1 (1715), 8.2 (1716), 9.2 (1717), and 10.2 (1719).
[61] See, primarily, Jonathan Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750* (Oxford: OUP, 2001).
[62] Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters 1680–1750* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995); Clifford Siskin and William Warner, eds, *This is Enlightenment* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2010).
[63] See, for instance, Jonathan Israel, 'Rousseau, Diderot, and the "Radical Enlightenment": A Reply to Helena Rosenblatt and Joanna Stalnaker', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 77 (2016), 649–77.
[64] Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*, p. 2.

argues that the creation and consolidation of this community, and one's social status within it, was more important to its members than any ideological divisions.[65] Indeed, no intellectual disagreement was so significant as the division between those who knew and abided by the rules of the intellectual community, and those who were separate from it. Goldgar demonstrates throughout her work that the most significant means of cementing such a community was through communication, and the negotiation of personal status that such communication always involved. The essays contained in Siskin and Warner's *This is Enlightenment* take an alternative, although complimentary, perspective. The watchword of their volume is mediation, which the contributors understand as a nebulous, although materially invested, concept. The editors suggest: 'Enlightenment *is* an event in the history of mediation'; they refer to their 'mobius-strip-like co-implication'; and that 'mediation is the condition of possibility for Enlightenment'; going on to emphasise the Enlightenment as the mediated form of knowledge rather than its specific philosophical content, as Israel argues.[66] Goldgar thus responds to Israel with a new emphasis on communication, and Siskin and Warner's volume on the forms such communication took.

Study of Johnson's communication and retail networks suggests a means of synthesising Goldgar and Siskin and Warner's perspectives. One addition that might be made to Goldgar's excellent book is to consider certain booksellers as inside rather than outside of her communications networks.[67] By taking the complaints of *philosophes* – that booksellers were philistines – for granted, she excludes the possibility that they too engaged in such communications networks as she explores, and were invested in the same intellectual and social structures. Indeed, when considered as inside rather than outside of the network of vested interests, it is apparent how much power booksellers could wield within that network as the agents of production and primary distributors of ideas. Siskin and Warner's volume provides multiple examples of mediation but, if we take Goldgar's emphasis on personal relations into consideration, it is apparent that the authors do not engage fully with the role and ambitions of those booksellers behind such mediation. When it is understood that the preoccupations of such men would encompass not only Goldgar's proposed interest in status within and maintenance of the extended scholarly community, but an understandable catholicity of taste based on the

[65] Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*, pp. 6–7.
[66] Clifford Siskin and William Warner, 'This is Enlightenment: An Invitation in the Form of an Argument', in *This is Enlightenment*, ed. by Siskin and Warner, pp. 1–33 (22).
[67] See especially Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*, pp. 49–51.

maximisation of sales, it is apparent that booksellers as the agents behind the distribution of ideas made no such abstract distinctions as Israel proposes.

Johnson established himself as a creator and purveyor of books and, significantly, of information about books. His business was central to the development and distribution of the ideas of the radical Huguenot community centred at The Hague. He positioned himself as a major supplier to various Scottish booksellers, and as an agent for and patron of individual Scottish residents and Scottish students studying abroad, supplying and recommending books and facilitating contact with European society. The diversity of Johnson's contacts and publications demonstrates his full integration in the community of the Enlightenment; the integration of radical and moderate types of thought in the experience of that community; and the publisher's pivotal role in mediating that community's experience of itself through his control of its material productions. Johnson's extant publications reveal no particular allegiance in the theoretical stance of the books he published, and he supplied books emanating from different intellectual camps to the same purchasers. Mijers' study of Johnson and Mackie corroborates this claim, suggesting that the Republic of Letters and Enlightenment 'often met and overlapped', and that the Republic of Letters (which should include Johnson's correspondence with Mackie) 'incorporated the whole spectrum of scholarly interests […] from the antiquarian and polyhistoric to the radical and the modern'.[68]

The career of the elder Jacob Tonson, a prominent member of the English publishing community and frequent point of reference when considering Johnson's English publications, suggests that the successful eighteenth-century publisher derived much of his cultural authority from his social and business persona.[69] Tonson was the secretary and patron of London's prestigious Kit-Cat Club, its Whig membership incorporating the leading lights of literary and political society. When Tonson provided the Kit-Cats with a new home at his house at Barn Elms, he positioned himself as vital to the club's existence and central to its literary productions. Johnson seems likewise to have been a member of a literary society, in his instance one affiliated with the *Chevaliers de la Jubilation*. The *Chevaliers* were a quasi-Masonic order of major (freethinking) European intellectuals and publishers, who are discussed most extensively by Jacob in *The Radical Enlightenment*. This community was centred at The Hague and its members were important contributors to – and customers of – Johnson's business.

[68] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 18.
[69] See, for instance, the conclusion to Geduld's *Prince of Publishers*, p. 171: 'Tonson's association with the Kit-Cat Club sets him apart from the generations of bookseller-publishers who preceded him; for he was the earliest publisher to understand and exploit the delicate art of public relations, and this […] distinguishes him *as the earliest professional publisher*.'

Jacob's work suggests similar connections between Johnson and the literary society to the better-documented relationship of Tonson and the Kit-Cats.[70] She goes so far as to suggest that the ideas and publications of the radical enlightenment (as she frames it) were frequently generated by the same individuals, members of 'radical coteries […] with access to the presses and their own publishing firms, [in which] the distinction between *philosophe* and publisher, between the enlightened man and the printed word, is inevitably blurred if not obliterated.'[71]

Johnson was central to the *Chevaliers*' publications. He collaborated with Charles Levier on a variety of projects, including Colerus' radical classic *La Vie de B. de Spinosa* (1706).[72] This publication was considered so compromising that Prosper Marchand burned multiple copies following Levier's death.[73] Although Jacob speaks only occasionally about Johnson, the many writers and thinkers focussed at The Hague whom she discusses, such as John Toland, Prosper Marchand and Willem 's Gravesande, were either published by or, at least, most probably known to Johnson.[74] Mijers also refers to Johnson's 'radical authors and […] Spinozist clandestina', his association with 'deists and freethinkers', and his 'close working relationship with many Huguenot journalists' involved in his *Journal Literaire*, especially Pierre Des Maizeaux.[75] Johnson was also, it seems, personally acquainted with Anthony Collins – a key member of the circle described by Jacob – and asked Des Maizeaux to 'assurer M. Collins de mes respects' and, showing an even closer relationship, requested that the news of his daughter's death might be passed on to Collins.[76] In another letter, as already mentioned, Johnson promised Mackie that he would forward a letter to Willem 's Gravesande, and many of these men attended the same Walloon churches of which Johnson seems to have

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[70] On Tonson and the Kit-Cats see George Francis Papali, *Jacob Tonson, Publisher: His Life and Work, 1656–1736* (Auckland: Tonson Publishing House, 1968); Geduld, *Prince of Publishers*; Lynch, *Jacob Tonson*; or, more recently, Ophelia Field, *The Kit-Cat Club: Friends Who Imagined a Nation* (London: Harper Press, 2008).
[71] Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment* (2006), xv. For a general introduction to the author's ideas regarding these groups see xiii-xvi, and for more extensive discussion pp. 112-38, 151-73.
[72] See Silvia Berti, 'The First Edition of the *Traité des Trois Imposteurs* and its Debt to Spinoza's *Ethics*', in *Atheism from the Reformation to the Enlightenment*, ed. by Michael Hunter and David Wootton (Oxford: OUP, 1992), pp. 182–220 (194).
[73] Berti, 'The First Edition', pp. 199. See also Prosper Marchand, *Dictionnaire Historique, ou Memoires Critiques et Litteraires, Concernant La Vie et les Ouvrages De Divers Personnages Distingués, Particulierement dans la Republique des Lettres*, 2 vols (A La Haye: Chez Pierre de Hondt, 1758), I, p. 325.
[74] For direct references to Johnson see Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment* (2006), pp. 138, 153, 157, 163, 174. For Johnson's publications see, for instance, John Toland, *Adeisidaemon, Sive Titus Livius a Superstitione Vindicatus* (Hagae-Comitis: apud Thomas Johnson, 1709), or Simon Tyssot de Patot, *Voyages et Avantures de Jacques Massé* (Bordeaux [The Hague]: J. l'Aveugle [Thomas Johnson], 1710 [*c.* 1714-17]). For this publication's attribution to Johnson see Jacob, p. 163.
[75] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, pp. 136-37.
[76] L Add. MS 4284, ff. 178-79 (16 January 1728), 180-81 (25 March 1729). Toland used Johnson's shop as a postal address in 1708 when corresponding with Leibniz (Justin Champion, *Republican Learning: John Toland and the Crisis of Christian Culture, 1696-1722* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press and Palgrave, 2003), p. 172).

been a part.[77] The *Journal Literaire* was used by Isaac Newton for the European dissemination of his ideas (see below), and Mijers notes that Johnson might also have supplied Mackie with manuscript copies of Newton's works acquired through his 'clandestine networks'.[78]

According to Jacob, the *Journal Literaire* was published by the radical 'inner circle' of the *Chevaliers*' literary society, and was its 'major intellectual interest'.[79] Israel suggests:

> While conviviality and drinking were part of the concept, and while the editors – besides Johnson and Marchand, Albert Henri de Sallengre […], Justus van Effen […], [Thémiseul de] Sainte-Hyacinthe, and the great physicist 's-Gravesande – did not all share the same views, they did see themselves as participating in a common enterprise of 'enlightenment'.[80]

The members of the *Chevaliers*' literary society are essentially identical to the *Journal*'s contributors and editorial board and Johnson, as its publisher, must have enjoyed a crucial position in determining the content of this work. Goldgar suggests that the *Chevaliers* also referred to themselves as the 'Society of the Authors who compose the Journal Litéraire'.[81] Johnson was also the first point of contact for correspondents of the *Journal*: 'qu'ils souhaiteront de faire insere dans ce Journal, pourront les addresser au Libraire'.[82] The same volume also tells us 'Le Journal […] est l'ouvrage de plusieurs personnes de differens Païs, qui ont formé une espéce de Societé', which society clearly overlaps with Jacob's *Chevaliers* and literary society.[83] Marchand's contemporaneous *Dictionnaire* also provides an account of the *Journal*'s publication that is simultaneously a discussion of the *Chevaliers*, and demonstrates Johnson's importance by recording the suspension of the *Journal* when Johnson withdrew his support.[84]

Johnson took advantage of the *Chevaliers*, literary society, and the extended 'radical' networks of its members to source material for production and as ready channels for its

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[77] E[2] La.II.91/C/39 (24 July 1733). On churches see Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment* (2006), p. 131, and Kossman, *De Boekhandel te's-Gravenhage*, p. 206.
[78] Mijers, "*News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 171.
[79] Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment* (2006), pp. 151, 153.
[80] Jonathan Israel, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man 1670-1752* (Oxford: OUP, 2006), p. 395.
[81] Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*, p. 79.
[82] *Journal Literaire*, 1.1 (1713), *3r.
[83] *Journal Literaire*, 1.1 (1713), *2v.
[84] Marchand, *Dictionnaire*, II, pp. 215–16. See especially p. 215: 'Il sut commence […] par une Société de jeunes Gens, tous distingués par leur genie & leur savoir; & étroitemeut unis par les liens de l'estime & de l'amité'; and p. 216: 'Ils continuérent ce Journal sans interruption jusqu'à l'année 1722 […]. Alors, Johnson Libraire de la Haye, qui avoit été l'Imprimeur du Journal, aïent été oblige de quitter son négoce; ce Livre cessa de paroitre, & ses Auteurs se dispersérent.'

distribution (see below). Johnson's leverage as a distributor of knowledge afforded him considerable influence in the world of the *philosophes*, and his instrumentality in the editing and circulation of their texts suggests how far their reception was dependent on Johnson. Whilst we cannot be sure how far Johnson sympathised with their views, he clearly saw the cultivation of the *Chevaliers*' work as a profitable enterprise. Furthermore, intellectual debate was central to the practice of Enlightenment, and many of its participants (such as Mackie, discussed below) were willing to engage with a range of ideas and opinions. Whilst the Enlightenment as a community is a fruitful way of understanding the experience of its members, booksellers were on the inside rather than outside of this circle. The Enlightenment as changes in the forms of mediation is likewise a powerful means of understanding its significance. Nevertheless, we should not lose sight of the interests of the purveyors of its texts, preoccupied with the consolidation of their own businesses and networks. As will be shown, Johnson's provision of services, news and books ensured his authority in facilitating encounters with the Enlightenment and the Republic of Letters for many of his contacts and customers. He balanced the means of producing and disseminating radical French works with a unique engagement with Scottish markets, and used the contacts he thereby established to mediate students' entry into the European intellectual world; such a crucial role might also be applied to other Enlightenment publishers. Whilst my own work serves as a starting point for understanding Johnson's role in this intellectual world, considerable further study of the non-Anglophone side of his business is required for further progress to be made in this direction, and to appreciate the full impact of publishers on the form and development of the Enlightenment.

Johnson's Trade with Britain

Johnson had a sustained and deep connection with a variety of customers in Britain, and especially in Scotland. St Clair tells us that up to the time of the Copyright Act, when Johnson first began issuing his *Collection*, the output of the Scottish printing industry 'had been small and its sales local.'[85] London copyright holders held a practical if not actual monopoly on the printing of most English drama, and the cost of transport from London to Scotland must have increased the demand in Scotland for an alternative to London editions and their prices. As Mijers notes, it took 'less time to reach a Dutch port from Leith by ship than it took a carriage from Edinburgh to reach London', so Johnson must have perceived a ready market for his

[85] St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, p. 105.

competitively-priced books in Scotland.[86] As his correspondence attests, he used numerous partners to import a variety of French and Latin works, and English-language reprints, into his homeland.

Charles Mackie was Johnson's most sustained contact in his relations with Scotland. After graduating from Edinburgh in 1705, Mackie completed his studies at Groningen between 1707-08.[87] Although Mackie's movements from 1708-15 are unclear he may have been a tutor, either in Scotland or travelling through Europe.[88] He was in Leiden from 1715-19 as the tutor of Alexander Leslie, with whom he maintained a 'long and intimate friendship'.[89] It is probably during this time that the pair first met Johnson, possibly through his wife, Jane Johnson, née Wemyss, who shared a family name with Leslie's mother, Anne.[90] Leslie later stood godfather to Alexander Johnson, and Thomas frequently referred to Leslie in his letters to Mackie and passed on the health and, later, good wishes of his godson.[91] Considering his subsequent trade with Mackie, it would seem that Johnson's familial and social connections could also bear fruit for his business. Nevertheless, from their lack of direct communication, it appears that Leslie took less interest in the relationship than Johnson did, which perhaps reflects their relative social standing.

In addition to being Johnson's closest acquaintance in Scotland, Mackie – as a scholar at Edinburgh University – enjoyed a convenient position for business with Edinburgh's academic circles, and it seems possible that when ordering multiple copies of the same books he might have been acquiring these for colleagues or students. Although Mackie made many requests for specific books, the choice of others appears to have rested in Johnson's selection (which reflects his position of knowledge), and Johnson expressed surprise on the rare occasions that Mackie was unenthusiastic:

> Mr Boswel tells me you want to dispose of the Diction. de Furetiere y^{t} I sent you, not having occasion for it your self; w[hi]ch I wonder at, for I do not know any work of so universal use for a man of Letters as that

[86] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 50.
[87] Jeffrey R. Smitten, 'Mackie, Charles (1688-1770)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/63630> [accessed 19 December 2019].
[88] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 94. For further information on Mackie's early years drawn on in this paragraph see pp. 93-95.
[89] Smitten, 'Mackie, Charles'.
[90] See Margaret D. Sankey, 'Melville, David, third earl of Leven and second earl of Melville (1660-1728)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18545> [accessed 19 December 2019].
[91] See, for instance, E^{2} La.II.91/C/9 (19 June 1731): 'His [i.e. Alexander Leslie's] Godson joins with us in assuring his Lo^{p} of all our most humble respects; I hope he may live to be My Lords humble servant after we are gone.'

> […]. I'm persuaded if you were used to consult it sometimes you would not part with it, & I leave it you at a low price, as you'l see by the note here annexed; if you let it goe to another it should be 5 or 6 guld. [i.e. guilders] more.[92]

Other items Mackie received from Johnson included three collections of maps which the publisher appears to have made up himself, and which came to a considerable 54 guilders and six *stuivers*.[93] In another particularly large shipment Johnson sent, amongst other works, twelve copies of Mascamp's *Tabulae Chronologicae*, de Patot's *Voyages* ([Johnson], 1710), Jacques Roergas de Serviez's *Les Femmes des Douze Cesars*, and three copies of Nathaniel Lee's play *Sophonisba*, also available in his *Collection*.[94] This parcel also included:

2 Swifts Works (w^{t} sheets wanting 4 times)	2-12-
2 Pope's Homer & Poems comp^{t}. 7 vol.	12-12-
6 --- Homer vol. 5 & 6	10-16-[95]

In addition to suggesting the generic and political diversity of books Mackie was receiving from Johnson, this shipment also demonstrates the general complexity of Johnson and Mackie's transactions in dealing in parts of books, which is visible in many of their letters. It also appears here that although Pope's *Iliad*, and his other works, were published separately by Johnson, in six volumes and one volume respectively, he was also marketing them as a single seven-volume set, presumably to attract buyers with a range of interests and spending capacities or who already owned a part of that set – which mirrors his practice with *Best English Plays*.[96] Certain of the volumes discussed in this letter were intended for Mackie – for himself or for him to distribute – and others for his bookseller cousin John Mackie, or for the bookseller

[92] Alexander Boswell, Lord Auchinleck (1706-82); Furetière, *Dictionnaire Universel* (Johnson *et al.*, 1727). E^{2} La.II.91/B/62 (19 October 1728). On Mackie's resale of this work see McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton', p. 37. See also Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 153, where she refers to this transaction, and p. 166, where Mijers suggests that for Mackie's research and teaching, 'many of his most important sources – the historical dictionaries, the thesauri and the journals – came from Johnson'.
[93] E^{2} La.II.91/B/62 (19 October 1728).
[94] Henricus Mascamp, *Tabulae Chronologicae, quibus exhibetur universae historiae compendium* (Leipzig and Amsterdam: Michael Andreas Fuhrmann, 1717); Jacques Roergas de Serviez, *Les Femmes des Douze Cesars* (A Amsterdam: Chez Du Villard & Changuion, 1721); Nathaniel Lee, *Sophonisba: or, Hannibal's Overthrow. A Tragedy* (London [The Hague]: Printed for T. Johnson, 1719). E^{2} La.II.91/B/32 (21 January 1721).
[95] Swift, *Miscellaneous Works* ([Johnson], 1720); Alexander Pope, trans., *The Iliad of Homer*, 6 vols (London [The Hague]: Printed by T. J. for B. L. & other Booksellers, 1718-21); 'Poems' either Pope, *Works* ([Johnson], 1718), or Pope, *Works* ([Johnson], 1720). E^{2} La.II.91/B/32 (21 January 1721).
[96] McDougall, in 'Gavin Hamilton', p. 32, suggests 'The Pope [*Iliad*] was a bargain to please the Scottish reader's eye: Lintot of London was charging subscribers a guinea a quarto volume, while his other issues were none too cheap, and here was a Johnson piracy for a fraction of the price.'

George Stewart.[97] In a later letter we learn that Mackie must also have been a regular subscriber to various 'Journals' from Johnson; in an apparent break from habit, Johnson told Mackie 'I have not sent you any because you forbid them'.[98] Mackie's manuscript library catalogue contains an entry for Johnson's 'Journal Literaire. Haye.' on its final leaf.[99] Although in this letter Johnson told Mackie 'I know nothing of Literary news worth mentioning', several of his letters did contain extensive and detailed updates on new publications by Johnson and many other publishers, and such reports must have functioned both as friendly news-sheets produced by one friend for another – a window on Enlightenment Europe – and as a catalogue of what Mackie might wish to procure from Johnson.[100] He also seems to have used Mackie to sound out the potential market for new editions, revealing in turn his particular interests in Scotland and its education. Discussing the *Cyropaedia* of Andrew Michael (Chevalier) Ramsay, Johnson speculated that this:

> should be valued in Scotland as being writen by a Country man. your young Ladies cannot read a prettier book for their improvement, & if they read the french w[hi]ch is very good it is proper for learning the french language. I shall furnish the Country with both English and french at an easy rate if it be wanted.[101]

Perhaps the most interesting part of Mackie and Johnson's business relationship was Mackie's work as an agent in gathering subscriptions for Bayle's *Oeuvres* (see also Chapter Four). Rather than receiving money, it seems that Mackie's payment for this and other work was in the social connections and access to knowledge that Johnson afforded him. Although in this instance Mackie was *also* offered a free copy of the *Oeuvres* for his own use if he could procure fifteen subscribers, this number was not met, and no free copy of Bayle was forthcoming.[102] The student John Mitchell later told Mackie:

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[97] Mijers suggests that Charles 'may have taken over John Mackie's networks after his death in 1723' (*"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 154).
[98] E^2 La.II.91/C/45 (22 December 1733).
[99] E^2 DC.8.51. See also Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 165.
[100] E^2 La.II.91/C/45 (22 December 1733). For literary news see especially E^2 La.II.91/B/34 (May 1722), and La.II.91/B/47-48 (31 July 1725).
[101] Andrew Michael Ramsay, *A New Cyropaedia, or The Travels of Cyrus* (Edinburgh [The Hague]: Printed for the Company of Booksellers [Thomas Johnson], [1728/29]). E^2 La.II.91/B/62 (19 October 1728). *A New Cyropaedia* was available in one or two volumes, in English, or in French and English parallel texts, apparently to cater to the various readerships mentioned in Johnson's letter. I assign dates to this work based on the evidence of this letter. The *ESTC* gives a speculative date of 1727. McDougall, in 'Gavin Hamilton', p. 33, transcribes 'Ladies' in the Scots form 'Ledies'.
[102] E^2 La.II.91/B/34 (May 1722).

> I spoke to mr Johnson, who told me you might take as many subscriptions for Bayle's works as you could, giving your own receipt for the money, even untill the last of January, and he would take care to send you his to relieve your own in due time.[103]

Mackie took payments from subscribers and was, in turn, charged by Johnson for each shipment. Johnson told him 'I have now sent you by Mr Gavin Hamilton eleven copies of sd 4th vol. of Bayle, & have drawn on you for f155 gilds. being the value of ten, at f15-10- a piece.'[104] Such a system would have considerably lessened Johnson's administrative difficulties by gathering most Scottish subscriptions from one individual. His use of a subscription scheme must also have defrayed costs.[105] He had previously told Mackie: 'Those that have not subscribed pay now 30 gilds. to receive the 2 first vols. & be admitted to the same benefit as subscribers, for the rest', although admitted 'the subscribers have saved a guiney for their first advancing 10 gilds., for they have scarce been any thing in advance since.'[106] This was not the only occasion on which Mackie undertook financial work for Johnson, although it seems Johnson was usually sympathetic to his agent's difficulties:

> He told me you had not yet got in all the money of the 4th vol. of Bayle, but I hope you have by this time for I want that with other money from G. Hamilton. None of those that have the former vols. but must have the last not to have an incompleat work. if they were oblidged to send me their money <u>france</u> & get their books brought home at their own charges as is [?usualy] they would be impatient till they had them; now they are sent home & all things made easier to them 'tis hard they should be backward. But tis your work; & I cannot have a better Lieutenant to drive on your 10 subscribers.[107]

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[103] E2 La.II.90/1/11 (17 November 1722).

[104] Gavin Hamilton (1704-67), the Edinburgh bookseller. E2 La.II.91/C/9 (19 June 1731). The eleventh, free copy was for James Melville of Balgarvie, *not* Mackie: see also E2 La.II.91/B/47-48 (31 July 1725), where Johnson refers to books for Balgarvie amongst '11 Oevres [*sic*] de Bayle vol. 1 & 2d for which you are now to pay 10 secd payments of subscriptions'. E2 La.II.91/B/62 (19 October 1728) notes 'I have put [?in] with those maps the 3d pt of Bayles works for Balgarvy, which I had [for]got it seems to send with yours', and the list of books sent includes '10 Oeuvres de Bayle vol 3d subscript. for 10 [?at] f13' and '1 Oeuv. de Bayle Tome 3e for Balgarvy sub[scri]pt' as separate entries.

[105] On the benefits of subscription schemes to publishers see also David Pearson, *Provenance Research in Book History: A Handbook* (New Castle and Oxford: Oak Knoll Press and The Bodleian Library, 2019), p. 233. Unfortunately, there does not appear to be any list of subscribers in the *Oeuvres* as published.

[106] E2 La.II.91/B/47-48 (31 July 1725); La.II.91/C/9 (19 June 1731).

[107] 'He' is probably James Melville of Balgarvie. For 'france' read 'franked', or 'franc de port'. E2 La.II.91/C/17 (11 December 1731). For other financial work see e.g. E2 La.II.91/B/32 (21 January 1721): 'I must beg the favour of you any day you pass in the Parliamt Close to call at Mr. Maclellan's of Barclay & give my most humble service & tell him that you'l pay him four pounds sterl. for me, there's no haste for the payment you may take time for that, but the sooner you tell him of it will be the better.' Possibly Samuel MacLellan: see David Falconer, *The Decisions of the Court of Session. From the Month of November 1744*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Printed by Wal. and Tho. Ruddimans, 1746-53), I, pp. 124-25. Johnson also hoped that Mackie would gather in

Johnson's connections with other British collectors suggests his wide range of contacts. His customers in the learned community included William Anderson, Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Glasgow, and various Scottish lawyers.[108] In England, in addition to Isaac Newton, Johnson's supposed contact with the Whig playwright and MP Joseph Addison may have had implications for his edition of *The Drummer* (see Chapter Three).[109] In his note to the royal physician Sir Hans Sloane, Johnson used their slight acquaintance to solicit subscribers for a forthcoming work. If we assume that this letter, misdated 1739 (seemingly in a different and later hand), was actually written several years earlier (perhaps in 1719 or 1729), then it appears most likely that the 'poetical Works' in question was Johnson's edition of Prior's *Poems on Several Occasions* (1720), of which several editions by the copyright holder Jacob Tonson were already in circulation.[110] Johnson's inclusion of a printing specimen suggests his confidence that his edition could compete against such rivals:

> I have no Apology for the Freedom of this Address but that slender Remembrance you may have of me when in Gresham College with Dr Woodward; unless their [*sic*] is some merit in the Author whose poetical Works I am publishing of which the enclosed is a Specimen.[111]

When embarking on Bayle's *Oeuvres* Johnson likewise sent a sample of its text to Mackie, assuring him 'the work will be all as well printed as this specimen.'[112] If Johnson also made a similar solicitation to Woodward as well as Sloane regarding the 'poetical Works' then he does not appear to have been successful, since this volume is absent from the sales catalogue for Woodward's library; this catalogue nevertheless includes Johnson's editions of Toland's *Adeisidaemon* and Willem 's Gravesande's *Essai d'une Nouvelle Theorie*.[113] Garnering as well

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James Melville's debts (E^{2} La.II.91/B/47-48 (31 July 1725)): 'Please add also the remainder of his acc^{t} to yours & send me a bill for all at your conveniency.'

[108] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 138.

[109] On Newton see Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 137. Newton and Mackie were also in contact with each other (L. W. Sharp, 'Charles Mackie, the First Professor of History at Edinburgh University', *Scottish Historical Review*, 41 (1962), 23–45 (p. 37)). On Addison see Mijers, p. 190, although the author does not elaborate on her sources. Whilst *A Catalogue of the Valuable Library, of the Late Celebrated Right Hon. Joseph Addison* ([London]: Leigh and Sotheby, 1799) includes many continental books that could have been acquired from Johnson, it does not contain any that he actually published.

[110] As a recent Tonson edition see Matthew Prior, *Poems on Several Occasions* (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, and John Barber, 1718).

[111] L Sloane MS 4056, f. 106 (16 July ?1719). Woodward is presumably John Woodward (1665/68-1728).

[112] E^{2} La.II.91/B/34 (May 1722).

[113] *A Catalogue of the Library, Antiquities, &c. Of the Late Learned Dr. Woodward* ([London]: Printed by Henry Woodfall, 1728): Toland, *Adeisidaemon* (Johnson, 1709), on p. 158, lot 3581; Willem Jacob 's

as selling texts in Britain, Johnson's letter to the scientist and mathematician John Keill thanked him for sending his works to be included in the *Journal Literaire*, and encouraged further contributions:

> I had the honour of your [*sic*] by Dr Cull last month, and have commu:nicate it to the gentlemen that write the Journal Literaire. They will always be glad to receive any thing curious in any part of mathematicks or natural Philosophy from so good good [*sic*] a hand as yours & bid me with their respects assure you, Sir, that they'l always endeavour to make the best use of every thing you'l be pleased to commu:nicate to them […]. I hope, Sir, what you contribute to it shall be none of the least.[114]

Keill in turn discussed with Newton how Johnson might be used to disseminate their interests on the continent: 'Dr Halley and I doe often drink your health, he and I are both of opinion that there should be 50 Copies of the Commercium sent over to Johnson'.[115] Keill nevertheless suggested 'I wish my paper were translated into French before it were sent over Dr Halley beleives [*sic*] that M^r^ De Noyer will doe it'; Pierre du Noyer was a French bookseller in the Strand who also acted as a go-between for Johnson and Des Maizeaux's correspondence.[116]

Although Mackie occupied an unusual position in receiving books both for himself and to distribute to others, the majority of Johnson's contacts so far discussed were individual customers receiving works only for their own collections. There is, however, important evidence for Johnson supplying a range of booksellers as well. We have already mentioned John Mackie, the cousin of Charles Mackie, and George Stewart (trading 1711-45), printer for Edinburgh University; Johnson was also in contact with one David Randie (trading 1728-?30).[117] The collaboration with Stewart, as the university printer, suggests the importance and quality of Johnson's books. John Mackie, who inherited his business from his father, Charles' uncle, also John Mackie, would have been a good choice of agent since Johnson was already in regular contact with Charles, and David Randie was a postmaster as well as a bookseller, which must surely have helped in transporting their goods.[118] Although these booksellers were

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Gravesande, *Essai d'une Nouvelle Theorie du Choc des Corps, Fondée sur l'Experience* (A la Haye: Chez T. Johnson, 1722), on p. 194, lot 4359.

[114] C MS Add.4007.40.521-23 (9 February 1714). Dr Cull is unidentified.

[115] 'Halley' i.e. Edmond Halley (1656-1742); John Collins, *Commercium Epistolicum D. Johannis Collins, et Aliorum de Analysi Promota* (Londini: Typis Pearsonianis, 1712). C MS Add.4007.40.526-28 (2 May 1714).

[116] C MS Add.4007.40.526-28 (2 May 1714). For references to du Noyer in the Des Maizeaux correspondence see L Add. MS 4284, ff. 180-81 (25 March 1729), 182-83 (21 June 1729).

[117] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, pp. 137-38.

[118] Sharp, 'Charles Mackie', p. 24. Marika Keblusek, in her introduction to Hans Cools, Marika Keblusek and Badeloch Noldus, eds, *Your Humble Servant: Agents in Early Modern Europe* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren,

not Johnson's friends in the same way that Mackie was, their partnership required considerable trust if physical and financial losses were to be avoided. Johnson frequently sent single shipments to be divided amongst multiple agents in order to reduce the import duties that he – or more frequently they – were required to pay. Johnson told Charles Mackie:

> I have sent you both [i.e. Mackie, and James Melville of Balgarvy] books marked here below, & for your ease & getting them more easily past at the Custom house I putt them all with some others in a bale directed to David Randie Postmaster in the Canongate who will deliver you all that are for you and Balgarvy on paying your share of charges.[119]

As noted by other critics, some of Johnson's English works were also, on occasion, shipped unbound between the pages of foreign-language books, to avoid their detection by customs officials.[120] Such evidence regarding the smuggling of English books seems to imply that Johnson was trading sufficient quantities of foreign works to make this practice viable. On one occasion he nevertheless expressed concern regarding the forthcoming delivery of an English consignment to George Stewart, for whom he usually used the Port of Leith, perhaps because he had ordered no foreign works to hide these books amongst:

> Give my service to M^{r}. G. Stewart ye Bookseller, tell him he may have of Prior's & Swifts works & 4th vol. of Homer if he'l direct me by whom to send them, but I cannot venture 'em at my risque not knowing what master to trust or to what port to send 'em safe.[121]

On several occasions Johnson also had dealings with the bookseller Gavin Hamilton (see above) who, like George Stewart before him, also became printer to Edinburgh University in 1754.[122] Corroborating Mijers' arguments for the role of booksellers as cultural and

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2006), p. 14, suggests: 'European postal networks, following mercantile routes of information, were based on personal trust between agents and postmasters – often […] merchants, secretaries and news agents themselves'.

[119] E^{2} La.II.91/B/47-48 (31 July 1725).

[120] E^{2} La.II.91/B/26 (13 October 1719). See also E^{2} La.II.91/B/32 (21 January 1721), and Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 131.

[121] 'Homer' i.e. Pope, *The Iliad of Homer* ([Johnson], 1718-21). E^{2} La.II.91/B/26 (13 October 1719). See also Henry Fletcher of Saltoun urging his son Andrew Fletcher, Lord Milton (1692-1766), a student in the Low Countries: 'I hope you have not yet sent my brother's books, for bound Books are treated here at our Custom-house as Counterband goods, therefor if the thing be yet entire, send them in a [Preston]Pans ship and direct them to Mr Hadden, Collector at the Pans, without mentioning to whom they are to be delivered.' The brother is Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun (1655-1716) (Murray, 'Letters of Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun', p. 162).

[122] See E^{2} La.II.91/C/9 (19 June 1731) and La.II.91/C/17 (11 December 1731). Warren McDougall's 'Gavin Hamilton' continues to provide the most significant study to date of this important Edinburgh publisher and his works, although a shorter account is also available by the same author as 'Hamilton, Gavin (1704-1767)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/65019> [accessed 13 February 2020]. This *ODNB* entry lists several further studies by McDougall of the publisher.

intellectual agents, or facilitators of learning, McDougall tells us that Hamilton was 'a central figure in the town's [i.e. Edinburgh's] publishing trade and hence a significant contributor to, and promoter of, the Edinburgh Enlightenment.'[123] Johnson later sent books to the bookseller 'Wm Hamilton' as well, who should not be confused with Gavin Hamilton's father, also William Hamilton, Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Edinburgh.[124] Unlike Gavin, the bookseller William is highly illusive, and even Plomer's *Dictionary* can offer little assistance, noting only that he was entered in the *Edinburgh Guild Register* on 6 May 1730, and was '[p]ossibly' a relative of Gavin.[125] However, spectral as he appears, Johnson told Mackie he had sent this William a large shipment of Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks*, but expressed surprise in a letter of 22 December 1733:

> I have found him very fair in his dealings & punctual in payment, but if he has much sale, or if such a book be well in his hands I don't know, for I have not heard from him since, & I should think 50 copies of such a book might soon sell in Edinburgh.[126]

There is no further mention of William Hamilton or his copies of the *Characteristicks* in Johnson's correspondence, even though Carnie and Doig suggest that he was still trading in 1739.[127]

In the same letter as William is discussed, Johnson also mentioned that the bookseller Thomas Henderson (trading 1733-34) had not written to him for any copies of Shaftesbury, '&

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[123] McDougall, 'Hamilton, Gavin'. Hamilton's vision of his work as a publisher as part of his national duty is also emphasised throughout 'Gavin Hamilton'. See, for instance, pp. 30-31: 'Gavin Hamilton's private concerns and public career as a Scottish bookseller had a unifying purpose. He saw this very clearly, and stated what it was often enough, in his actions, in his books, and even in a glass-framed picture that he nailed to a wall of his home. The picture was coloured red and silver and was deliberately showy: it was his coat of arms as a cadet of the Hamiltons of Preston, quartered with the arms of the Balfours of Pilrig. There were two felicitous features, a man waving a sword, and the motto "pro patria", for my country.'

[124] Laurence A. B. Whitley, 'Hamilton, William (1669-1732)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2009) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/64386> [accessed 13 February 2020].

[125] H. R. Plomer, G. H. Bushnell and E. R. McC. Dix, *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers Who Were at Work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1726 to 1775* (Oxford: The Bibliographical Society, 1968), pp. 317-18.

[126] Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks, of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, &c*, 3 vols (London [Rotterdam]: [Thomas Johnson], 1733). E^{2} La.II.91/C/45. This edition has not been previously identified as Johnson's. Although in duodecimo rather than octavo, as Johnson claims in E^{2} La.II.91/B/62 (19 October 1728), the arrangement of flowers on its title pages is identical to that in Johnson's editions of Banks, *The Unhappy Favourite* ([Johnson], [n.d.]), John Banks, *Vertue Betray'd; or Anna Bullen: A Tragedy* (London [*sic*]: Printed for the Company [Thomas Johnson], [n.d.]), George Farquhar, *The Twin-Rivals. A Comedy* (London [*sic*]: Printed for the Company [Thomas Johnson], [n.d.]), and George Lillo, *The London Merchant: with the Tragical History of George Barnwell* (London [Rotterdam]: [Thomas Johnson], 1731). It seems that this *Characteristicks*, and Deschamps, *La Religion Defendue* (Johnson, 1733), were Johnson's final publications.

[127] Robert Hay Carnie and Ronald Paterson Doig, 'Scottish Printers and Booksellers 1668-1775: A Supplement', *Studies in Bibliography*, 12 (1959), 131-59 (p. 146).

as things fell out tis well he did not', apparently because Johnson had sent the books to Hamilton instead.[128] Balancing multiple potential dealers for his works in Scotland, Johnson had previously made overtures about sending the *Characteristicks* to Thomas Heriot (trading 1724-?40), who had been brought to his attention by Mackie:

> If your friend Mr Hariot I think, of whom you once wrote to me, will take a good number of them, he shall have them for 3 months alone in Scotland, & at a reasonable price that so he may sell them b^{d} & Let^{d}. for 7sh.6^{d}. & have good profit. & I may put more other things in his hands after wards that he may find his account in, if he deals well by me. If he incline to this he may write to me by first post & it may come ^{in} time to send him any parcel by Dallas's ship that lyes now here.[129]

Delayed payment for such large consignments was a constant headache for Johnson: 'G. Hamilt. has given me too much reason to complain of him for not paying what he owes me; & therefor to be beforehand with me he thinks proper it seems to invent some ground of complaint ag[ain]st me.'[130] Johnson may have had similar motives two years previously when disparaging a gentleman who appears to be Lieutenant-Colonel John Johnstone of Netherwood (1698-1741):

> Our hearty service also to good kindhearted Sr James Johnstone I wish it were in my power to serve him or any of his: tho I have no reason to commend his brother John, who has rewarded me very ill for some services I have done him, & occasion'd me considerable loss & trouble, but that's none of Sir James's fault.[131]

Providing strong evidence that Mackie himself was selling Johnson's books, or at least supplying them and gathering payments, Johnson's final letter to Mackie was accompanied by:

12 Tables Chronologiques de Lenglet	f48-/-
10 Ptolomei Geographia fol.	65-/-
2 Heineccii Antiquit. Romanae. 8°. 2 vol	5-10-
1 1/8 ounce fyn scarlet ingr. sowing silke	3-7-8[132]

[128] E^{2} La.II.91/C/45 (22 December 1733).
[129] E^{2} La.II.91/C/39 (24 July 1733). McDougall, in 'Gavin Hamilton', p. 41, suggests that Johnson's reference to Henderson (in E^{2} La.II.91/C/45), was in fact a mistake for Heriot.
[130] E^{2} La.II.91/C/39 (24 July 1733).
[131] Sir James Johnstone, third Baronet (1697-1772). E^{2} La.II.91/C/17 (11 December 1731).
[132] Nicolas Lenglet du Fresnoy, *Tablettes Chronologiques de l'Histoire Universelle* (Paris: Pierre Gandouin, 1729); Claudius Ptolemy, *Orbis Antiqui Tabulae Geographicae* (Amstelaedami: Apud R. & J. Wetstenios & Guil. Smith, 1730). Heinecke multiple editions, but perhaps Johann Gottlieb Heinecke, *Antiquitatum Romanarum Jurisprudentiam Illustrantium Syntagma* (Argentorati [Strasbourg]: Sumptibus IO. Reinholdi Dulsseckeri, 1730). E^{2} La.II.91/C/45 (22 December 1733).

If Mackie was offering at least some of the historical and geographical works contained in this shipment to his students, as well as his colleagues, they may have had prior knowledge of this Dutch bookseller before Mackie supplied them with directions and introductions to Johnson to help them in their travels (see below). On a more domestic note – signifying their friendship as well as business partnership – the silk had previously been requested from Jane Johnson by Mackie's wife Ann (*d.* 1770).[133] Fourteen years earlier Johnson had been obliged to send some blue fabric for 'Lady Balgonie' – possibly as a wedding present – on behalf of Mackie.[134]

These letters are an essential resource on Johnson and his work. Although they provide little direct information about the *Best English Plays*, they are crucial for situating these within Johnson's wider business concerns as a major Enlightenment publisher. Rather than a pirate on the margins of the trade, he was central to his own business networks connecting Scotland to the Low Countries. My discovery of his letters to Keill and Sloane reveal important points of contact in England, and the sheer number of Scottish booksellers discussed in Johnson's letters to Mackie show the wide scope of options that were available to Johnson, and the regard in which his services and books were held in Scotland. Mackie was an important contact, but not his only one. If Milhous and Hume in particular had known about these letters, we would already have considerably more information available on the means by which Johnson's books came to be sold in Britain than these authors suggest. As my work on the *Charactersticks* and *A New Cyropaedia* show, the systematic study of these letters also affords a means of dating Johnson's texts, and indeed of attributing texts to him, that has so far gone unnoticed.

Johnson in Europe

The services that Johnson provided for students in Europe built on his ability to supply a wide variety of texts. He published law, philosophy, theology, politics, history, science and literature – in French, Latin and English. Most of Johnson's French books were unpublished in Britain, and his English books were cheaper than their British counterparts but still of a high material quality. Johnson offered Mackie a portmanteau 'works' of Antoine Augustin Calmet in seven quarto volumes for thirty-six guilders, whereas 'The Dictionary alone is printing in English in

[133] E^2 La.II.91/C/39 (24 July 1733).
[134] Lady Balgoney (1697-1722), wife of George Leslie (1695-1721), née Margaret Leslie Carnegie. National Records of Scotland, GD26/13/546/1 (25 November 1719).

3 vol^{s}. fol. at 6 guineas Subscription at London.'[135] Offering books in various creative combinations, such as this Calmet collection and the aforementioned Pope 'Works' (see 'Johnson's Trade with Britain'), or Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Addison's *Notes* on Milton (in 'The Circulation and Influence of *Best English Plays*'), Johnson also framed Alexander Cunningham's edition of Horace's *Poemata*, and the same author's *Animadversiones*, as a single set.[136] The diversity and comprehensiveness of Johnson's catalogue would have appealed to such voracious readers as Alexander Leslie, who bought more than six hundred guilders (£55) worth of books whilst studying at Leiden – so many that he asked his father to store some.[137]

The student John Mitchell, an even keener collector than Leslie, commented on the disparagement that one of Johnson's publications received in London, though how justified this was is hard to judge:

> I suppose I need not tell you that the Terence which mr Johnson at the Hague has been so long about printing of, has at length appeared, in 2. or 4. vol in 4to. I have only seen it, & that is all; neither have I heard any bodies judgment about it; only I find by a letter I had this week from London, that it is not wonderfully esteemed there.[138]

Whatever the merits of Johnson's publication – its rubricated title page and clear typeface are at least materially attractive – such comments corroborate the wide circulation of his books, and that his contemporaries in London considered them worthy of appraisal. Obviously a bibliophile himself, on one occasion Mitchell discussed the typography of an Edinburgh-

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[135] E^{2} La.II.91/C/31 (12 August 1732). Johnson's 'Works' was: Antoine Augustin Calmet, *Dictionnaire Historique, Critique, Chronologique, Geographique et Litteral de la Bible*, 4 vols (A Geneve: Chez Marc-Michel Bousquet et Compagnie, 1730), and Antoine Augustin Calmet, *Dissertations Qui Peuvent Servir de Prolégomenes de l'Ecriture Sainte, Revûës, Corrigées, Considérablement Augmentées & Mises dans un Ordre Méthodique*, 3 vols (A Paris: Chez Emery, Saugraen, et Pierre-Martin, 1722). The London dictionary was Antoine Augustin Calmet, *An Historical, Critical, Geographical, Chronological, and Etymological Dictionary of the Holy Bible*, 3 vols (London: Printed for J. J. and P. Knapton, D. Midwinter and A. Ward, A. Bettesworth and C. Hitch, J. Pemberton, J. Osborn and T. Longman, C. Rivington, F. Clay, J. Batley, R. Hett, and T. Hatchett, 1732).

[136] Horace, *Q. Horatii Flacci Poemata*, ed. by Alexander Cunningham (Hagae Comitum: Apud Thomam Jonsonium, 1721); Alexander Cunningham, *Animadversiones, in Richardi Bentleii Notas et Emendationes ad Q. Horatium Flaccum* (Hagae Comitum: Apud Thomam Jonsonium, 1721). See E^{2} La.II.90/1/9 (2 December 1721), where John Mitchell tells Mackie 'Mr Cunninghame's Horace is all printed in two volumes 8vo. and mr Johnson told me lately that it would be published before the new-year', and La.II.91/B/33 (23 January 1722).

[137] National Records of Scotland, GD26/13/529 (25 February 1718); GD26/13/569 (n.d., but catalogue suggests *c.* 1721).

[138] Terence, *Comoediae Sex*, 2 vols (Hagae Comitum: Apud Thomam Jonsonium, 1726). E^{2} La.II.90/1/19 (31 May 1726).

printed *Euripidis Tragoediae Duae* at length.[139] Putting aside the opinions of his Terence correspondent, Mitchell must have harboured considerable respect for Johnson's editions since, when he was in London and Mackie at Leiden, he asked Mackie to supply him with Johnson's edition of Prior's *Poems*, even though several other official and pirate editions were available.[140] National pride and loyalty might also have helped bolster Johnson's success. Mitchell told Mackie that he was frequently 'ashamed' of the quality of Scotland's books, and Johnson himself was keen to promote native industry; Johnson told Mackie 'I am glad that you begin to publish somthing in Scotland that may make your ingenious men known to the rest of the world, I wish that Spirit may continue & find encouragement'.[141]

Alexander Leslie also seems to have valued Johnson's services as well as his stock. Although Leslie must have had multiple contacts who could have supplied him with Mackenzie's *Institutions*, printed in Edinburgh, he chose to order the book through Johnson.[142] Johnson told Mackie, referring to William Anderson: 'when you or he or any friends want books you should send [me] lists of them before hand that one might pick 'em up upon occasion at a reasonable price.'[143] It would seem that such access to trade was one of the principal reasons that Johnson moved to Rotterdam in 1728, 'the combined center of Scottish exile and commercial activity in the United Provinces.'[144] He was familiar with Captain John or Johannes Howlatson of the Britannia Sloop, and also Captains Pidgeon and Conway, entrusting such men with promissory notes as well as books and letters.[145] These and other contacts also supplied Johnson with London's latest publications for his own reprinting: 'If you [Mackie]

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[139] E^2 La.II.90/1/11 (17 November 1722). Euripides, *Euripidis Tragoediae Duae, Medea et Alcestis* (Edinburgi: In Aedibus Thomae Ruddimanni. Prostant venales apud Georgium Stewart, 1722).

[140] E^2 La.II.90/1/7 (no date recorded, but *c.* 1720). For other editions see, for instance, Prior, *Poems on Several Occasions* (Tonson and Barber, 1718), or Matthew Prior, *Poems on Several Occasions* (Dublin: Printed for J. Hyde, R. Gunne, R. Owen, and E. Dobson, 1719).

[141] E^2 La.II.90/1/3 (no date recorded, but *c.* 1718); La.II.91/C/39 (24 July 1733). Johnson had previously told Keill: 'I shall always be glad to see the learned of Great Britain make the most considerable figure in it [i.e. the *Journal Literaire*], & more particularly those of our Country, for there is nothing I desire more than to contribute to advancing the honour & advantage of every ingenious a worthy Scots man.' C MS Add.4007.40.521-23 (9 February 1714). On Johnson's commendation of Scottish publishing in the letter of 24 July 1733 see also McDougall, 'Gavin Hamilton', pp. 41-42.

[142] George Mackenzie, *The Institutions of the Law of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Printed by William Brown and Company, and sold by the said William Brown, 1719). National Records of Scotland, GD26/13/546 (2 May 1721).

[143] E^2 La.II.91/B/34 (May 1722).

[144] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 32.

[145] See L Add. MS 4284, ff. 180-81 (25 March 1729) and 190-91 (22 April 1732) for references to Howlatson; see 187-89 (12 January 1730) for Pidgeon and Conway and the promissory notes. Johnson elsewhere refers to books 'ship'd aboard the Margret Charles Jaffray Master & bound for Leith', in E^2 La.II.91/B/32 (21 January 1721).

come pray bring me the 5th & 6th vols. of Homer fol. stich'd up but not bd. & what other books I desired of Capt. macleod.'[146]

Johnson's ability to furnish his clients with information helpful to their stay in the Low Countries – as made manifest in his *Guide for English Travelers* – seems to have been as significant a draw to his shop as the texts that he retailed.[147] Johnson situated himself as a cultural mediator between Scottish students – who tended to keep to their own communities and often did not learn the language – and their host country and its institutions.[148] Mitchell preferred to be shown around foreign towns by Englishmen, stay at lodgings where the landladies were English, and was pleased to find English-speaking women in Germany.[149] Johnson also acted as an information hub for such men, receiving and passing on letters and messages.[150] Johnson's reputation as both a bookseller and general agent must, furthermore, have preceded him since, working at The Hague for the majority of his career, he was not in the immediate vicinity of any of the major Dutch universities, of which Leiden and Groningen were particularly popular with Scottish students.[151] According to Mijers, a Dutch education and the acquisition of books went hand in hand.[152] Johnson supplied the law books of Thomas Calderwood of Polton (*d.* 1773/74) when he was studying at Leiden.[153] Mijers also suggests that many Scotsmen continued to make purchases from Dutch booksellers on their return home, as evidenced by their libraries.[154] Johnson's sustained contact with the Melville/Leslie family allowed him to establish such a relationship that extended over more than one generation, and acquisitions were frequently made through or for relatives and friends.[155]

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[146] E^2 La.II.91/B/30 (23 August 1720). London edition Alexander Pope, trans., *The Iliad of Homer*, 6 vols (London: Printed by W. Bowyer, for Bernard Lintott, 1715-20), reprinted by Johnson 1718-21. See also E^2 La.II.91/B/29 (6 August 1720): 'If you [Mackie] should come over before Capt. Macleod, be so kind as [to] ask him the books I desired him to bring for me.'

[147] See also Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 136.

[148] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 55.

[149] E^2 La.II.90/1/1 (27 September 1717); La.II.90/1/3 (*c.* 1718). Although Mitchell's position is most common, the more adventurous George Turnbull (1698-1747) instead made a point of shunning the English: E^2 La.II.91/B/75 (23 October 1730).

[150] See, for instance, National Records of Scotland, GD26/13/546/1 (25 November 1719), and GD26/13/546/2 (8 July 1720). See also E^2 La.II.91/C/31 (12 August 1732), and La.II.91/C/39 (24 July 1733).

[151] G. C. Gibbs, 'Some Intellectual and Political Influences of the Huguenot Emigrés in the United Provinces, c. 1680-1730', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen Betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 90 (1975), 255–87 (pp. 264, 266). Mijers, in *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, pp. 38-39, emphasises the attendance at Leiden in particular, with 867 Scots registered 1681-1730, and its proximity to The Hague. She also suggests (p. 33) that students constituted 'By far the largest group of Scots living in the United Provinces', and that they were important 'economically, socially and intellectually.'

[152] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 136.

[153] E^2 La.II.91/B/76 (22 November 1730). See also Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 131.

[154] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 123.

[155] See also Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, on the Bogles, Clerks, Dalrymples, Dunlops and Gregories, pp. 118-19.

Letters of introduction, as well as textbooks, were essential for young men hoping to find their way in Europe.[156] As many students became associated with Johnson on the recommendation of Mackie, so on Calderwood's first journey to Leiden he stopped at Johnson's shop with a letter from him.[157] The bookseller told Mackie 'you may be sure whatever service I can do to any one that you recommend, will always be done with pleasure.'[158] A letter from James Alston (graduated Leiden 1731) to Mackie, also quoted above, reveals that Johnson's name bore currency in several cities:

> Mr Dalrymple and I both return our most hearty thanks for your Letter to Mr Johnson; he has been very kind to us on all Occasions, and when we went to Utrecht he was at Pains to write a Letter with us, which was of no little Use to us.[159]

Johnson welcomed such associations, regretting that the visits of one Mr Warrender and his tutee William Henry Kerr, fourth Marquess of Lothian (*c*. 1712-75), who was studying at Utrecht, had not been more frequent. In the same letter we learn that Alston and Dalrymple had been back on more than one occasion, and that a Mr Melville had paid a visit and brought news of Mackie and the Bayle enterprise.[160] There is a similar account of Thomas Dundas of Fingask (*c*. 1706-84) in a letter that repeats Johnson's desire for students he met on their way to university to visit him again during their holidays: 'You may always be sure that any person recommended by you may expect all that is in my power.'[161] On certain occasions Johnson seems to have been trusted above other booksellers, and it is perhaps such generosity with his time that helped him avoid general disparagements of the trade. Describing Pieter Burman's *Poetae Latini Minores*, Calderwood told Mackie:

> these Tyrants the Book:sellers as he [i.e. Burman] calls them here refused to take any of these books in exchange of others from his printers, so that he compleins, that there is nott one copy of that book yet sent over to Britain, & he will certainly be pleased now to hear that there is one copy sent […] I have sent the copy to your correspondent M^{r}. Johnson, who will take care to send it over with the first opportunity.[162]

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[156] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, pp. 130-31; Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*, pp. 18, 23.
[157] E^{2} La.II.91/B/76 (22 November 1730).
[158] E^{2} La.II.91/C/9 (19 June 1731).
[159] 'Mr Dalrymple' i.e. Sir Hew Dalrymple. E^{2} La.II.91/C/16 (1 November 1731).
[160] E^{2} La.II.91/C/17 (11 December 1731).
[161] E^{2} La.II.91/C/45 (22 December 1733).
[162] Pieter Burman the Elder, *Poetae Latini Minores*, 2 vols (Leidae: apud Conradum Wishoff et Danielem Goedval, 1731). E^{2} La.II.91/C/10 (16 July 1731).

If, finally, we consider the libraries of these students and contacts, and their knowledge of Johnson's plays, we find that, in addition to Mackie's receipt of three copies of *Sophonisba* (see above), John Mitchell might also have had come into contact with the *Collection* whilst in Europe. Mitchell was left with a considerable quantity of plays belonging to 'Mr Melville' – possibly Alexander Leslie – who 'knew not where to send them, or what to do with them.'[163] A sale catalogue incorporating Thomas Calderwood's books included Johnson's edition of Furetière's *Dictionnaire* – at £2 12*s* 6*d* – alongside several nonce volumes that might well have included Johnson's plays.[164] John Mitchell's library might also have included Johnson's *Oeuvres* of Bayle, although the relevant sale catalogue again comprises volumes from several libraries.[165] The library of Anthony Collins – one of the radicals studied by Jacob – contained *La Vie de B. de Spinosa*, another copy of Furetière's *Dictionnaire*, the 'Journal Litteraire depuis, May 1713, jusqu' a l'Annee 1729 inclus. 13 Vol.', the *Voyages du Sr. A. De La Motraye*, and Deschamps' *Caton d'Utique*, all published by Johnson.[166] Collins also owned Johnson's editions of Terence's *Comoediae Sex* and the first three volumes of Burnet's *History*.[167] Finally, and most importantly, Collins owned an extensive selection of the *Best English Plays*, sold by the auctioneer as individual volumes over more than one day. The first group comprised three volumes containing *Merry Wives*, *Julius Caesar* and *Othello*; *Macbeth*, *The Beaux Stratagem* and *Oroonoko*; and *Don Sebastian* and *Love for Love*.[168] The following

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[163] E[2] La.II.90/1/25 (22 May 1729).

[164] *A Catalogue of a Very Fine Collection of Books, In all Branches of Learning; Containing near Thirty Thousand Volumes; In which are included the Libraries of the Late Thomas Calderwood, Henry Henley, Sam. Brooke, and John Fearnside, Esqrs. Likewise of the Learned and Reverend Dr. Charles Hall, And of the Rev. Mr. Woodeson* ([London]: Tho. Payne, 1774). For Furetière see p. 11. For the plays see p. 153. Lot 5095 includes *Busiris*, *Abra-Mule*, *Lady Jane Gray*, *The Perfidious Brother* (not published by Johnson) and *Sir Courtly Nice*, at 2*s* 6*d*; lot 5096 includes *Hamlet*, *Henry IV*, *She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not* (not by Johnson) and *Venice Preserv'd*, at 1*s* 6*d*; lot 5097 includes *Mariamne*, *The Orphan*, *Venice Preserv'd*, *The Distrest Mother* and *Abra-Mule*, at 1*s* 6*d*; lot 5098 includes *The Provok'd Husband*, *Merry Wives*, *The Lady's Last Stake* (not by Johnson) and *The Plain Dealer*, at 1*s*.

[165] *A Catalogue of Twenty Thousand Volumes; Containing the Libraries of R. Thornton, Esq; Dr. John Mitchel, Dr. T. Hayes, of Chester, Deceased; And of several other Collections lately purchased* ([London]: Tho. Payne, 1769), p. 25, lot 892, £3 3*s*. Unfortunately, as Pearson identifies is the case for so many catalogues, in *Provenance Research*, p. 186, this and the above catalogue (including Calderwood's library) do not specify which collector listed on their title pages the indivual books formerly belonged to.

[166] *Bibliotheca Antonij Collins, Arm. Or, A Complete Catalogue of the Library of Anthony Collins, Esq; Deceas'd:* […] *Part II* ([London]: Thomas Ballard, 1731): Colerus, *La Vie de B. de Spinosa* (Johnson, 1706) p. 124, lot 1419, 1*s*; Furetière, *Dictionnaire Universel* (Johnson *et al*., 1727) p. 170, lot 336, £2 2*s*; *Journal Literaire* p. 179, lot 2035, 18*s*; La Motraye, *Voyages* (Johnson and Van Duren, 1727) p. 67, lot 131, 12*s* 6*d*; François Michel Chrétien Deschamps, *Caton d'Utique, Tragedie* (A La Haye: Chez T. Johnson, 1715) p. 87, lot 929, sold at 1*s* 4*d* as a bundle of lots 927-30. See also Champion, *Republican Learning*, pp. 171-72.

[167] *Bibliotheca Antonij Collins* […] *Part II*: Terence, *Comoediae Sex* ([Johnson], 1726) p. 94, lot 383 (misprinted 583), 18*s* 6*d*; Burnet, *History* ([Johnson], 1725-34) p. 123, lot 1386, 7*s* 4*d*.

[168] *Bibliotheca Antonij Collins* […] *Part II*, p. 154. Lots 1758-60, sold at 2*s* 4*d*, 1*s* 10*d*, and 1*s*.

seventeen volumes of plays range in price from 1*s* 2*d* – for *The Adventures of Five Hours* and *Plain Dealer* – to 2*s* each for several volumes of three plays.[169] The only work among these 56 items that was definitely not published by Johnson was Racine's *Athaliah*, showing Collins' loyalty to Johnson's publications despite his residency in London.[170]

Conclusions

This chapter's focus on new evidence about Johnson's connections and trade associations gives a much fuller sense of his world and business than has hitherto been available. Taking Mijers' investigations as its starting point, but refocussing her enquiry on supply rather than demand (and on Johnson rather than Mackie), it demonstrates that Johnson inhabited a world which connected the Low Countries to Scotland, and incorporated many contacts in England as well. Uncovering neglected correspondence reveals an international business supplying a wide variety of books – much more so than literary commentators identify – to large numbers of scholars and students. It corroborates Johnson's cultivation of sales and loyalty through the other services he provided, such as updates on new publications for Mackie, and letters of introduction for Scottish students on the continent. It also highlights Johnson's position as an important Enlightenment publisher, and that side of his work certainly warrants further investigation. Analysis of Johnson's trade shows that rather than the radical and moderate aspects of Enlightenment learning being entirely separate entities (as Israel argues), works in these categories were often published by the same individual, and supplied to the same customers. Certainly communication was central to the Enlightenment (as Goldgar, and Siskin and Warner identify), but again, our understanding of the form of this communication (as printed books, or incorporating Johnson's other services), as something mediated by individuals with their own business priorities, 'initiative and caprice', requires a far greater appreciation for the importance of publishers as 'intellectual midwives' – such as is argued by James Raven – than has hitherto been generally realised.[171]

Working from his *Best English Plays* only, writers such as Milhous and Hume have been left largely in the dark about the precise arrangements of Johnson's import business, and the introduction of new 'direct evidence' from Johnson's letters and the various sales catalogues I have identified does much to illuminate this field.[172] Most particularly, his letters

[169] *Bibliotheca Antonij Collins* […] *Part II*, p. 158. Lots 1761-77.
[170] *Bibliotheca Antonij Collins* […] *Part II*, p. 158, lot 1774. Perhaps Jean Racine, *Athaliah. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for J. Watts, 1722).
[171] Raven, *The Business of Books*, pp. 5, 3.
[172] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 108.

explain who his trade partners were, and how his books entered Britain. These letters, itemised for the first time in this thesis, with the identification of several new specimens, will serve as an invaluable resource for future work on Johnson. They offer the opportunity to undertake further research on a variety of topics, such as dating and attributing Johnson's works, and better understanding the non-Anglophone side of his business. A fuller comprehension of the wide scope of his ventures should dispel a general assessment of *Best English Plays* as historically slight just because it was produced abroad.[173] To realise that Johnson was at the centre of his own substantial business networks, and that these reached beyond the interests of many London-based members of the trade, should cause us to reconsider how far an international range of interests should disqualify Johnson from serious consideration within British publishing histories. He was in contact with multiple captains and scholars, passing books and letters to and fro, and supplying texts, information and services to more (and some less) marginal members of the early eighteenth-century lettered community, not to mention being the first publisher of several important Enlightenment texts, such as the *Vie de B. de Spinosa*. It is hard not to see Johnson and, by extension, his *Best English Plays*, in a new and much more complimentary light.

[173] As is demonstrated by Raven, in *The Business of Books*, p. 2, 'The English book trade was […] never simply national. Books know no frontiers. The history of books should not be constrained by false national perspectives […]. The book was, and is, an international commodity.' Raven reiterates (p. 143) 'Although it is often forgotten, in Continental terms, London had only just become a first-ranking book trade centre in 1745. Many accounts of the early modern book trade in Britain are remorselessly anglocentric, isolating the English – and British – trade in books from that of Europe, and severely underestimating the market for imported books.' Raven also identifies the Netherlands as the prime source of (especially scholarly) books imported into Britain.

Chapter Three: *A Collection of the Best English Plays*

Johnson's Dedication to the *Best English Plays*

This chapter, responding to McMullin's invitation as outlined above, provides a guide to the contents and production history of Johnson's *Collection*. It begins with an analysis of Johnson's own understanding of the *Collection* and its aims, as evidenced by his 1714 Dedication to the *Collection.* It then provides an itinerary of the plays released by Johnson between *c*. 1710-31 and which were the components of the collection in its several forms, alongside a history of its first- and second-series volume title pages and how these correlate with the individual plays. In the course of this explanation, I also provide suggestions regarding Johnson's use of imprints and devices to identify the plays as a series. The chapter concludes with a study of Johnson's 'Advertisement' in *The Drummer*, which proposes that despite the claims made in other editions, *The Drummer* was not in fact by Addison. Although the importance of Johnson to literary as opposed to publishing history is not a central concern of this thesis, the question mark he places over Addison's authorship of *The Drummer* provides an example of how examination of Johnson's texts might contribute to broader literary studies as well as the history of drama in print.

I thus undertake two forms of enquiry in this chapter and, by marrying these, offer a more complete picture of the *Best English Plays* than has hitherto been available. I have used the primarily bibliographical study of a large number of copies of the *Collection* to determine its contents and the order in which these were published, and offer a fuller survey of these than any other author. I have subjected the Dedication and 'Advertisement' to more biographical and historical forms of enquiry to understand Johnson's ambitions for the *Collection*, his choice of texts, and who he thought might have read them and why. I have already suggested in Chapter One that the *Collection* must be studied in its entirety if we are to acquire an accurate picture of its significance, and my analysis of the Dedication supports this aim. Nevertheless, each play was printed independently, and why Johnson printed what he did, rather than any other plays, is also an important question. As I elaborate in Chapter Four, popularity in the London theatres was, I believe, his overriding motivation in this regard. However, certain plays, such as *The Drummer*, also offered their own more specific interest to Johnson, and his choice of such works suggests serious thought on the scope and aims of his *Collection*. Since Grant argues that Johnson chose his copytexts with the utmost care, it seems probable that he applied a similar degree of consideration when deciding what plays he should print in the first

place.[1] Thus, whilst a comprehension of the *Collection* as a whole is essential to understanding Johnson's contribution to the history of the publication of English drama, closer analysis of each of the plays that made up this *Collection* is also necessary if work on Johnson is to contribute to the histories of individual texts and authors. Finally, as I show in Chapter Five, readers of Johnson's plays arranged these in an incredible variety of ways, as individual works and in all manner of different combinations. Since each of Johnson's plays were available individually, he seems to have anticipated this diversity. A critical study that is sensitive to Johnson's total vision for the *Collection*, but also his individual choices and the plays' reception amongst readers, must therefore hold these dual forms of understanding in tandem, and balance both individual plays and the *Collection* as a whole as important subjects of enquiry. Although this chapter provides just one in-depth case study (of *The Drummer*), it offers a model for such multi-faceted enquiry. It demonstrates the structure and significance of the *Best English Plays* as a collection but, also, the potential interest of each of the individual plays that made up this collection.

Johnson's Dedication provides our best source on Johnson's own understanding of the *Collection* and its market, albeit at a single moment in its history. Although dedications were more usually the province of authors – and most frequently addressed to an aristocratic patron – Johnson's position as a reprinter (and thus not working with the authors) allowed him to use this space for his own purposes.[2] Dedicating the plays to 'Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales', he concludes with 'the sincere & fervent Prayer of Madam, Your Royal Highnes's, Most zealously devoted & most dutifull humble Servant T. Johnson.'[3] This suggests a publisher taking full responsibility for his publications, and apparently believing in their legitimacy, which is a far cry from the false imprints and deliberate misdirection often associated with pirates working within Britain, especially in London.[4] On the assumption that the higher the social position of the dedicatee, the higher the merits of the work it prefaced, Johnson was clearly ambitious for his project. It is my contention that Johnson's Dedication's primary purpose was to express this ambition, and bolster readers' confidence that what they were

[1] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 23.
[2] On traditional authorial dedications and patronage see Paul J. Korshin, 'Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 7.4 (1974), 453-73 (especially pp. 466-67).
[3] L 1345.b.16, *1r, *2v.
[4] Milhous and Hume, in *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 71, suggest 'a printer or publisher engaged in concocting a dodgy product that might attract the attention of the authorities would have excellent reasons for falsifying imprint information.' See also Michael Treadwell, 'On False and Misleading Imprints in the London Book Trade 1660-1750', in *Fakes & Frauds: Varieties of Deception in Print and Manuscript*, ed. by Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Delaware: Oak Knoll Press, 1996), pp. 29-46.

buying was a high-quality selection of plays perfectly representing contemporary British theatre.

In providing the only previous discussion of the Dedication, which has a separate register and is not itself dated, Ford tells us:

> Now the Princess of Wales as such did not exist until 27 September 1714, when her husband's patent was sealed. She stayed at The Hague from the 17 to 20 October on her journey to England, and was possibly presented with a set of these plays then, therefore this dedication could not have been printed many days prior to that date […]. Possibly there was no dedication originally, as Queen Anne was fonder of the apron than the sock and buskin.[5]

The Princess of Wales, still unnamed by Ford, was Princess Caroline of Brandenburg-Ansbach, later consort of George II, who did indeed follow the King and her husband to Britain in October of 1714.[6] Although Ford postulates that she was presented with a copy of the *Collection* in person this must remain entirely speculative, though 1714 does seem its most likely date of composition, written 'on this happy & long wished for occasion, of Your Royal Highness passing this way to England'.[7] Since Johnson also extended his *Collection* with *Volpone* and *Jane Shore* in this same year, these may have formed part of a general drive to rejuvenate the project.[8] Why it took four years for Johnson to provide a Dedication at all is impossible to know. As Ford imagines, this may have been owing to the lack of an appropriate patron, but it might also have been because such a move was relatively unconventional for a publisher rather than author and, in line with Murphy's hints regarding Johnson's growing confidence (evidenced by increasingly honest imprints), it may have taken several years for him to become comfortable enough in the interest and/or popularity of his *Collection* to make a royal dedication not seem ridiculous.[9] It also seems likely that it was events themselves – Caroline's travel to England – that prompted Johnson.

Johnson's first concern in his Dedication was to emphasise the interest of 'this Collection of the best Dramatick Pieces of our most eminent English Poets':

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[5] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, pp. 52-54.
[6] Stephen Taylor, 'Caroline [Princess Caroline of Brandenburg-Ansbach]', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4720> [accessed 2 January 2020].
[7] L 1345.b.16, *1r.
[8] Nicholas Rowe, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore. Written in Imitation of Shakespear's Style* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1714).
[9] Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 104.

> countenanced and favoured by our Soverains themselves, & by others of the Royal Family; & I hope the whole Collection will not be thought unworthy of Your Royal Highnes's acceptance, nor unfit for the diversion of some of your leisure hours.[10]

Although Johnson does not make any explicit statements about Caroline's existing literary or theatrical interests, he is obviously aware of them. In his *ODNB* biography, Stephen Taylor refers several times to the princess' leanings in this direction, and notes that on her arrival in London she and her husband 'frequently attended the theatre and opera'; Voltaire thought she was 'born to encourage the whole Circle of Arts'.[11] It is also worth noting that Johnson's references to 'diversion' and 'leisure hours', i.e. the princess' personal reading of the plays, might sit more easily with his small octavos than the larger quartos or folios in which many of the plays had previously appeared.

Amongst a variety of fulsome and conventional praise for Caroline, Johnson also eulogises the princess taking her place as 'the Head, as well as the principal ornament, of the most glorious & most beautifull Circle in the Universe', which appears to be the women of the Court. He situates this in the context of Caroline's patronage of the theatres:

> The stage when duly regulated, affords not only the most refined diversion to polite persons, but also the most lively & useful Instructions: & I doubt not Your ROYAL HIGHNES will find the English Stage may deserve your countenance & protection, which will soon raise it to a degree of perfection far beyond any other that has yet been in the World.[12]

By promoting plays in the theatre in this way, Johnson also seems to endorse a specifically 'refined' and 'polite', and by implication female, readership for his play collection. Another cause for celebration is the Hanoverian succession itself, with:

> Religion & Liberty secured, Order & good Government re-established, Commerce & Credit restored, Tyrrany, Treachery, & Popery defeated; yet the enjoyment of those blessings cannot be perfect, till that more beautifull & softer Sex appear, with Your ROYAL HIGHNES at their head, to share & enhance them.[13]

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[10] L 1345.b.16, *1r-v.
[11] Taylor, 'Caroline'; Voltaire, *Letters Concerning the English Nation* (London: Printed for C. Davis, and A. Lyon, 1733), p. 79.
[12] L 1345.b.16, *1v.
[13] L 1345.b.16, *1v.

Johnson goes on to emphasise the 'Benefits & advantages that arise to Great Britain, & its Allys, to the Protestant Interest, & to the Libertys of Europe', and ties this to a surprisingly frank admission of his political allegiances: 'My Zeal for this Cause has been sufficiently known, when it was attended with no small disadvantages, & was very ill look'd on by many then in Power.'[14] There follows in the Dedication a general celebration of the princess' 'Beautys & Perfections', position and family, but this is supplemented with specific referral to her 'Signal Piety & firm adherence to the Protestant Religion' against 'the most artificious attacks of Popery', and the expression of such a belief might again add much to Johnson's biography.[15] One might also speculate that Johnson's reference to 'the gracious bounty & Justice of Heaven' in securing Caroline's present position as a consequence of her past actions – 'reject[ing] the Spanish & Imperial Diadem' i.e. the hand in marriage of Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI – might hold some implicit hopes for his own more modest reward for adherence to the Protestant cause.[16]

As already suggested, this intriguing Dedication appears in just one known copy of the *Collection*. Although this collection (1345.b.16-25) is held by the British Library, it is not from the Royal Library and has no demonstrable relationship to Caroline. Whilst it seems likely that Johnson printed more than one copy of the Dedication – for any to survive at all – it is also apparent that it only made its way into a limited number of collections, and all of these must have been sold after 1714. Although we cannot know for sure why the Dedication is not more widespread in surviving copies, the practical implications are that only a limited number were produced, or that few readers wanted to bind them into their collections. It seems plausible that the Dedication might have been an occasional venture and that Johnson produced only a few *literally* on the occasion of the princess' 'passing this way', and ceased to offer them to customers after a short period. Whatever the actual chain of events, the existence of this single exemplar provides a telling insight on Johnson's ambitions for his project (deserving of royal patronage), a statement of his political and religious allegiances (however true or opportunistic these might have been), and some suggestion of his imagined readership, at least in 1714 when the Dedication was printed (with a strong interest in British, Protestant and female readers). Although several other English publications by Johnson contain original prefatory matter, such as Swift's *Works* (1720), *The Drummer*, and Burnet's *History* (1725-34), I have seen no other English publications which contain an explicit Dedication (a 'Bookseller's Advertisement' is

[14] L 1345.b.16, *1v-2r.
[15] L 1345.b.16, *2r.
[16] L 1345.b.16, *2r.

more common). This seems to mark out the particular care Johnson took in crafting his *Collection*, especially in its changing presentation over the many years for which it was sold.

Bibliographical Description

This main section of the chapter provides a detailed itinerary of the publication history of Johnson's *Best English Plays*, as is requested by McMullin and Grant. It demonstrates that the first series consists of forty plays published 1710-12, which were issued with ten volume titles dated 1711-12. It shows that Johnson then published twelve further plays in the ensuing decade, also accompanied by new volume titles, before embarking on a massive scheme of enlargement and reprinting between *c*. 1720-22, totalling 48 additional publications. These were available with sixteen new volume titles, for which transitional titles suggest a date of 1721-22. Johnson continued to add to the *Collection* throughout the remainder of his career, with eleven further plays in total.

Johnson's ten first-series volume titles are dated 1711-12, with volume one dated 1711 and the rest 1712. Appearing on a clean page with no margins, a diplomatic transcript of the first volume title page (also depicted in Chapter One, figure 1) is as follows:

> A | COLLECTION | OF THE BEST | ENGLISH PLAYS. | *VOL. I.* | Containing, | JULIUS CÆSAR; | MACBETH; | HAMLET; | OTHELLO: | }By *Mr. W*^{m}. | *Shakespear.* | [TJ monogram] | Printed for T. JOHNSON, | Bookseller at the Hague. | [rule] | M. DCC. XI.[17]

Although the titles for the following nine volumes broadly follow the pattern of the first, with the same main-title, at least, Johnson also undertook some initial experiments in structuring these pages, and the second volume organises his contents list slightly differently (figure 1).[18] The third volume, which does not list its plays' primary author, and removes its place of publication, sets the consistent typography for the remaining seven volumes (figure 2).[19] This absence of a named author on later volumes suggests some special regard for Shakespeare, as

[17] Transcription taken from Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.J6.
[18] *A Collection of the Best English Plays*, II, first-series title page. Image from Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.J6.
[19] *A Collection of the Best English Plays*, III, first-series title page. Image from Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.J6.

Figure 1

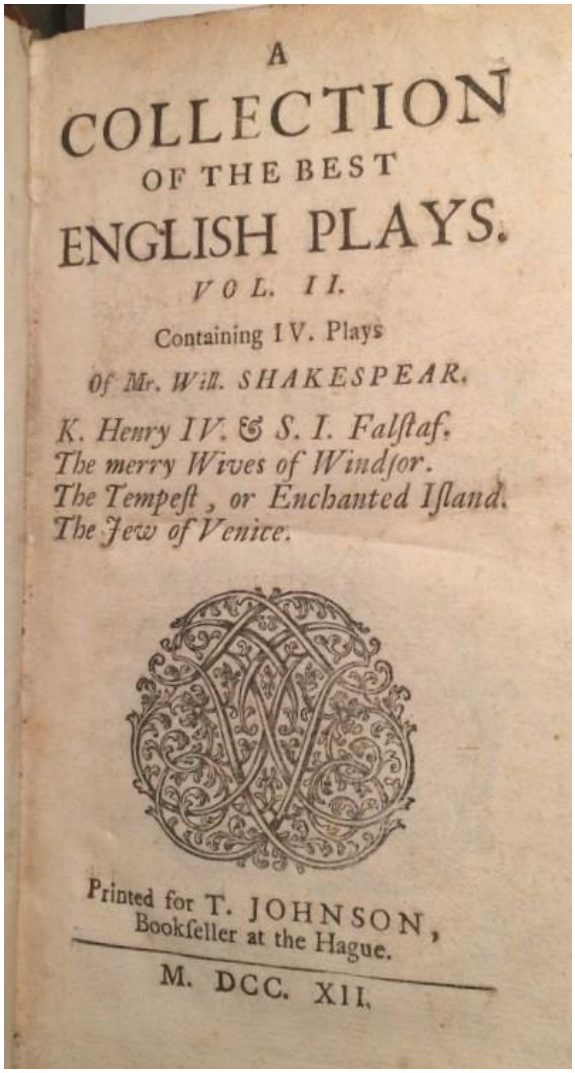
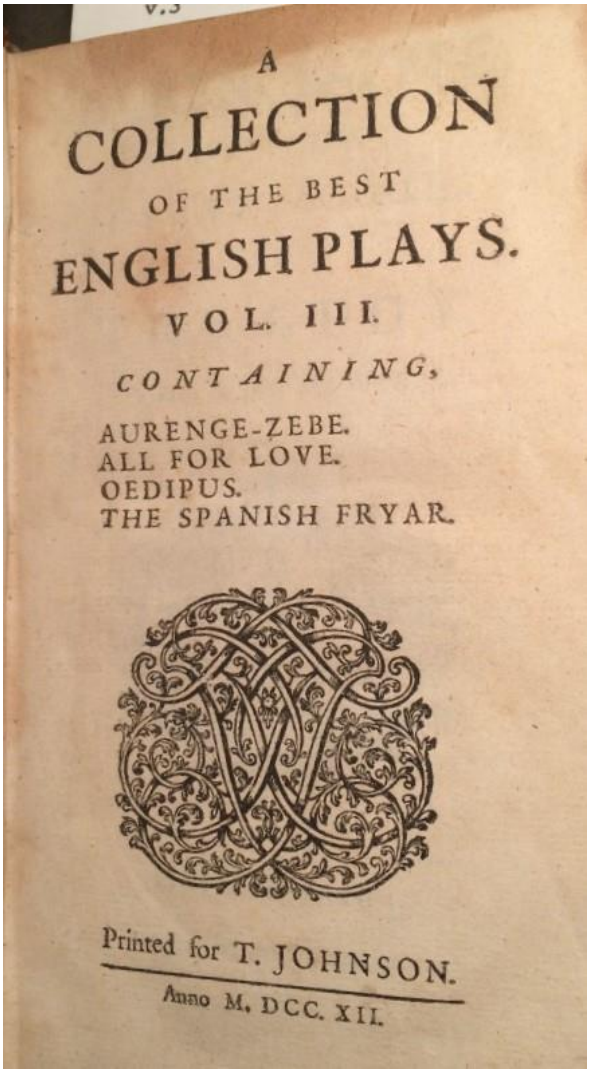

A
COLLECTION
OF THE BEST
ENGLISH PLAYS.
VOL. II.
Containing IV. Plays
Of Mr. Will. SHAKESPEAR.
K. Henry IV. & S. I. Falstaf.
The merry Wives of Windsor.
The Tempest, or Enchanted Island.
The Jew of Venice.
Printed for T. JOHNSON,
Bookseller at the Hague.
M. DCC. XII.

Figure 2


A
COLLECTION
OF THE BEST
ENGLISH PLAYS.
VOL. III.
CONTAINING,
AURENGE-ZEBE.
ALL FOR LOVE.
OEDIPUS.
THE SPANISH FRYAR.
Printed for T. JOHNSON.
Anno M. DCC. XII.

the only author named, and as occupying the first two volumes. That *The Jew of Venice* (by Granville) and *The Tempest* (primarily by Dryden and Davenant) were adapted versions, but listed on the volume title under the general 'Shakespeare' group, also suggests that Johnson's vison for the collection was one that embraced current theatrical versions – rather than versions that were no longer performed – as most worthy of inclusion.[20]

The plays which this first-series collection incorporated, following their description and order on the volume titles, are:

Table 1: The Ideal Contents of Johnson's First-Series *Collection*

Vol. 1	William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar. A Tragedy* (London: 1711)
	---, *The Tragedy of Macbeth* (London: 1711)
	---, *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. A Tragedy* (London: 1710)
	---, *Othello, The Moor of Venice. A Tragedy* (London: 1710)

[20] On the performance of adapted Shakespeare on the early eighteenth-century stage see, primarily, Robert D. Hume, 'Before the Bard: "Shakespeare" in Early Eighteenth-Century London', *ELH*, 64.1 (1997), 41-75.

Vol. 2	---, *K. Henry IV. With the Humours of Sir John Falstaff. A Tragi-comedy* (London: 1710)
	---, *The Merry Wives of Windsor; with the Amours of Sir John Falstaff. A Comedy* (London: 1710)
	John Dryden and William Davenant, *The Tempest: or, The Enchanted Island. A Comedy* (London: 1710)
	George Granville, *The Jew of Venice. A Comedy* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1711)
Vol. 3	John Dryden, *Aurenge-Zebe, or, The Great-Mogul. A Tragedy* (London: 1710)
	---, *All for Love: or, The World Well Lost. A Tragedy. Written in Imitation of Sakespeare's Stile* [*sic*] (London: 1710)
	---, and Nathaniel Lee, *Oedipus: A Tragedy* (London: 1710)
	---, *The Spanish Fryar, or, The Double Discovery: A Tragi-comedy* (1710)
Vol. 4	---, *The Indian Emperor: or, The Conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards. Being the Sequel of The Indian Queen* (London: 1710)
	---, *The State of Innocence, and Fall of Man: An Opera. Written in Heroick Verse* (London: 1710)
	---, *Don Sebastian, King of Portugal. A Tragedy* (London: 1710)
	---, *Amphitryon: or, The Two Sosias. A Comedy* (London: 1710)
Vol. 5	Thomas Otway, *The Orphan: or, The Unhappy Marriage. A Tragedy* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1711)
	---, *Venice Preserv'd; or, A Plot Discovered. A Tragedy* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1712)
	Thomas Southerne, *Oroonoko: A Tragedy* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1712)
	Joseph Trapp, *Abra-Mule: or, Love and Empire. A Tragedy* (Printed for T. Johnson, 1711)
Vol. 6	George Etherege, *She Wou'd if She Cou'd. A Comedy* (London: 1710)
	---, *The Man of Mode, or, S^r^. Fopling Flutter. A Comedy* (London: 1711)
	George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, *The Rehearsal; A Comedy* (London: 1710)
	---, *The Chances, A Comedy* (London: 1710)
Vol. 7	William Congreve, *The Old Batchelour. A Comedy* (London: 1710)
	---, *The Double-Dealer. A Comedy* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1711)
	---, *Love for Love: A Comedy* (London: 1710)
	---, *The Way of the World. A Comedy* (Printed for T. Johnson, 1711)
Vol. 8	---, *The Mourning Bride. A Tragedy* (Printed for T. Johnson, 1711)
	Edmund Smith, *Phaedra and Hippolitus. A Tragedy* (Printed for T. Johnson, 1711)
	Samuel Tuke, *The Adventures of Five Hours: A Tragi-comedy* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1712)
	William Wycherley, *The Plain-Dealer, A Comedy* (1710)
Vol. 9	Colley Cibber, *Love's Last Shift; or, The Fool in Fashion. A Comedy* (Printed for T. Johnson, 1711)
	---, *The Careless Husband: A Comedy* (London: 1710)
	John Vanbrug[h], *The Provok'd Wife: A Comedy* (London: 1710)

	---, *Aesop. A Comedy. With the Addition of A Second Part* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1711)
Vol. 10	Richard Steele, *The Funeral: or, Grief a-la-Mode. A Comedy* (1710)
	George Farquhar, *The Constant Couple: or, A Trip to the Jubilee. A Comedy* (London: 1710)
	---, *The Recruiting Officer, A Comedy* (1710)
	---, *The Beaux Stratagem. A Comedy* (London: 1710)

As can be seen, the most succinct imprints, with just a date, or a date and 'London', all appear on plays published in 1710. Those listing 'The Hague' or 'Printed for T. Johnson' all occur in 1711 or 1712. None of these works carry the 'Printed for the Company of Booksellers' imprint which is so prevalent amongst second-series editions, and which has misled both Ford and Mijers in their understanding of Johnson's relationship to London booksellers. It is apparent that this aspect of the *Collection* – which is also key to its bibliographical description in multiple authors' works – was not something that was there at its inception.

To consider the works themselves, Johnson's first-series collection contained 21 plays named as comedies and fourteen named as tragedies, alongside the apparently tragi-comic *K. Henry IV* (actually *1 Henry IV*), *The Spanish Fryar* and *The Adventures of Five Hours*; operatic *The State of Innocence*; and *The Indian Emperor*, which does not have a specified genre. *The Indian Emperor*, listing its status as a sequel, has an exceptionally full title page anyway, and is also the only first-series play that carries no form of printer's device on its title page. Author is the most important means of organisation in this collection, with the first two volumes containing eight plays by or adapted from Shakespeare, volumes three and four eight plays by Dryden or Dryden and a collaborator, and volume seven four plays by Congreve – with an additional Congreve play in volume eight. The remaining five volumes (including volume eight) contain the works of twelve further authors: three plays by Farquhar; two plays each by Otway, Etherege, Buckingham, Cibber and Vanbrugh; and just one each by Southerne, Trapp, Smith, Tuke, Wycherley and Steele. Comparison with *The London Stage* demonstrates that the majority of these plays were popular in London theatres at the time, an argument which is elaborated in conjunction with Johnson's Shakespearean publications in Chapter Four, below.[21]

Johnson published twelve plays in the years intervening between his first- and second-series collections. Listed by year of publication, these are:

[21] Emmett L. Avery, *The London Stage 1660-1800: Part 2: 1700-1729*, 2 vols (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960).

Table 2: Inter-Series Plays Published by Johnson

Ambrose Philips, *The Distrest Mother. A Tragedy* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1712)

Thomas Shadwell, *The History of Timon of Athens, The Man-Hater* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1712)

Joseph Addison, *Cato. A Tragedy* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1713)

Ben Jonson, *Volpone: or, The Fox. A Comedy* (Printed for T. Johnson, 1714)

Nicholas Rowe, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore. Written in Imitation of Shakespear's Style* (The Hague: Printed for T. Johnson, 1714)

John Vanbrug[h], *The Relapse; or, Virtue in Danger: Being the Sequel of The Fool in Fashion. A Comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1717)

Colley Cibber, *The Non-Juror. A Comedy* (London: Printed for T. J. & are sold by the Booksellers of London & Westminster, 1718)

Nicholas Rowe, *The Tragedy of the Lady Jane Gray* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1718)

Thomas Killigrew, *Chit-Chat. A Comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1719)

Nathaniel Lee, *Sophonisba: or, Hannibal's Overthrow. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1719)

---, *Theodosius: or, The Force of Love. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1719)

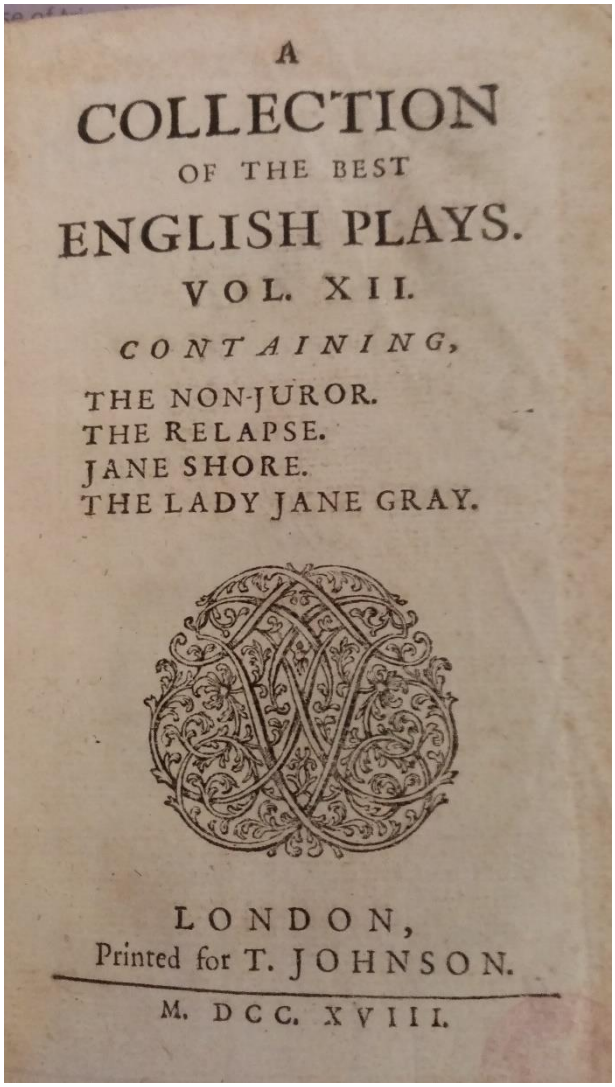
Edward Young, *Busiris, King of Egypt. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1719)

Ford suggests that certain of these plays might be characterised as volumes 'XI' and 'XII' of the first-series collection, with volume eleven containing *Cato*, *Jane Shore*, *The Distrest Mother* and *Timon*, and volume twelve containing *Volpone*, and Rowe's *The Ambitious Step-Mother*, *Tamerlane* and *Jane Shore*, which should 'probably' be dated 1714 and 1718.[22] Ford does not elaborate on why he thinks this, although it seems probable that this is an attempted reconstruction of Johnson's intended contents from the eleventh and twelfth volumes of the British Library's Cup.403.z.52. These in fact contain *Cato*, *The Distrest Mother*, *Jane Shore*, *Timon of Athens* and *Volpone*; and *The Non-Juror*, *The Relapse*, *Jane Shore* and *Lady Jane Gray*. As is detailed below, *The Ambitious Step-Mother* and *Tamerlane* were only released later as part of Johnson's second-series *Collection*, in or after 1720. Grant, also referring to the British Library copy, says 'it is clear that he [i.e. Ford] has not actually seen a bound book arranged as he suggests.'[23] Volume eleven of this collection is without general title page and appears, from its variant binding, inclusion of five plays and repetition of *Jane Shore* (also in volume twelve), to have been made up by someone other than Johnson and added to the collection at a later date. Volume twelve of the British Library copy does however include a volume title page (figure 3), and is the only example of an ideal, 'inter-series' volume twelve

[22] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 55. Nicholas Rowe, *The Ambitious Step-Mother. A Tragedy* (London [The Hague]: Printed for the Company [Thomas Johnson], [n.d.]); Nicholas Rowe, *Tamerlane, A Tragedy* (London [The Hague]: Printed for the Company [Thomas Johnson], [n.d.]).
[23] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 24.

that I have seen.[24] Since this title page follows the pattern of the first-series title pages, excluding the addition of 'London' to its imprint, Johnson seems to have imagined it as a supplement to his first series. Its correct contents are clearly those listed on the volume title, which has not been noticed by any other critic. Although I have seen no copy of the volume eleven title page that must also have supplemented the first-series *Collection* (since a volume twelve title page exists), I have no doubt that examination of other copies held outside the British Isles (detailed in Chapter Five) would reveal an example of this item. Since the plays contained in the 1718 volume twelve are dated 1714-18, it seems reasonable to suppose that the ideal contents of volume eleven should be the four earlier plays that were also issued after the first-series volumes one to ten, i.e. *The Distrest Mother* (1712), *Timon of Athens* (1712), *Cato* (1713) and *Volpone* (1714). The volume eleven title page may therefore carry a da anywhere between 1714 (when *Volpone* was issued) and 1718 (when the volume twelve title was issued). The University of Chicago Library copy has eleventh and twelfth volumes each containing the plays I have proposed.[25] Although the catalogue record for this item makes no specific mention of a volume eleven title page, it tells us 'vols. 12 (1718) and 13 (1719) bear the imprint "London: printed for T. Johnson"', which implies the presence of twelfth and thirteenth volume titles.[26] This thirteenth volume title is not recorded elsewhere and certainly warrants further investigation. The Chicago volume thirteen contains Johnson's four final inter-series plays (*Chit-Chat*, *Theodosius*, *Sophonisba* and *Busiris*, all 1719) and so suggests that Johnson did, in the end, provide three inter-series

Figure 3


A
COLLECTION
OF THE BEST
ENGLISH PLAYS.
VOL. XII.
CONTAINING,
THE NON-JUROR.
THE RELAPSE.
JANE SHORE.
THE LADY JANE GRAY.
LONDON,
Printed for T. JOHNSON.
M. DCC. XVIII.

[24] *A Collection of the Best English Plays*, XII, inter-series title page. © British Library Board, L Cup.403.z.52.
[25] University of Chicago Library, PR 1245.C655 1711.
[26] University of Chicago Library Catalogue <https://catalog.lib.uchicago.edu/vufind/Record/1630256> [accessed 13 January 2020].

volume titles (*c.* 1714-18, 1718 and 1719) to encompass all twelve of his inter-series plays.

Why did Johnson publish these inter-series plays? Grant has done ample work on Johnson's potential motivations in publishing *Volpone*. Many of the other plays were new releases, such as Philips' *The Distrest Mother* and Addison's *Cato*, so it would seem that Johnson was generally seeking to promote interest in his project with the most popular and current plays on the London stage.[27] The knowledge of these new plays also shows how in-touch Johnson was with the theatrical scene in England, and their reprinting suggests how quickly he could source material from the capital. Although *Timon* was not new, the fact that it replaces *Jew of Venice* in many extant copies of the *Collection*, especially those prefaced by the second-series title pages of *c.* 1721-22, suggests that this may have been a deliberate substitution for *Jew* if this were not selling well.[28]

Regarding the imprints of these works, the plays issued between 1712-14 are all relatively honest about their origins, telling us they were printed by T. Johnson and just one omitting The Hague. From 1717, however, Johnson reverted to London in his imprints, which may suggest either difficulties in retailing his wares in Britain – and hence a greater need to obscure their origins – or an increasing exploitation of English markets, for which a London imprint might have seemed appropriate.[29] *The Non-Juror* (which was also new to the stage) appears to have spawned a variety of piracies and offshoots in 1718, and Johnson's unusual use of 'London: Printed for T. J. & are sold by the Booksellers of London & Westminster', rather than his own name, 'for the Company', or 'for the Company of Booksellers' might suggest a hope that his imported edition could escape notice amongst this wide selection of materials.[30] More generally, whereas an *ESTC* search restricted to 1700 to 1750, with the 'company of booksellers' in the publisher field, gives just twenty hits, of which eighteen are by Johnson, a search for 'the booksellers of London and Westminster' (as Johnson used here) under the same parameters returns 1738 hits. A search for 'printed for the company' returns 181 hits, of which a very large proportion are again by Johnson, and many that are not represent

[27] According to Avery, in *The London Stage 1700-1729*, pp. 271, 299, *The Distrest Mother* premiered on 17 March 1712, and *Cato* on 14 April 1713.
[28] For copies that replace *The Jew of Venice* with *Timon* see, for instance, L 1345.b.17, or University of Toronto Library B-10 04840 v.2.
[29] As we have seen, Johnson told Mackie that he thought Ramsay's *Cyropaedia* 'should be valued in Scotland as being writen by a Country man.' E[2] La.II.91/B/62 (19 October 1728). This publication is unusual amongst Johnson's works in having 'Edinburgh' listed in the imprint as its place of publication, which corroborates my suggestion that Johnson matched his imprints to his intended markets.
[30] See especially Colley Cibber, *The Comedy Call'd The Non-Juror. Shewing The particular Scenes wherein that Hypocrite is concern'd. With Remarks, and a Key, Explaining The Characters of that Excellent Play* (London: Printed for J. L. and Sold by the Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1718).

multiple editions of the same or similar works. The majority of these are also printed 'for the company of stationers' rather than booksellers, all of which points to Johnson's later 'printed for the Company of Booksellers' imprints as deliberately obscuring the origins of his works whilst at the same time remaining distinctive (in contrast to his earlier experiment with *The Non-Juror*).[31]

So, after printing forty plays between 1710-12, to which were added ten volume titles of 1711-12, Johnson printed twelve further plays 1712-19. He gave customers the option of buying at least some of these as part of his *Collection*, or adding them to their own *Collection* if already purchased, by printing supplementary volume title pages in line with the first-series format, between *c*. 1714-19. Beginning in 1720, Johnson then printed or reprinted considerably more plays than had been available as part of the first series which, with new volume titles, should be considered as his second-series *Collection*. That Johnson printed these works (especially those works he *re*printed) suggests that his project had so far been a success and that he was confident of a continued and receptive market. The plays that were printed as part of this second series, ordered by author, are:

Table 3: Second-Series Plays Published by Johnson

Joseph Addison, *The Drummer; or, The Haunted-House: A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

Colley Cibber, *The Careless Husband: A Comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1721)

---, *Love's Last Shift; or, The Fool in Fashion. A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

William Congreve, *The Double-Dealer. A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

---, *Love for Love: A Comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1720)

---, *The Mourning Bride. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

---, *The Old Batchelour, A Comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1720)

---, *The Way of the World A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

John Crowne, *Sir Courtly Nice: or, It Can Not Be. A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

John Dryden, *All for Love: or, The World Well Lost. A Tragedy. Written in Imitation of Sakespear's Stile* [*sic*] (Printed for T. Johnson, 1720)

---, *Amphitryon: or The Two Sosias. A Comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1721)

---, *Aurenge-Zebe, or, The Great-Mogul. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1721)

---, *The Indian Emperor: or, The Conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards: Being the Sequel of The Indian Queen* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1721)

---, *The Spanish Fryar, or, The Double Discovery: A Tragi-comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1720)

[31] As a London publication with a 'stationers' imprint see, for instance, *The Gentleman's Diary, or the Mathematical Repository: An Almanack For the Year of our Lord 1744* (London: Printed for the Company of Stationers, 1744) which, with its later issues, accounts for seven of the *ESTC* 'printed for the company' hits.

---, *The State of Innocence, and Fall of Man: An Opera. Written in Heroick Verse* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1721)

---, and William Davenant, *The Tempest: or The Enchanted Island. A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

---, and Nathaniel Lee, *Oedipus: A Tragedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson)

George Etherege, *The Man of Mode, or, Sr. Fopling Flutter. A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

---, *She Wou'd if She Cou'd. A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

George Farquhar, *The Beaux Stratagem. A Comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1720)

---, *The Constant Couple: or, A Trip to the Jubilee. A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

---, *The Recruiting Officer, A Comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1720)

Elijah Fenton, *Mariamne. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

George Granville, *The She-Gallants: A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

John Hughes, *The Siege of Damascus. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1720)

Thomas Otway, *The Orphan: or, The Unhappy Marriage. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

---, *Venice Preserv'd; or, A Plot Discover'd. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

Ambrose Philips, *The Distrest Mother. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

Nicholas Rowe, *The Ambitious Step-Mother. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

---, *The Fair Penitent. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

---, *Tamerlane, A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

---, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore: Written in imitation of Shakespear's Style* (London: Printed for the Company)

Thomas Shadwell, *The History of Timon of Athens, The Man-Hater* (London: Printed for the Company)

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1720)

---, *Julius Caesar; A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

---, *K. Henry IV. With the Humours of Sir John Falstaff. A Tragi-comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1721)

---, *The Merry Wives of Windsor; with the Amours of Sir John Falstaff. A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

---, *Othello, The Moor of Venice. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

---, *The Tragedy of Macbeth* (London: Printed for the Company)

Edmund Smith, *Phaedra and Hippolitus; A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

Thomas Southerne, *Oroonoko: A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

Richard Steele, *The Funeral: or, Grief a-la-Mode. A Comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1721)

Joseph Trapp, *Abra-Mule: or, Love and Empire. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

John Vanbrug[h], *Aesop. A Comedy. With the Addition of a Second Part* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

---, *The Provok'd Wife: A Comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1721)

George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, *The Chances, A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

---, *The Rehearsal; A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company of Booksellers)

William Wycherley, *The Plain-Dealer, A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

As already suggested, many of these works were new editions of plays Johnson had already printed in the *Collection* (such as *Hamlet*), but others, such as Hughes' *The Siege of Damascus*, were entirely new to Johnson. Several others that were included in the original collection were not reprinted, such as *The Adventures of Five Hours*, and so we might assume that these had proven the least popular amongst Johnson's customers. *Volpone* was also not reprinted. Johnson did reprint all five of his Congreve plays, on the other hand, and all works by Dryden other than *Don Sebastian*, which was printed in 1710 only. Johnson did not reprint Granville's *The Jew of Venice* (1711), but issued the same author's *The She-Gallants* for the first time. Nicholas Rowe would seem to have been well received. Although Johnson printed no plays by Rowe as part of his first-series *Collection*, he issued *Jane Shore* in 1714 and *Lady Jane Gray* in 1718, and provided his first editions of *The Ambitious Step-Mother*, *The Fair Penitent* and *Tamerlane*, alongside a second edition of *Jane Shore*, as part of the second-series collection. In terms of the chronology of these works, all of those plays that are dated, as printed in either 1720 or 1721, list Johnson in the imprint. Those that refer to the 'Company' have no date. Although it is impossible to tell for definite, it seems likely that Johnson became more committed to the Company imprint over the course of printing these second-series plays, and that most of those carrying this imprint should probably be dated to 1721-22 which, as will be shown, is also when Johnson printed his second-series volume titles.

Many of these second-series plays appear in arrangements without general title pages, as is discussed below in Chapter Five. However, those that do appear under general title pages are found in collections of up to sixteen volumes, such as that held by the Koninklijke Bibliotheek in The Hague.[32] Since the most usual number of plays per volume is four, this suggests that the maximum extent of any collection anticipated by Johnson was 64 plays, presumably incorporating first-series plays that had not been reissued, inter-series plays and second-series plays. Nevertheless, since Johnson's second series seems itself to have been an evolving project, and was supplemented in later years, he may also have been anticipating some room for growth in his *Collection*. The line I draw below between second-series and later plays is necessary from a historical point of view, but also somewhat permeable when reconstructing how Johnson and his readers might have seen the *Collection*. Generally speaking, I have classified later plays as those carrying dates after 1722, or with title-page devices other than the TJ monogram, which appears on all the above second-series plays – and most importantly those with explicit dates – barring *The Indian Emperor* (for the same reasons of space as in

[32] Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KW 849 A 2.

Johnson's first edition of this work, and presumably also because the second edition was set from this). Nevertheless, Fenton's *Mariamne*, which I have classified above as part of the second-series collection, cannot have appeared until 1723 at the earliest since this was the date of its first edition.[33] I have called this a second-series play because its layout is in all respects similar to the other second-series plays, including its use of a monogram, and it was thus clearly intended to be a part of that collection.

The second-series volume titles (see also figure 2 in Chapter One, above) appear to be uniform in all copies I have seen, following the pattern:

> A | COLLECTION | OF THE BEST | ENGLISH PLAYS, | *Chosen out of all the best* | AUTHORS. | VOL. I. | [TJ monogram] | LONDON. | Printed for the Company of Booksellers.[34]

As will be observed, these are considerably more succinct than the first-series volume titles, the omission of contents allowing readers to make up collections in a variety of arrangements. The imprint – alongside the imprints in many of the second-series plays, above – again gives the impression of a new commitment to the 'Company of Booksellers' name, which seems likely to have been intended so that readers could recognise Johnson's books without naming himself directly. Certainly this and 'London' reverse the trend towards more honest imprints in the first-series plays, although a perusal of the advertisements contained in many of Johnson's plays from the whole period he was publishing (see Chapter One) would quickly reveal who they were really available from.

This second series has traditionally been assigned a date of 1720-22, following Ford.[35] Although the second-series volume titles do not themselves carry any dates, my identification of two transitional volume titles (for volumes three and six) in L Cup.403.z.52 places the main bulk of second-series title pages as actually being printed in 1721 or later. These transitional titles carry contents lists instead of 'Chosen out of all the best Authors', like the first-series volume titles, but use 'London[.] Printed for the Company' as their imprint, which is much closer to the second-series 'London. Printed for the Company of Booksellers' than the first-series 'Printed for T. Johnson[, Bookseller at the Hague].' The first of these transitional volume titles also carries a date of 1721, which is what allows us to narrow the probable date of publication of the second-series titles. It seems that Johnson must have printed just a small

[33] Elijah Fenton, *Mariamne. A Tragedy. Acted at the Theatre Royal in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields* (London: Printed for J. Tonson, 1723).
[34] Transcription taken from Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.J61.
[35] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 55.

Figure 4

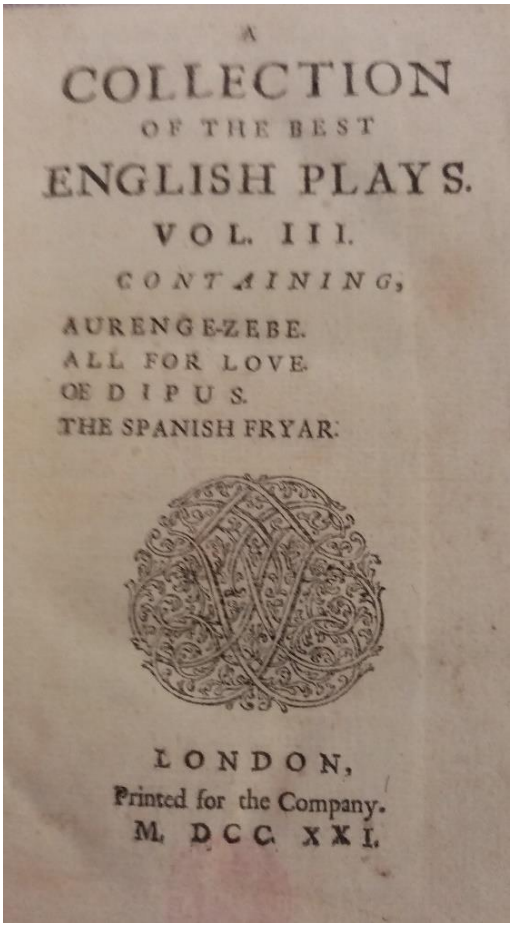
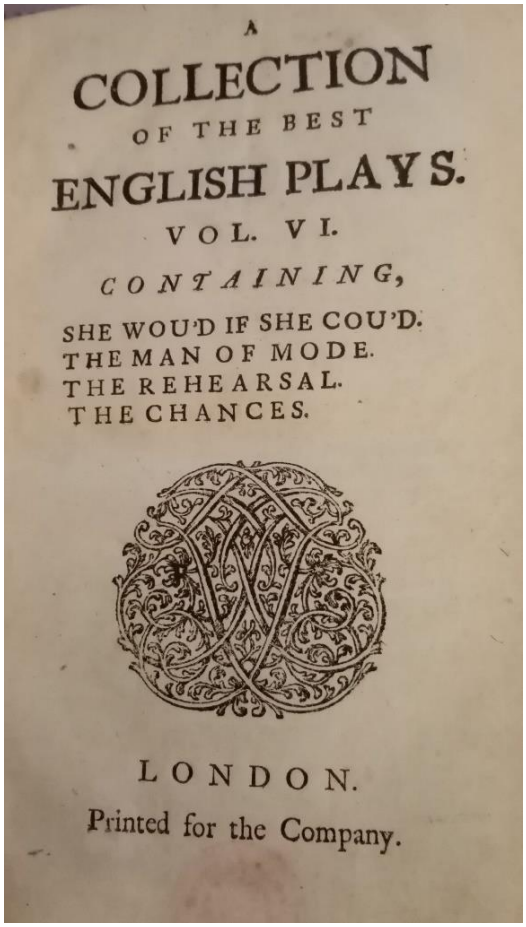

A
COLLECTION
OF THE BEST
ENGLISH PLAYS.
VOL. III.
CONTAINING,
AURENGE-ZEBE.
ALL FOR LOVE.
OEDIPUS.
THE SPANISH FRYAR.
LONDON,
Printed for the Company.
M. DCC. XXI.

Figure 5


A
COLLECTION
OF THE BEST
ENGLISH PLAYS.
VOL. VI.
CONTAINING,
SHE WOU'D IF SHE COU'D.
THE MAN OF MODE.
THE REHEARSAL.
THE CHANCES.
LONDON.
Printed for the Company.

number of these titles (given their rare state – I have seen no other copies beyond those held in the British Library) and gone on to adopt the format without date or contents list quoted above. That the volume three transitional title page contains a date (figure 4), whereas the volume six title is not dated (figure 5), also distinguishes these as separate trial versions.[36] Thus, since Johnson began reprinting his plays in 1720, but did not print his new volume titles until 1721, he seems likely to have been issuing some second-series plays in conjunction with first-series volume titles before the new volume titles were required, and this is confirmed in my register of copies in Chapter Five.

As is noted above, the two most helpful tools in identifying when second-series plays give way to later plays are the dates in imprints, and title-page devices. Because every play bar one dated 1720-21 carries a TJ monogram, as do all the undated plays cited above, they have a visual coherence that seems to identify them as a single multi-work project. The following plays, listed by author, might be categorised as later works:

[36] *A Collection of the Best English Plays*, III, VI, transitional title pages. Both images © British Library Board, L Cup.403.z.52.

Table 4: Later Plays Published by Johnson

Joseph Addison, *Cato, A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company, 1730)

John Banks, *The Unhappy Favourite: or, The Earl of Essex. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

---, *Vertue Betray'd; or Anna Bullen: A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

Colley Cibber, *The Provok'd Husband; or, A Journey to London. A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

George Farquhar, *Sir Harry Wildair: Being the Sequel of the Trip to the Jubilee. A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

---, *The Twin-Rivals. A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

William Grimston, *Lawyer's Fortune: or, Love in a Hollow Tree. A Comedy* (Rotterdam: Printed and Sold by T. Johnson, 1728)

Robert Howard, *The Committee, A Comedy* (London: Printed for the Company)

George Lillo, *The London Merchant: with the Tragical History of George Barnwell* (London: 1731)

Richard Steele, *The Conscious Lovers. A Comedy* (London: Printed for T. Johnson, 1723)

James Thomson, *The Tragedy of Sophonisba* (London: Printed for the Company, 1730)

Addison's *Cato* is dated 1730 so comes after the bulk of second-series printing and, indeed, after the upheaval of Johnson's move to Rotterdam. Although undated, the title page of Banks' *The Unhappy Favourite* carries an arrangement of printers' flowers rather than the TJ monogram, and the same substitution is visible on *Vertue Betray'd*, Lillo's *The London Merchant*, and Farquhar's *Sir Harry Wildair* and *The Twin-Rivals*. There is no indication of Johnson using this device on his earlier English publications, although it is apparent on his *Charactersticks* of Shaftesbury of 1733. Cibber's *The Provok'd Husband* has the device of a smiling sun in a frame, which does not appear on the earlier plays. I have not seen a copy of Howard's *The Committee*, but the *ESTC* records its 'device similar to that on Cibber's "Provok'd Husband" […] which is not before 1728.'[37] Grimston's *Lawyer's Fortune* is dated 1728 and carries two small square ornaments rather than the monogram. Steele's *The Conscious Lovers* has been most hard to determine on and, like *Mariamne* discussed above (also probably printed in 1723), exemplifies the difficulty of applying too rigid a periodisation to Johnson's many plays. *The Conscious Lovers* carries both the TJ monogram and the relatively early date of 1723. This play was first printed in London in 1722 and so seems (again like *Mariamne*) to be an opportunistic publication by Johnson, picking up on a recent theatrical success. Although most of Johnson's undated second-series plays were probably printed *c.* 1721-22, there are none with an *actual* date of 1722 in their imprint. The return to dating with *The Conscious Lovers* in 1723 thus seems to imply a slight break with this practice, even if its title page is in all other respects similar to the majority of second-series plays. Obviously we

[37] *ESTC* T14928.

must settle for a continuum of publication in this instance, rather than a definite line between second-series and later plays. Thomson's *Sophonisba*, which is dated unambiguously to 1730 on its title page (and by the date of its first publication in London), also carries the TJ device, which seems to place it as a more integrated part of the *Collection* than the other plays described above that include different devices. Nevertheless, most of these later publications (including *Sophonisba*) also make relatively few appearances in extant copies of the *Collection* with second-series title pages, which suggests that they were available from Johnson for a more limited period than most of his other works. Extending this argument, several of these publications, such as *Sir Harry Wildair*, were available as part of *The British Stage* (1752) and other reissues of Johnson's works by later publishers (see Chapter Six), which argues for a relatively large number remaining at the time Johnson ceased trading. As is shown in Chapter Five, the ambiguous *The Conscious Lovers* makes more frequent appearances in primarily second-series collections than other plays in this group.

To conclude this survey, some further comment is required on Johnson's general presentational strategies, most importantly his use of a printer's device and combination of this with the distinctive 'Company' imprint. Taken together, some version of the TJ monogram appears on at least 85 of the 111 play editions noted above. Suarez and Woudhuysen characterise such devices as identificatory marks used by a printer or publisher as a 'hallmark' and 'marketing tool', also used to distinguish a work from those by other printers.[38] Johnson's use of multiple cuts of what is essentially the same device, as identified by McMullin, is probably explained by R. B. McKerrow's suggestion that title pages were often left in forme.[39] Although McKerrow uses this to justify why certain publications by the same printer might lack their customary device, it would seem Johnson had several such devices to avoid this eventuality wherever possible. The only device other than his monogram that Johnson used regularly on play titles depicts a fountain and two goats (which occurs in ten editions, including *The Beaux Stratagem* of 1710).[40] Such variant devices are visible primarily in the first-series

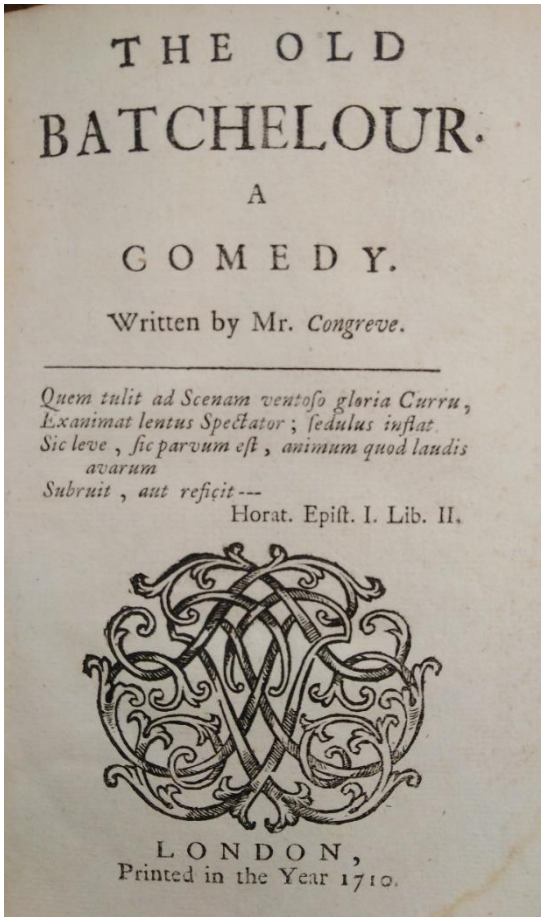
[38] Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen, eds, *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, 2 vols (Oxford: OUP, 2010), pp. 1052-53 (especially p. 1053). Valérie Hayaert writes that such marks were 'to protect printers against frauds and counterfeits […] a token of quality […] a hallmark', in 'The Legal Significance and Humanist Ethos of Printers' *Insignia*', in *Typographorum Emblemata: The Printer's Mark in the Context of Early Modern Culture*, ed. by Anja Wolkenhauer and Bernard F. Scholz (Berlin: De Gruyter Saur, 2018), pp. 297-314 (308). As a general discussion on the naming of devices see Bernhard F. Scholz, 'In Place of an Afterword: Notes on Ordering the Corpus of the Early Modern Printer's Mark', also in *Typographorum Emblemata*, pp. 361-74.
[39] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 101; R. B. McKerrow, *Printers' & Publishers' Devices in England & Scotland 1485-1640* (London: The Bibliographical Society at the Chiswick Press, 1913), pp. xliii-xliv.
[40] McKerrow's *Printers' & Publishers' Devices* contains no examples that are analogous to either the monogram or fountain and goats.

and post-1722 plays, suggesting a most pronounced commitment to consistency and recognisability in the main second-series period, *c.* 1720-22. Although the 'Company of Booksellers' does not point so explicitly to Johnson as an actual name, especially if seen in a single isolated text, when Johnson's use of this is taken *en masse* and considered alongside his title-page layouts and multiple advertisements or notices that bear his name – not to mention the monogram – these factors together constitute a recognisable house style.[41] Certainly Johnson was as consistent in his use of a monogram as the Tonsons were in their deployment of the 'Shakespeare's Head' device, and also used the device for his seal, visible on much of his correspondence.[42] We might say, therefore, that although Johnson was reprinting his English texts, he was as concerned they should be recognisably his own as an important London publisher (i.e. Tonson), but in doing this had to employ a degree of creativity that also obscured their origins outside the British Isles. Furthermore, by constituting a distinctive look for his many plays – published across more than twenty years – Johnson was able to tie them together as a recognisable and potentially very large series, whether or not they were prefaced by his volume titles (which, in many instances discussed below, they were not).

We might also reiterate at this juncture how clean Johnson's title pages were in relation to those of his competitors. His edition of Congreve's *The Old Batchelour* of 1710, for instance, is reasonably typical (figure 6).[43] It carries the play's title, genre, author, and a quotation from Horace, followed by an early version of the TJ monogram and 'London, Printed in the Year 1710'. It has no frame or extraneous decoration, and considerably fewer horizontal rules than the first edition, all of which focuses attention on the monogram. It also, most significantly, removes the common formula 'As it is Acted at the Theatre Royal, by Their Majesties Servants', which had been repeated in most editions since the first.[44] Such tendency to remove acting formulae is visible across most examples of Johnson's plays, and suggests that although his work was dependent on the stage (in being reproductions of popular playtexts), he was also formulating a specifically literary selection intended for reading, and appreciable as literature independent of theatrical merits; such a dual interest is also visible in his Dedication to Princess Caroline, which refers both to the pleasures of the stage and to private reading. By removing

[41] For detailed discussion of a 'house style' and its development see Robert B. Hamm, Jr, 'Rowe's "Shakespear" (1709) and the Tonson House Style', *College Literature*, 31.3 (2004), 179-205.
[42] On the overlap of other printers' devices and their seals see Justyna Kiliańczyk-Zięba, 'The Transition of the Printer's Device from a Sign of Identification to a Symbol of Aspirations and Beliefs', in *Typographorum Emblemata*, pp. 315-31 (317).
[43] Congreve, *The Old Batchelour* ([Johnson], 1710), A1r. The image is taken from my own copy.
[44] Quotation from first edition: William Congreve, *The Old Batchelour, A Comedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre Royal, by Their Majesties Servants* (London: Printed for Peter Buck, 1693), A1r.

Figure 6


THE OLD
BATCHELOUR.
A
COMEDY.
Written by Mr. *Congreve*.

Quem tulit ad Scenam ventoso gloria Curru,
Exanimat lentus Spectator; sedulus inflat.
Sic leve, sic parvum est, animum quod laudis avarum
Subruit, aut reficit---
Horat. Epist. I. Lib. II.

LONDON,
Printed in the Year 1710.

statements of performance which, by their very nature, were prone to dating (as it *is*, not as it *was* acted) Johnson may also have been hoping to afford greater longevity to his *Collection*. Some parallel sense of plays' value as literature separate to their life in performance might be observed in contemporaneous authorial works editions, containing as they did many plays that were not in the current repertory (in Rowe's Shakespeare, for instance). Another notable edition of *The Old Bachelor* that removed the acting formulation was that appearing in Tonson's *Works* of the author.[45]

Roy Wiles suggests that playbooks 'offered special possibilities for sequential sales, for it was supposed that people who bought a single play by Nathaniel Lee, for example, would be interested in buying others by the same author if subsequently published in a similar format.'[46] Based on this logic, if other plays by different authors were also published in the same style and format, this would encourage readers to extend their interests beyond their original purchase, and to do so within the catalogue of that publisher offering the uniform series from which their first purchase was made. Since Johnson offered all of his plays singly as well as in bulk, some readers might initially have bought just one or several texts, and then been tempted by their interest and the uniform appearance of the plays to purchase more, perhaps only binding them together and adding volume titles once a certain number had been acquired. Other non-dramatic English works published by Johnson, such as *Paradise Lost*, Burnet's *History* and Prior's *Poems*, frequently employ similar visual features and/or imprints to the plays, and are also generally in octavo format. Johnson is explicit about his editorial attentions in certain of these works – notably the *History*, as McMullin describes, and *Works* of Swift.[47] The similar look of these

[45] William Congreve, *The First Volume of the Works of Mr. William Congreve*, 3 vols (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1710). It is of course possible that this *Works* was the source of Johnson's text although, if this is the case, his printing from a works rather than theatrical quartos – when taken alongside the variety of copytexts used for his Shakespearean publications (singletons *and* works), and that of Ben Jonson (F1) – argues for some deliberate strategy.
[46] Roy Wiles, *Serial Publication in England Before 1750* (Cambridge: CUP, 1957), p. 15.
[47] In Swift's *Miscellaneous Works* (1720) Johnson uses a fictitious letter to tell the reader that his edition contains many additional materials that have not been previously printed (iv-v), and that (vi) 'I advise the printing all those pieces together in one volume, because I think it will take very well (especially when done so

other publications might have implied to customers a similar level of editorial care in the *Collection*. As we will see in the case of his Shakespearean works, any editing Johnson undertook for his plays usually seems to have gone by without comment from the publisher.

If we follow Helen Smith in assuming that the various names of printers, publishers and booksellers in books' imprints 'participate in competing narratives of ownership', we might finally note the extraordinary dominance that Johnson asserted over his publications.[48] Whilst Smith characterises imprints as declaring the proprietary rights of, particularly, the bookseller – most important for customers wishing to purchase the book – it is clear that Johnson did away with such competition since his English publications usually identify only his own name or that of the fictitious 'Company'.[49] In the absence of evidence to the contrary, this strongly suggests that in terms of his English texts Johnson fulfilled the roles of all three parties of the book trade most frequently identified in imprints (printer, publisher, bookseller) and thus enjoyed complete control over the presentation and quality of his texts, the choice of texts, print-runs and formats, and the price and area of sale. If the books are of so high a quality as previous critics have suggested, then the responsibility for this rests fully at Johnson's feet. Finally, whilst the 'Company' imprint was probably a means of obscuring the books' origin in The Hague, but also of distinguishing them more particularly than the 'company of stationers' or 'booksellers of London and Westminster' (which were in far more common use) would have done, it also seems possible that Johnson chose this wording in particular to imply a form of corporate authority for his books, and one which offered an alternative idea of quality or legitimacy to that of the actual London booksellers' guild.

The Drummer; or, The Haunted-House

Now that we have a much better picture of the *Collection* as a whole, we might ask about Johnson's choices regarding certain of his individual publications (beyond their general popularity in the theatre), and what each of these plays can add to publishing and/or literary history. Following McMullin's compelling combination of bibliography and history, and my own assessment of Johnson's Dedication which began this chapter, this final section on *The Drummer* might serve as a model for revealing how the investigation of Johnson's individual

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neat & correct as you are used to doe)'. The 'Errata' (ix) prefaces its general list with the plea: 'The Gentle, Courteous, Indulgent Reader, is desired to correct the Errors here marked, & to pardon some others he may meet with, & attribute them either to the Printer, or to the Corrector, who is as subject to fits of dullness & inatention as the Reader himself may be sometimes.'

[48] Helen Smith, '"Imprinted by Simeon such a signe": Reading Early Modern Imprints', in *Renaissance Paratexts*, ed. by Helen Smith and Louise Wilson (Cambridge: CUP, 2011), pp. 17-33 (21).

[49] Smith, 'Reading Early Modern Imprints', p. 23.

publications, as well as the *Collection* itself, can make an important contribution to our understanding of the history of drama in print. This also prefaces my much more extended analysis of his Shakespearean publications in Chapter Four. The following argument is a revised text of my own 'Authorship of The Drummer; or, the Haunted House'.[50]

Johnson published *The Drummer* just once, as part of his second-series *Collection*. Although the edition is undated, it appears to have been issued in 1722 or shortly thereafter, including as it does material taken from another 1722 edition. The play had enjoyed only limited success when it was premiered anonymously in 1715, but was revived with more positive reviews in February 1722 once it was attributed to Addison.[51] This revival seems likely to have stimulated Johnson's interest. Supplementing those paratexts that had already appeared in other editions and which were reprinted by Johnson, the publisher added his own notice claiming to have special knowledge regarding the authorship of this work. He must have imagined such information as was supplied in his edition, and absent from others, would imbue it with considerable added appeal to potential readers. Presenting its publisher as a man of letters as well as business, it might also have suggested to customers the relative quality or reliability of Johnson's other publications, especially the many plays which shared its design and were published as part of the *Collection*. From our perspective, Johnson's intervention provides an extraordinary sidelight on the play, and reveals one way in which the study of his work might be valuable for literary as well as bibliographical history. According to Johnson's 'Advertisement, Concerning the Author of this Play', one William Harrison (1685-1713) was *The Drummer*'s original author, albeit acting to some degree under the direction of Addison, who is now accepted as its author. Although not made explicit, it seems reasonable to imagine that the 'friend of his [i.e. Harrison's] at the Hague' to whom this information was communicated, was Johnson himself.[52] As we have seen in Chapter Two, Mijers suggests that Johnson was in personal contact with Addison as well, although provides no information on her sources.[53]

Jacob Tonson issued the first two editions of *The Drummer* in 1715 and 1716.[54] Although, according to Richard Steele's later complaints, Tonson had paid Steele fifty guineas for the copyright on the understanding that the play was Addison's ('which by my Zeal for it,

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[50] Emil Rybczak, 'Authorship of The Drummer; or, the Haunted House', *N&Q*, 63.4 (2016), 588-90.
[51] Avery, *The London Stage 1700-1729*, p. clxxiv. See also pp. 392-93 and 661-63 (and multiple entries thereafter).
[52] Addison, *The Drummer* ([Johnson], [*c.* 1722]), p. 23.
[53] Mijers, *"News from the Republick of Letters"*, p. 190.
[54] Joseph Addison, *The Drummer; or, The Haunted House. A Comedy* (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1715); *The Drummer; or, The Haunted House. A Comedy* (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1716).

he took to be written by Mr. Addison') Steele's preface to these earliest editions – like the records of the original performances – is not explicit in this regard.[55] Five years later, however, Tonson's editor Thomas Tickell (1685-1740) omitted the play from the publisher's *Works* of Addison.[56] *The Drummer* was subsequently published by John Darby the Younger.[57] In this edition Darby included a long repudiation by Steele of Tonson and Tickell's *Works* – amongst other things – in the form of a letter 'To Mr Congreve, Occasion'd by Mr. Tickell's Preface to the Four Volumes of Mr. Addison's Works.'[58] Steele's letter contains the apparently contradictory accusations that Tickell included all of those works that Addison and his friends had wished to remain anonymous, but that he had failed to include *The Drummer*. Tickell's decision is vindicated, however, if Johnson was right in his belief that the play was, primarily, Harrison's. Harrison's other achievements include a short diplomatic career, the composition of a small selection of English and Latin poetry, and adoption as the protégé of more successful literati, especially Swift. He was a contributor to *The Tatler*, and served as its editor after Addison and Steele moved on to *The Spectator*.[59] William Axon tells us that in Harrison's early years 'he wrote a satire on the Winchester ladies', and Robert Elliott reports that his poem 'The Passion of Sappho' was 'set to music by Thomas Clayton and given several performances'.[60]

Johnson introduced his text into the authorial controversy with a note on his title page, promising 'a PREFACE by Sir *Richard Steele*, & his Letter to Mr. *Congreve*, concerning the Author of this Play, &c.'[61] Whilst this echoes the statement of additional materials on the title

[55] For the original preface see Addison, *The Drummer* (Tonson, 1715), A3r-v. For Steele's report of the sale of the work, as reprinted by Johnson, see Addison, *The Drummer* ([Johnson], [*c.* 1722]), p. 6.
[56] Joseph Addison, *The Works of the Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq; In Four Volumes*, 4 vols (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1721).
[57] Joseph Addison, *The Drummer; or, The Haunted-House. A Comedy* (London: Printed for John Darby, and sold by J. Roberts, 1722); also *The Drummer; or, The Haunted-House. A Comedy* (London: Printed for J. Darby: And Sold by Thomas Combes, 1722). See Chapter Seven for Darby's use of Johnson's monogram.
[58] Addison, *The Drummer* (Darby and Roberts, 1722), A2r. Letter continued A2r-11r.
[59] For these and other biographical details see W. P. Courtney, Linda Frey and Marsha Frey, 'Harrison, William (1685-1713), poet and diplomat', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/12455> [accessed 3 January 2020].
[60] William E. A. Axon, 'The Literary History of the Comedy of "The Drummer"', *Papers of the Manchester Literary Club*, 21 (1895), 172–81 (p. 176). See also pp. 176-78 for other biographical details on which I draw, and an itinerary of Harrison's disparate works. Further analysis of his poetry is provided by Robert C. Elliott, in 'Swift's "Little" Harrison, poet and continuator of the Tatler', *Studies in Philology*, 46 (1949), 544–59 (pp. 544-49), with Sappho discussed p. 547. The latter part of Elliott's essay is concerned principally with *The Tatler*. The introduction to Linda Frey, Marsha Frey and John C. Rule, eds, *Observations from the Hague and Utrecht: William Henry Harrison's Letters to Henry Watkins 1711–12* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Libraries Publications Committee, 1979) offers a very different perspective of Harrison, focussing primarily on his diplomatic career.
[61] Addison, *The Drummer* ([Johnson], [*c.* 1722]), A1r.

page of Darby's edition, it adds the explanatory information regarding 'the Author […] &c.'[62] Johnson also added a footnote to Steele's letter to Congreve (reproduced from Darby's edition) advising us to '* See the advertisement at the end of this Letter', when Steele claims: 'They who shall read this Play, after being let into the Secret that it was writ by Mr. *Addison*, or under his Direction *, will probably be attentive to those Excellencies, which they before over-look'd'.[63] Since Steele goes on to reiterate Addison's authorship at length, the caveat that *The Drummer* may have been written by someone 'under his Direction' easily passes unnoticed. This qualification tallies with Steele's repeated insistence that the fact works are not in his own hand does not disqualify them from being Addison's. Aware of the controversy, Steele says:

> No one who reads the Preface which I publish'd with it [*The Drummer*], will imagine I could be induc'd to say so much as I then did, had I not known the Man I best lov'd had had a part in it, or had I believ'd that any other concern'd had much more to do than as an Amanuensis.[64]

This argument is later reiterated in explaining the history of *Cato*: 'when he [Addison] had taken his Resolution, or made his Plan for what he design'd to write, he would walk about the Room and dictate it into Language with as much freedom and ease as any one could write it down, and attend to the Coherence and Grammar of what he dictated.' The author continues: 'I have been often thus employ'd by him, and never took it into my Head, tho' he only spoke it, and I took all the Pains of throwing it upon Paper, that I ought to call my self the Writer of it.'[65] Whilst Steele's own beliefs are clear, his manner of argument does acknowledge some doubt over the play's authorship.

I reproduce Johnson's advertisement in full:

> Mr. *Harrison*, an ingenious Gentleman who had written several Tatlers after Mr. *Steel* had dropt them, undertook afterwards to write a Play called *The Drummer or the Haunted House*, under the direction & tutorship of Mr. *Addison*, as he told a friend of his at the Hague, where he was Secretary to the Earl of Strafford in 1710. That friend, to whom Mr. *Harrison* read some Scenes of his Play, thinks they were much the same as here in this Play; but he cannot be positive, that Mr. *Harrison* had quite finished his Play, or tell what additions or alterations Mr. *Addison* may have made in it after Mr. *Harrison*'s death,

[62] Addison, *The Drummer* (Darby and Roberts, 1722), A1r. The exact wording on Darby's title page is: 'With a PREFACE by Sir *Richard Steele*, in an Epistle Dedicatory to Mr. *Congreve*, occasioned by Mr. *Tickell*'s PREFACE to the Four Volumes of Mr. *Addison*'s Works.'
[63] Addison, *The Drummer* ([Johnson], [*c.* 1722]), p. 18.
[64] Addison, *The Drummer* ([Johnson], [*c.* 1722]), p. 18.
[65] Addison, *The Drummer* ([Johnson], [*c.* 1722]), p. 20.

> which was in 1712. Mr. *Tickell* may be best able to give an account of that; & this hint may serve to justify him for not joining this Play with Mr. *Addison*'s Works.[66]

Although Axon and Elliott have discussed this advertisement previously, neither addresses the full significance of Johnson's claims for the play – let alone interpreting the publisher's interest in printing it – and both their remarks have gone unanswered.[67] Given that Johnson was embarking on the *Collection* at the same time as Harrison's visit to The Hague, it should not be surprising if, making his first dramatic endeavours, Harrison had shared 'some Scenes' with Johnson – we know from Chapter Two how important a contact Johnson was for Britons in the Low Countries. Although Johnson places his and Harrison's meeting in 1710, whereas Harrison was actually in The Hague from 1711-12, this discrepancy is not insurmountable as a mistake on Johnson's part. In a letter of 27 August 1711 Harrison told Henry Wakins (*c.* 1666-1727), a fellow diplomat, that 'If it were possible for me to imagine that you have any leisure for trifles, I should venture to consult you upon an affair I am like to be ingaged in with the Muses'.[68] Since none of Harrison's known works are of a similar date, this 'affair […] with the Muses' may well refer to *The Drummer*.

Several scenarios might explain this disputed history. If Addison had provided the initial idea to Harrison, and revised an incomplete draft after Harrison's death, he may well have considered the work to be his own.[69] In his letter to Congreve, Steele says that Addison told him 'a Gentleman then in the Room had written a Play that he was sure I would like, but it was to be a Secret, and he knew I would take as much Pains, since he recommended it, as I would for him'.[70] Under these terms, Addison could claim authorship if the play was successful but remain anonymous if it were not – as was the case with the play's first performances. Whilst such practice might be interpreted as somewhat disingenuous on Addison's part, it seems equally possible that Harrison himself had wished to remain anonymous, or had really left very limited materials from which Addison built a new play. In either case, by the time controversy

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[66] Addison, *The Drummer* ([Johnson], [*c.* 1722]), p. 23. Thomas Wentworth, First Earl of Strafford (1672-1739).
[67] See Axon, 'Literary History', *passim*; Elliott, 'Swift's "Little" Harrison', p. 549.
[68] Frey, Frey and Rule, eds, *Observations from the Hague and Utrecht*, p. 89.
[69] Axon, in 'Literary History', p. 181, summarises his findings: 'the story of the house at Tedworth, haunted by a drummer, which Addison would hear in his boyhood, as his father's residence was in the same county and at no great distance, may have recurred to him in manhood as a fitting subject for treatment in a comedy. That he would suggest it to young William Harrison is not unlikely, seeing the interest that he took in him. The exact share of Harrison as author or amanuensis cannot now be determined, but whether great or little, it need not be doubted that to Addison it owes the excellent qualities of its style.' For the first treatment of this story of the Drummer of Tedworth in print see Joseph Glanvill, *Saducismus Triumphatus: or, Full and Plain Evidence Concerning Witches and Apparitions* (London: Printed for J. Collins, and S. Lownds, 1681).
[70] Addison, *The Drummer* ([Johnson], [*c.* 1722]), p. 21.

arose both Addison and Harrison were dead and Steele left to justify a project with which he had only been partially involved. Johnson tells us 'Mr. *Tickell* may be best able to give an account of that [i.e. Addison and Harrison's contributions]; & this hint may serve to justify him for not joining this Play with Mr. *Addison*'s Works'. Elliott describes Tickell as Harrison's 'close friend and school-mate'.[71] If, to conclude our speculations, Tickell knew that a significant portion of *The Drummer* was by Harrison, yet also that his friend had not wished its authorship to be known, this would go some way to explaining his rejection of the play from Addison's *Works* and simultaneous refusal to propose an alternative author. Johnson left the play out of his own *Works* of Addison (1722).

Assuming that Johnson or his 'friend' were not simply misled by Harrison, for whatever personal reasons, Johnson's notice attached to *The Drummer* opens several intriguing possibilities surrounding the play's authorship, specifically over Harrison's role as an amanuensis and/or collaborator with Addison. These certainly warrant further consideration by any future editor of that play. In his own time, Johnson's engagement in this debate must have suggested to readers that although he was beyond the geographical circle of the London theatres, he was nevertheless fully conversant in their affairs and, as such, that his publications might be expected to present as reliable texts as those issued in the capital. Furthermore, whilst his involvement in *The Drummer* effectively demonstrates Johnson's credentials as an informed man of letters, as I argue in Chapter Two, it also reveals another reason why a full understanding of the *Best English Plays* and its component parts is so important. The knowledge of the London theatrical scene that Johnson brought to bear in developing the contents of his collection suggests its enormous potential as a source on the popularity and reception of plays at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Although this is an area of enquiry that I only touch on in this thesis, Johnson's choices of individual plays published in the *Collection*, and its malleability in the hands of readers (see Chapter Five) offer the possibility of significant further research in this direction.

Engaging with Johnson's *Collection*

This chapter has given the first detailed survey of the publication history of Johnson's *Best English Plays*. Between 1710-12 Johnson published forty plays and supplied these with ten volume titles. He printed twelve more plays 1712-19 and supplied these with further volume titles that supplement the first-series collection. It was during this time, in 1714, that he also

[71] Elliott, 'Swift's "Little" Harrison', p. 546.

issued the Dedication that tells us so much about his aims for the *Collection*, even if this was a short-lived addition. I show that Johnson's second series should be dated from 1720, when he began reprinting first-series works, and that the sixteen volume titles that accompany this collection were probably printed *c*. 1721-22. Whilst it is hard to define where exactly the second series ends, and Johnson's later plays begin, I suggest that the majority of second-series plays were published by the end of 1722 or shortly thereafter. Since almost all plays that carry a date of 1720-21 also display Johnson's monogram device, the lack of such a device in several other plays probably marks them as later works. My findings also suggest that it was in this 1720-23 period that Johnson was most committed to the idea of a visually coherent series, as revealed by his monogram and imprints. Although Johnson's imprints became more likely to state his name and their true origin at The Hague across the course of the first series' printing, he later changed his strategy (perhaps for legal reasons associated with exporting to Britain) by using the new 'Company' imprint on most undated examples of second-series plays; that these *are* second series is corroborated in Chapter Five, which identifies which plays appear alongside which volume titles in extant copies. These undated plays also tally with the second-series title pages since these likewise use the Company imprint. This imprint, combined with the even more prevalent and much earlier monogram device, and octavo format and consistent title-page layouts, constitute a distinctive house style. Together, these various measures identify the many plays by different authors as part of a smart, uniform and recognisable collection even when separated from their volume titles. Although the idea of a play collection itself was not widely repeated until after the ending of perpetual copyright, Chapter Seven demonstrates that a significant number of publishers took inspiration from Johnson's consistent deployment of his monogram.

The analyses that begin and end this chapter, of the Dedication and 'Advertisement', suggest how Johnson himself saw the *Collection*, and offer insights on how he might have chosen particular works beyond their general popularity (in the case of *The Drummer*, because of Johnson's special knowledge of Harrison's involvement and the opportunity to advertise this knowledge to his customers). In their own ways both the 'Advertisement' and Dedication imply a dual interest in the plays as theatre and as literature, which supplements my findings in the bibliographical survey that forms the bulk of this chapter. Furthermore, if Milhous and Hume, and Grant have shown how an understanding of Johnson's work can contribute significantly to debates regarding, respectively, format, play collections and canon formation, and format and editorial history, my study of *The Drummer* shows how Johnson's work might also be incorporated in literary history. I am not an expert on Addison, but any future editor of

this author must take account of Johnson's 'Advertisement' in *The Drummer* and justify Addison's responsibility for that work (or otherwise). The *Collection* is more and different to the sum of its parts, but many of these parts are also important in their own right. A synthesis of bibliographical and other types of analysis provides our most useful toolkit for unearthing the importance of Johnson's work, and situating it in dialogue with British publishing and literary history.

Chapter Four: Johnson as Editor

Outline

We have seen in Chapter One how Grant and McMullin have made the only significant contributions to date in studying Johnson's work as an editor. McMullin offers comments on Johnson's source texts and emendations to *Sir Courtly Nice* (from the *Collection*) and other works, and provides a relatively detailed investigation of Burnet's *History*. Grant focuses on Johnson's *Volpone* (also from the *Collection*) and compares Johnson's decisions to those of other publishers. Whilst Dugas, and Milhous and Hume have undertaken a limited amount of work on Johnson's source texts for his Shakespearean publications, their studies miss some plays and mis-assign others, and a new and more complete survey of Johnson's Shakespearean works is provided below.[1] In this, and in a much fuller investigation of Johnson's edition of *The Tempest*, I follow Grant's methodology of identifying source texts and reading Johnson's plays alongside other editions to identify relationships and differences. When discussing Johnson's edition of Bayle's *Oeuvres*, I follow McMullin's 'softer' form of editorial analysis in his critique of La Motraye's *Voyages*; I interpret Johnson's letters to Pierre Des Maizeaux as a central and previously unnoticed source on the preparation of Bayle. These letters illuminate Johnson's general activities and responsibilities as a publisher and highlight his considerable attention to the quality of his editions. Whilst this material is concerned principally with the *Oeuvres*, comparison with the *textual* evidence of his *Tempest* in particular, suggests a similar degree of concern between his plays and other, non-Anglophone publications.

Johnson's 'Shakespeare' Editions

Johnson published nine 'Shakespearean' plays, related to the actual works of Shakespeare in varying degrees. Where these plays are closest to the Shakespeare originals, Johnson printed his editions from Tonson's 1709 *Works* of the author. However, he also printed adaptations taken from a variety of sources, and in several instances seems to have derived his editions from more than one source. Although the first-series volume titles to volumes one and two of the *Collection* advertise their contents 'By *Mr. Wm. Shakespear*.' and *'Of Mr. Will. SHAKESPEAR'* this did not exclude the possibility of adaptation. It is my contention that

[1] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, pp. 166-67; Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 247.

Johnson sought to provide his readers with a compromise between the best literary texts and current performance practice. The sheer variety of copytexts that he used – for his Shakespearean plays and others – suggests a willingness to adopt new and different strategies on a case-by-case basis, depending on a play's contents and status in the theatre. The plays with which we are concerned are *Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *1 Henry IV*, *Merry Wives*, *The Tempest*, Shadwell's *Timon of Athens* and Granville's *The Jew of Venice*. Of these texts, the four Shakespeare tragedies contained in volume one of the *Collection* each received two editions, one in the first series and one in the second, and the same applies to *Henry IV*, *Merry Wives* and *The Tempest*. *The Jew of Venice* was printed just once, in 1711, and *Timon* appears to have been printed just after the first series, in 1712, and again in the second series – replacing *The Jew of Venice* in many second-series copies of volume two of the *Collection*.

It is my belief that these texts were chosen principally on account of their popularity in the London theatres. By way of comparison, Johnson's treatment of John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham's plays suggests that Johnson made a clear distinction between plays that would be of interest to readers of his *Collection*, and texts that might have a more specialised appeal for those interested in one author in particular. Buckingham's *Cesar* and *Brutus* – both closet dramas and unperformed on the public stages – were printed as a bibliographically integral part of the author's *Works*, with continuous pagination and register, and for this reason seem not to have been intended for inclusion in the *Best English Plays.*[2] Johnson's practice of issuing the same texts individually and as parts of larger groupings (as shown in Chapter Two with Pope's *Works* and *Iliad*) would have allowed such a dual issue of Buckingham's plays if he had anticipated their popularity amongst readers of the *Collection*. His 1722 *Works* of Addison included its own integrated text of the extremely popular *Cato*, but this was also issued independently by Johnson in 1713 and 1730 as part of his *Collection*.[3]

Dryden's *All for Love* – which being taken from Plutarch shares much with Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* – was printed as an independent work and available as part of both the first- and second-series *Collection*s. Although Robert D. Hume is right in asserting that this play cannot be classed as an adaptation of Shakespeare 'by any stretch of the

[2] John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, *The Works of John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, Marquis of Normanby, and Duke of Buckingham*, 2 vols ([The Hague]: Printed for John Barber [Thomas Johnson], 1726). For a brief discussion of Buckingham's plays see Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), pp. 94-95.

[3] Addison's libretto for *Rosamond*, by contrast, appeared in the *Works* only, perhaps because at less than fifty pages it would have been far shorter than any of the other dramatic texts that were published in the *Collection*. *The Drummer*, as we have seen, was printed in the *Collection* but omitted from Addison's *Works*, probably due to Johnson's doubts over its authorship.

imagination', not all readers of Johnson's plays seem to have agreed with this assessment, and some bound *All for Love* alongside his Shakespearean plays.[4] However, be that as it may, the essential point is why Johnson printed *All for Love* rather than *Antony and Cleopatra*, as readers today might expect. The simple answer is their popularity in the London theatres: in the decade preceding the *Collection*'s first issue, *All for Love* enjoyed a steady visibility in the repertory, against no known performances of *Antony and Cleopatra*.[5] We might also notice in passing that, although most modern assessments of Johnson's *Collection* have focussed on his Shakespearean publications, he did in fact afford as much space in it to Dryden as to Shakespeare, which is probably reflective of their works' prevalence in the London theatres at the time Johnson was working.

Volume one of the *Collection*, as Johnson first conceived it, contained a coherent selection of tragedies – *Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet* and *Othello* – all of which appear to follow the text of Rowe's 1709 *Works*. These versions would not, therefore, necessarily have reflected the plays as they were staged at the time of their printing. For instance, a new acting version of *Hamlet* with alterations probably by Davenant was first published in 1676, and this was performed throughout the period.[6] *Macbeth* was likewise staged in Davenant's version, first published in 1674.[7] Although Restoration quartos of *Othello* also include some minor alterations, the play as performed seems largely to have followed Shakespeare's original design.[8] It seems, then, that where the play as performed was *relatively* close to Shakespeare's text – and a tragedy – Johnson printed from the most carefully revised modern version of these, i.e. by Rowe (five of whose own works Johnson also published, beginning with *Jane Shore* in 1714). Rowe's additions to the apparatus accompanying Shakespeare's plays (cast lists, scene divisions and location markers) all provided guidance to readers and must have helped them to

[4] Hume, 'Before the Bard', p. 52. For volumes that place *All for Love* amongst Shakespearean works see, for instance, the State University of New York at Buffalo Library, PR 701.A1 1750 vol. 1 (*Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Timon*, *All for Love*), or Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KW 3037 G 20 (*Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Timon*, *All for Love*, Steele's *The Funeral*, Dryden's *State of Innocence* and *Amphitryon*).
[5] Avery's *The London Stage 1700-1729* records performances of *All for Love* in 1701, 1704, 1705 and 1709 (pp. 7, 56, 67, 87, 110, 191), but no performances of *Antony and Cleopatra*.
[6] William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmark. As it is now Acted at his Highness the Duke of York's Theatre* (London: Printed by Andr. Clark, for J. Martyn, and H. Herringman, 1676). See also Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 28, and Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, pp. 46-51.
[7] See, for instance, William Shakespeare, *Macbeth, A Tragedy*. *With all the Alterations, Amendments, Additions, and New Songs*. *As it's now Acted at the Dukes Theatre* (London: Printed for P. Chetwin, and are to be Sold by most Booksellers, 1674).
[8] See Hazelton Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved: The Restoration Versions in Quarto and on the Stage* (NY: Frederick Ungar, 1963), pp. 355-62.

imagine the plays in performance.[9] Where *Macbeth* in Rowe's edition begins on '*an open Heath*' and *Hamlet* in '*An open Place before the Palace*', the 1676 quarto *Hamlet* gives no initial location, and nor does the 1674 *Macbeth*.[10] Johnson's texts include Rowe's stage directions in both instances.[11]

Whilst Johnson's *Julius Caesar* is again taken from Rowe's edition, in this instance he supplemented his source text with additional and apparently original material, four songs by Buckingham that were intended as interludes for his own adaptation of the play. These were also included by Johnson in his 1726 *Works* of the author, although in this later edition they were integrated within the play; in the 1711 Shakespeare *Caesar* they appear tagged on at the end. In a statement preceding the songs in this edition Johnson tells us:

> As several of *Shakespears* Plays have been altered & brought nearer the taste of the present age, so there was once much talk of this Play's being altered by the present Duke of *Buckingham*, & great expectation of an excellent performance from so good a hand & on a subject so rich. 'Tis not known whether this work be yet finished, nothing of it having ever got abroad, except the four following Songs, which the Reader will be pleased, no doubt, to find here annexed.[12]

In commending adaptation Johnson justifies his own provision of adapted texts for other of his Shakespearean publications (*The Tempest*, *Timon of Athens*, *The Jew of Venice*). The passage also reiterates how knowledgeable Johnson was about the London theatrical scene, not least because of how difficult these songs are to trace in any earlier source. Indeed, his description of the songs having 'got abroad' – i.e. being available in print or manuscript – leaves how exactly Johnson acquired them ambiguous. After extensive research, the earliest alternative edition of the songs I have found is in *Poems on Several Occasions* of 1717, which claims they were first written in 1692 – this correlates with (Shakespeare's) *Julius Caesar*'s possible revival in the early 1690s.[13] We cannot now tell whether or not the Buckingham songs might

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[9] Walsh, in 'Editing and Publishing Shakespeare', p. 23, calls such additions 'a real editorial contribution', noting that 'lists of dramatis personae, act and scene divisions, and indications of scene locations' 'were materially helpful to the reader'.
[10] Shakespeare, *Works* (1709), v, Q3r, U4r.
[11] Shakespeare, *Macbeth* ([Johnson], 1711), p. 3; Shakespeare, *Hamlet* ([Johnson], 1710), p. 3.
[12] Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* ([Johnson], 1711), p. 87. Margaret D. Sankey suggests that two of these songs were in fact written by Pope, but does not elaborate on this, in 'Sheffield, John, first duke of Buckingham and Normanby (1647–1721), politician and author', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2008) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25297> [accessed 7 January 2020].
[13] *Poems on Several Occasions: By His Grace the Duke of Buckingham, Mr Wycherly, Lady Winchelsea, Sir Samuel Garth, N. Rowe, Esq; Mrs Singer, Bevil Higgons, Esq; And other eminent Hands* (London: Printed for Bernard Lintot, 1717), A4r (see also pp. 193-200); William van Lennep, *The London Stage 1660-1800: Part 1: 1660-1700* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), p. 386.

have appeared in a performance, but in either case it seems likely that Johnson went to some considerable trouble to source these texts, quite probably in manuscript (although we do not know who delivered this) since they appear not to have been printed before Johnson added them to his *Julius Caesar*. Their addition to this play chimes with Johnson's practice in *The Drummer* of adding interest to his publications with additional materials or information not available in other editions and, in this particular instance, the efforts he might have gone to in acquiring such texts. The implication of their appearance alongside Rowe's text (rather than a Restoration quarto or revised version) is that Johnson was not averse to marrying what he considered the best text with current performance, and this is even more visible in his practice with Shakespearean comedies. The possibility that Johnson's *Julius Caesar* might contain the first version of these poems in print makes it vital to any subsequent critical editions of these works.

Johnson's texts for *Merry Wives* and *1 Henry IV* (in volume two of the *Collection*) are again taken from Tonson's Rowe edition. Although Rowe placed these in separate volumes, *1 Henry IV* with the histories and *Merry Wives* with the comedies, Johnson brought them together apparently because of their shared use of the popular character of Falstaff.[14] This motivation is suggested by his volume two title page, which calls *1 Henry IV*: '*K. Henry IV. & S. I. Falstaff*'. The play seems to have been performed in Betterton's version – generally cut rather than altered – which was published as '*K. Henry IV. With the Humours of Sir John Falstaff. A Tragi-comedy*'.[15] Rowe's *Works*, by contrast, announced the play as '*The First Part of Henry IV. With the Life and Death of Henry Sirnam'd Hot-Spur*'.[16] Johnson's play, actually entitled '*K. Henry IV. With the Humours of Sir John Falstaff. A Tragi-comedy*' thus follows Betterton's theatrically-orientated title even as it uses Rowe's text. Like Betterton, Johnson refocuses attention on Falstaff, and does not distinguish the work from *2 Henry IV* since only part one was currently performed.[17] Johnson's use of Betterton's title suggests he may well have acquired a Betterton quarto in addition to his Rowe *Works* in order to assess the relative merits of the two texts, even though, in the end, he used the Betterton version only for its title.

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[14] On the popularity of Falstaff in performance see Katherine West Scheil, *The Taste of the Town: Shakespearian Comedy and the Early Eighteenth-Century Theater* (Lewisburg and London: Bucknell University Press and Associated University Presses, 2003), pp. 134-43.

[15] William Shakespeare, *K. Henry IV. With the Humours of Sir John Falstaff. A Tragi-comedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre in Little-Lincolns-Inn-Fields by His Majesty's Servants* (London: Printed for R. W. and sold by John Deeve, 1700).

[16] Shakespeare, *Works* (1709), III, L2r.

[17] Dobson, in *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 117, suggests that *2 Henry IV* was performed by Betterton at Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1702, although if this was the case *1 Henry IV* was still dominant.

Johnson's emphasis on the '*Humours*' of Falstaff in *1 Henry IV* also helped to establish the parallel interest of his '*Amours*' in *Merry Wives*. In 1702 John Dennis' adaptation of this play was published as '*The Comical Gallant: or the Amours of Sir John Falstaffe. A Comedy*'.[18] The only recorded performance of this piece occurred in May of that year, when the characterisation of Falstaff was poorly received, and Shakespeare's original has a similarly underwhelming record of performances in this period.[19] Since other Shakespearean works received considerably more performances – such as *The Taming of the Shrew*, in the guise of John Lacy's *Sauny the Scott*, Tate's *Lear*, or Cibber's *Richard III* – Johnson seems to have taken a chance with *Merry Wives* by marketing it on the back of the successful *1 Henry IV*. He used Rowe's text, and amalgamated the *Works* title of '*The Merry Wives of Windsor. A Comedy*' with that of Dennis to create a direct parallel with the 'Tragi-com[ic]' *1 Henry IV*: '*The Merry Wives of Windsor; with the Amours of Sir John Falstaff. A Comedy*'.[20] This shows the same degree of comparison of alternative editions, and reframing of Rowe's text in light of performance conditions – the popularity of Falstaff – as *1 Henry IV*.[21]

This story is complicated by a copy of Johnson's *Merry Wives* in the Folger Shakespeare Library with a cancelled title page that apparently predates the page I have described, which is as it appears in other known copies. Ford quotes the librarian G. Dawson on this alternative state of the work:

> Leaf A1 was originally a title with Johnson's early fountain ornament (as on *Othello*, 1710), with the name of William Page in the Dramatis Personae on the verso. Before the printing was completed, some one noticed that the editor had excised the only scene in which William appears and that his name ought, therefore, to be omitted from it. Also it was decided that the title-page ought to mention 'The Amours of Sir John Falstaff'. Therefore a new title was set up including this, and one line was removed from the type of the Dramatis Personae and printed on leaf F6, which would otherwise have been blank. Most copies have the new title with 'The Amours' and a smaller ornament – flowers, leaves, and fruit. This is a cancel, attached to a stub. Our copy has the original title as A1 and the second title as F6. The original title is thus: The |

[18] John Dennis, *The Comical Gallant: or the Amours of Sir John Falstaffe. A Comedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury-lane. By his Majesty's Servants* (London: Printed, and Sold by A. Baldwin, 1702).
[19] For Dennis see Avery, *The London Stage 1700-1729*, p. 19. Between 1700 and 1710 there are entries for Shakespeare's *Merry Wives* on 24 April and 18 May 1704, and 23 April and 13 December 1705 only.
[20] Shakespeare, *Works* (1709), I, I6r.
[21] Discussing his source texts for the *Oeuvres* of Bayle, Johnson told Des Maizeaux: 'I would be glad to have several copies […] to refer to in case there was any fault, as I always do as much as I can.' Author's translation from L Add. MS 4284, ff. 178-79 (16 January 1728).

> Merry Wives | of | Windsor. | A | Comedy. | Written by Mr. W. Shakespear. | [O.] | London. | Printed in the Year 1710.[22]

This earlier state of *Merry Wives* is very interesting for a variety of reasons. To begin with the title, Johnson must have decided to change his title to include 'Amours' to relate the play more closely to *1 Henry IV* (with its 'Humours') after printing had begun, which suggests that this was a measure he felt strongly about. More intriguingly, the removal of William from the cast list opens a whole range of possibilities which certainly warrant considerable further investigation. Johnson's *Merry Wives* clearly takes Rowe's version as its principal copytext, following his newly instated *Dramatis Personae*, entry directions and act and scene divisions.[23] The only other texts prior to Johnson's are the early seventeenth-century quartos and Shakespeare folios, which do not have this apparatus, and Dennis' *The Comical Gallant*, which is entirely different in almost every regard. Yet William Page's scene where he receives his lessons – IV.1 – is indeed cut from Johnson's edition (with the scenes of act four renumbered accordingly), but present in Rowe and the quartos and folios. On first impressions, it seems that Johnson may have been editing his own version of *Merry Wives* distinct from any other – and purging it of what he considered to be unnecessary elements. This text merits as full an investigation as that I have afforded *The Tempest*, below. Although IV.1 appears to be the only scene that is cut in its entirety, I have every confidence – based on Johnson's practice in *The Tempest*, and as described by Grant and McMullin – that many more minor changes will have been implemented across the play as a whole, and that Johnson's text thus represents an important and hitherto unnoticed version of the play created for a particular market and purpose.

The other plays appearing in volume two of Johnson's *Collection* were originally Dryden and Davenant's *The Tempest*, with emendations by Johnson from Shadwell's text and Rowe's Shakespeare, and Granville's *The Jew of Venice*. As already stated, Shadwell's *Timon of Athens* seems to have replaced *The Jew of Venice* in most copies of the second-series *Collection* that follow a relatively regular order of plays. The full complexity of *The Tempest* is discussed below. Like *All for Love*, *The Jew of Venice* received multiple performances on

[22] Ford, *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 51. The current Folger Library Catalogue (<hamnet.folger.edu> [accessed 14 January 2020]) also records this copy (PR 2826 1710 Sh.Col.) as 'a bibliographical freak, with cancellandum title at front and cancellans title (naming Falstaff) and dramatis personae (with William Page's name removed because his one scene has been cut from the play) at the back part of the last sheet.' See also *ESTC* N34816.
[23] For Rowe's 'Dramatis Personae' see Shakespeare, *Works* (1709), I, p. 124. See also 'ACT I. SCENE I. | *Enter Justice* Shallow, Slender, *and Sir* Hugh Evans.', p. 126, for instance, for parallels to Johnson's apparatus, which is identical in quotation: Shakespeare, *Merry Wives* ([Johnson], 1710), p. 3.

the early eighteenth-century stage, and was presumably chosen over *The Merchant of Venice* because this received no known performances. Shadwell's *Timon of Athens* was also popular on stage even as the original went unperformed, and no singleton edition of either *The Merchant of Venice* or *Timon* was available in a recent, unadapted Shakespeare text when Johnson began printing his *Collection*. It seems then that unlike the tragedies, and *1 Henry IV* and *Merry Wives* – taken from Rowe – Johnson printed wholesale adaptations (*Timon*, *The Tempest*, *Jew*) when the play as performed and the original Shakespeare texts differed significantly. Where Ford, Dugas and Murphy seem to value Johnson for his contribution to the history of Shakespeare publishing, it should be apparent that he was not seeking to provide a purist rendering of these various texts he published, an authorial works in miniature, but rather a representative sample of Shakespearean plays (marrying popularity in performance with textual quality) as part of his much broader *Best English Plays* project. His treatment of *The Tempest* – as an adaptation but, also, a serious editorial subject – provides a fascinating insight into just how much work Johnson was prepared to do in creating what he thought was the best possible text for one of these plays.

Bayle's *Oeuvres Diverses*

The unusually significant degree of editorial attention Johnson afforded his dramatic texts may be related to his experience managing other publication projects in different genres. Although we have little evidence (excluding the Dedication) for Johnson's intentions for the *Collection* in his own words – and only the texts themselves to go on – a series of correspondence he sent to Pierre Des Maizeaux in London regarding the *Oeuvres* of Pierre Bayle does survive (and is recorded for the first time in this thesis), and provides a crucial insight on his concerns in this very different edition.[24] Although Johnson's work on Bayle should in no way be understood as automatically comparable to his work on the plays, it warrants some assessment as indicative of his wider aims as a publisher and editor, and the sort of issues that might have troubled Johnson in producing his works.

A large folio in four monumental volumes, Bayle's *Oeuvres Diverses* (1727-31) is prestigious by any bibliographical standards, unlike the octavo plays (even though there are many of them). Its copious text is printed on high-quality paper with lavish margins. Both examples I have seen are in high-status leather bindings, and one includes supplementary

[24] Complete correspondence L Add. MS 4284: 1701-1745, ff. 177-91.

engravings of the author bound into each volume.[25] Although the *Oeuvres* was, like the *Collection*, produced without an author's collaboration, *un*like the plays, Johnson worked on these books with several publishers' (and contributors') collaboration.

Johnson's *Oeuvres* was the first relatively complete works of Bayle. Its fourth volume includes the author's letters (which Des Maizeaux was expected to edit), and Johnson also envisaged a biographical essay which did not make it into the finished product. Although the *Oeuvres* as published speaks for itself on Johnson's ambitions for the project – by its inclusion of hitherto disparate materials and physical beauty – it is only in his previously unexplored correspondence that his full (and sometimes unrealised) intentions are revealed. Since the material quality of the *Oeuvres* so far exceeded that of previous editions, especially of those of Bayle's letters, we should not be surprised that Johnson tried to match this physical excellence with a concomitant degree of editorial care. This seems, however – according to Johnson at least – to have been partially frustrated by his colleagues. It will be remembered that this *Oeuvres* was also the work for which Mackie collected subscriptions and distributed copies (see Chapter Two), which shows Johnson's interest in his publications from their conception to delivery.

Earlier editions of Bayle's letters had been published as the *Lettres Choisies* of 1714 and *Nouvelles Lettres* of 1715, both in duodecimo.[26] Des Maizeaux had, more recently, edited another *Lettres* of Bayle with copious notes, published in Amsterdam in 1729.[27] Des Maizeaux provided some supplementary comments to these notes for Johnson's edition, but most of his work is lifted directly from the 1729 text.[28] Johnson seems to have hoped that Des Maizeaux would undertake more thorough revisions, but was frustrated in this by the other publishers' haste to get the work through the press. As Johnson told Des Maizeaux:

> You know, and I find by experience, that a man that has one or more partners has so many Masters, and cannot do what he would oftimes. I no sooner received your letter but I sent it to M^{r} Le Vier and wrote to him that it would be of great use to us to accept of the offer you made

[25] L G.11650-3; L 131.h.1-4 with engravings.

[26] Pierre Bayle, *Lettres Choisies de M$^{r.}$ Bayle, avec des Remarques*, 3 vols (A Rotterdam: Chez Fritsch et Böhm, 1714); *Nouvelles Lettres de M^{r}. Bayle, Au sujet de sa Critique Generale de l'histoire Du Calvinisme de Mr. Maimbourg*, 2 vols (A Amsterdam: Chez David Mortier, 1715). There is also a review of *Lettres Choisies* in *Journal Literaire*, 4.2 (1714).

[27] Pierre Bayle, *Lettres de M^{r}. Bayle, Publiées sur les Originaux: avec des Remarques: par Mr. Des Maizeaux, Membre de la Societé Royale*, 3 vols (A Amsterdam: Aux depens de la Compagnie, 1729). 'la Compagnie' has no connection to Johnson.

[28] The first letter that appears in both *Lettres* (1729) and *Oeuvres Diverses*, IV (1731), to Vincent Minutoli (1639-1709), of 31 January 1673, is accompanied by 21 footnotes in 1729, with all of these reprinted, and four added, in 1731.

> us of more observations and Corrections &c on Lettres de Bayle, of which I had often spoken to him before; I d[e]sired that he would speak with the other partners to send you a~~ne~~ [co]py of Oevres de Bayle [*sic*] fol. which was necessary for adjusting [yo]ur notes &c to our Edition; […] but what thro' indolence, negligence and other reasons, I have not had an answer till yesterday, and then he tells me he had tryed to get the other partners agree [*sic*] to send a copy but could not prevail with them, yet he doubts not the[y]'l give it if we agree for your Vie de M. Bayle. That they press [s]o [h]ard to get the work done that they will rather give it so as they [c]an now than wait longer for some small matters which may come in time for a new Edition, and so he has begun the letters & printed already to the year 1681, which I'm sory for[.][29]

Johnson later elaborates:

> I am not a litle vex'd to be so restrain'd and hindered by others from doing as I would and should do in a mater of such consequence and wherein I am so much concerned; for I have a 4th part of the work and the others have but each an 8th part: but I must have patience and doe as well as I can.[30]

Johnson's partners, based on the *Oeuvres*' imprints for volumes one to three, seem to have been Pieter Husson, Pierre Gosse, Johannes Swart, Hendrik Scheurleer the Elder, Johannes van Duren, Rutgert Christoffel Alberts, Charles Levier and Frederik Boucquet. The same publishers minus Alberts and Gosse also appear on the volume four imprint. Thus for this fourth volume, at least, the evidence of the imprints tallies with Johnson's explanation of his share in the work, Johnson having a quarter and the other six partners an eighth each – how Gosse and Alberts fitted into this picture is impossible to ascertain. We might note here a comment Johnson makes in an earlier letter, where he tells Des Maizeaux 'I doubt not you have seen & examined the 3 vol: of Bayles works which we have already printed, & I should be glad to have your opinion of them, as to our part of the edition', which might imply a visible apportioning of the various parts of the edition amongst the various printer-publishers.[31] Johnson seems to have effectively ignored the prevarications of his partners with regard to sending Des Maizeaux the first three volumes of the work, apparently doing so on his own initiative.[32]

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[29] 'Mr Le Vier' i.e. Charles Levier. L Add. MS 4284, ff. 180-81 (25 March 1729).
[30] L Add. MS 4284, ff. 180-81 (25 March 1729).
[31] L Add. MS 4284, f. 177 (18 December 1727).
[32] See L Add. MS 4284, ff. 180-81 (25 March 1729): 'I shall send you next week by Capt Howlatson of the Britannia sloop a Copy of Oeuv. de Bayle the 3d Vols. to which I shall add the following when finished, at my own risque, it shall be directed for you at Mr du Noyer's shop.' 'Capt Howlatson' i.e. Captain John or Johannes Howlatson; 'Mr du Noyer' i.e. Pierre du Noyer, bookseller in the Strand.

Another significant theme in Johnson's letters to him is that Des Maizeaux might be able to supply some previously unpublished letters. His first surviving letter to Des Maizeaux, referring to manuscript letters by Bayle, asks him: 'If you have or know of any which we perhaps may not have you would oblige us as well as the learned world by communicating them to us, & we should be gratefull for them.'[33] Johnson later suggests:

> If you have any other pieces of Mr Bayle which we have not got (of which I shall here add a note) I should be oblidged and thankfull to you if you would send 'em me, for I would gladly have every thing as full and perfect as I can: and let us doe what we can there will still be some things wanting and some to be mended &c.[34]

Apparently after receiving no reply, Johnson's next letter reiterated the contents of this one, concluding: 'I begg'd a speedy answer to these particulars; and now beg it again, it will very much oblidge.'[35] Repeated references continue right up to his final letter in the British Library collection, which repeats: 'If you find any other pieces of M. Bayle I hope you'l be so kind as to communicate them to me that they may serve for a new Edition.'[36]

Johnson had also hoped that Des Maizeaux might offer a biography of Bayle to be included in their edition. His first letter tells Des Maizeaux: 'If your account of M. Bayles life &c be finished, or so advanced as it might be finished this winter I should be glad to know on what terms we may have it to print with the works.'[37] He later reiterated: 'I beg also you'l let me know on what conditions and in what time you will let us have your Vie de M. Bayle which I'm very desirous to have in this Edition'.[38] Unfortunately, it seems Johnson was overruled in his wishes. Discussing another unidentified piece that Des Maizeaux offered to the consortium, Johnson told Des Maizeaux:

> only M^r^. Le Vier was of my opinion; the others, who are 5 & make the plurality voted not to accept the piece you offer at so high a price. They say it is not worth so much to us now we are so near an end […] They say my opinion is of no more weight in this case than in that of your Life of Bayle which I took much pains to persuade them to purchase of you, & when I thought I had brought it to bear, & had sent you over a copy of Oeuvres de Bayle I was disapointed & they laughed at me. I must own

[33] L Add. MS 4284, f. 177 (18 December 1727).
[34] L Add. MS 4284, ff. 180-81 (25 March 1729). The note appended to this letter includes a detailed list of such works Johnson already had, and those he was still looking for, concluding 'If you could help me to any of them you would oblige me extreamly.'
[35] L Add. MS 4284, ff. 182-83 (21 June 1729).
[36] L Add. MS 4284, ff. 190-91 (22 April 1732).
[37] L Add. MS 4284, f. 177 (18 December 1727).
[38] L Add. MS 4284, ff. 180-81 (25 March 1729).

> I was very sorry you gave away your Life of Bayle to be placed where it does not come half so well as it would have done with the other works. I shall be sorry to not have this piece you have got, in this Edition, for I would always have all that can be got to make a work compleat; so rather than not have it I'll give the Oeuvres de Bayle you have for it & send you the following part as soon as published, all at my own charge, if you will send it sealed up & directed to me by the first Sloop for Rotterdam […]. If you doe not I must have patience & shall not say a word of it to the other partners that they mayn't have a new occasion to laugh at me.[39]

Johnson took great pains in preparing the Bayle edition, endeavouring to secure from Des Maizeaux a variety of new notes to the correspondence, the delivery of fugitive correspondence, and a biography of the author. The majority of this work is absent, or far from apparent, in the edition itself. In his final letter regarding the project (accompanying the fourth volume of the *Oeuvres*) Johnson told Des Maizeaux: 'There are a good many faults of impression &c in this vol. which I believe I should not have passed, had I been [in] the place. but many readers will not observe them.'[40] Although this prestige authorial works edition is not directly comparable to Johnson's *Best English Plays*, it affords some idea of Johnson's perspective on publishing – and the lengths he would go to in producing his ideal edition – in his own words. This provides further evidence for our interpretation of his dramatic texts, and corroborates the material and textual evidence for the quality of these volumes, at least in their intention. The *Oeuvres* should also be taken in conjunction with the evidence I present in Chapter Two for Johnson as an internationally significant publisher. He published the work at The Hague and Rotterdam, in French, but sourced materials from Des Maizeaux in London whilst simultaneously using Mackie to acquire subscriptions in Scotland; his letters to Des Maizeaux suggest Matthieu Marais (1665-1737), resident in Paris, might also have been involved, at least as a subscriber.[41] Taking all this into account, it should come as no surprise that Johnson appears to have managed perfectly well in sourcing multiple copytexts for the plays in his *Collection*, and retailing this to a range of customers over a wide geographical area. Furthermore, publishing the plays independently – rather than working with other publishers,

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[39] L Add. MS 4284, ff. 184-86 (29 November 1729). Johnson later confirms (ff. 190-91 (22 April 1732)): 'According to my promise I have sent the last vol. of Oeuvres de Bayle directed to you, by Captain Howlatson of the Britannia Sloop. He lives at St Katherine & is to be met with on ye Exchange.' Des Maizeaux appears to have given the 'Life' to the publishers of Pierre Bayle, *Dictionaire Historique et Critique, par M^{r}. Pierre Bayle. Quatrieme Edition, revue, corrigée, et augmentée. Avec la vie de l'Auteur, Par Mr. Des Maizeaux*, 4 vols (A Amsterdam and A Leide: Chez P. Brunel; R & J. Wetstein & G. Smith; H. Waesberge; P. Humbert; F. Honoré. Z. Chatelain; & P. Mortier. Chez Samuel Luchtmans, 1730).

[40] L Add. MS 4284, ff. 190-91 (22 April 1732).

[41] L Add. MS 4284, ff. 190-91 (22 April 1732): 'I have not yet sent this vol. to M. Marais at Paris but shall send it by first good occasion.'

as with Bayle – must have given Johnson greater freedom to accomplish his aims than was the case with the Bayle *Oeuvres*.

The Tempest: or, The Enchanted Island

The four seventeenth-century quarto *Works* of Dryden were nonce collections and contained *The Tempest* as it was revised by Shadwell from the Dryden and Davenant version, in any one of several early editions.[42] Because Shadwell's name does not appear on these early quartos it seems unlikely that many readers would have been aware of their full authorial provenance.[43] Before Tonson's 1701 Dryden folio, Dryden and Davenant's text of *The Tempest* was only available in its first quarto of 1670.[44] Tonson's post-1701 singleton editions of *The Tempest* again reverted to Shadwell's text, and neither version of the play appeared in Herringman's 1673 *Works* of Davenant or Tonson's 1720 *Works* of Shadwell.[45] The ambiguity in authorship established by these early editions has persisted into later ones. Both Walter Scott's *Works* of Dryden, and James Maidment and W. H. Logan's *Works* of Davenant unwittingly follow Shadwell's text.[46]

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[42] John Dryden: *The Works of Mr. John Dryden* (London: Printed and are to be Sold by Jacob Tonson, 1691); *The Works of Mr. John Dryden, In Four Volumes*, 4 vols (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1693); *The Works of Mr. John Dryden. In Four Volumes*, 4 vols (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1694); *The First Volume of the Works of Mr. John Dryden*, 4 vols (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1695). Early Thomas Shadwell quartos: 1674 *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island. A Comedy. As it is now Acted at His Highness the Duke of York's Theatre* (London: Printed by T. N. for Henry Herringman, 1674); 1676A *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island. A Comedy: As it is now Acted At His Highness The Duke of York's Theatre* (London: Printed by J. Macock, for Henry Herringman, 1676) [A-L4, M2]; 1676B *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island. A Comedy: As it is now Acted At His Highness The Duke of York's Theatre* (London: Printed by J. Macock, for Henry Herringman, 1676) [A3, B-I4, K1]; 1690 *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island. A Comedy. As it is now Acted At Their Majesties Theatre in Dorset-Garden* (London: Printed by J. M. for H. Herringman; and sold by R. Bentley, 1690); 1676C *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island. A Comedy: As it is now Acted At His Highness The Duke of York's Theatre* (London: Priented [*sic*] by J. Macock, for Henry Herringman, 1676 [1692]) [A-H4]; 1695 *The Tempest, or, the Enchanted Island. A Comedy. As it is now Acted By His Majesties Servants* (London: Printed by Tho. Warren, for Henry Herringman, and Sold by R. Bentley, J. Tonson, F. Saunders, and T. Bennet, 1695). See also Christopher Spencer, ed., *Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1965), p. 436.

[43] Our knowledge that the alterations were by Shadwell derives principally from John Downes' claim in *Roscius Anglicanus, or an Historical Review of the Stage* (London: Printed and sold by H. Playford, 1708), p. 34.

[44] John Dryden, *The Comedies, Tragedies, and Operas Written by John Dryden, Esq; Now first Collected together, and Corrected from the Originals. In Two Volumes*, 2 vols (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, Thomas Bennet, and Richard Wellington, 1701), cited hereafter as Dryden, *Works* (1701); John Dryden and William Davenant, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island. A Comedy. As it is now Acted at his Highness the Duke of York's Theatre* (London: Printed by J. M. for Henry Herringman, 1670).

[45] As a later Tonson edition see, for instance, Thomas Shadwell, *The Tempest: or, the Enchanted Island. A Comedy. As it is Acted at His Highness the Duke of York's Theatre* (London: Printed for J. Tonson: And Sold by W. Feales, 1733); William Davenant, *The Works of Sr William D'avenant K^t^ Consisting of Those which were formerly Printed, And Those which he design'd for the Press: Now Published Out of the Authors Originall Copies* (London: Printed by T. N. for Henry Herringman, 1673); Thomas Shadwell, *The Dramatick Works of Thomas Shadwell, Esq; In Four Volumes*, 4 vols (London: Printed for J. Knapton; and J. Tonson, 1720).

[46] Walter Scott, ed., *The Works of John Dryden: Now First Collected in Eighteen Volumes: Illustrated with Notes, Historical, Critical, and Explanatory, and a Life of the Author*, III (London: Printed for William Miller,

Johnson's integration of elements of both versions of the text, by Dryden and Davenant, and with further alterations by Shadwell, makes his awareness and close reading of these two versions self-evident. Nevertheless, Johnson's title page leads one to suspect that he too may not have known who exactly was responsible for the Shadwell text, advertising that the play was 'First written by Mr. William Shakespear. & since altered by Sr. William Davenant, and Mr. John Dryden.'[47] Although he uses the 1701 Dryden folio as his copytext, Johnson inserted scenic descriptions from a Shadwell quarto which, I would argue, were intended to match Rowe's additions to Shakespeare's plays (used in several of Johnson's other Shakespearean works) and aid the reader in visualising the play in performance. Johnson also appears to have referred to Rowe's edition of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* for further elucidation of certain corrupt or ambiguous passages in the Dryden and Davenant, and Shadwell texts (see below).[48]

Shadwell's version of the play reorganises several of the scenes in Dryden and Davenant's text as well as adding locations and divisions. In act two, for instance, Dryden and Davenant's three scenes involving the courtiers, then the clowns, and finally Prospero each appear without locations or scene breaks. In Shadwell's text these are transposed and separated so that the scene involving the clowns, where 'The Scene changes to the wilder part of the Island, 'tis compos'd of diver sorts of Trees, and barren places, with a prospect of the Sea at a great distance' (II.1) is followed by Prospero in 'Scene Cypress Trees and Cave' (II.2), and then the courtiers, on 'A wild island' (II.3).[49] Johnson retained the scene order as it appears in Dryden and Davenant's text but reassigned Shadwell's stage directions to the appropriate parts of the play. A direction regarding 'a wilder part of the Island […]' now introduces the courtiers (II.1), followed by 'Another wild part of the Island' for the clowns (II.2), and 'Cypress Trees and Caves' [*sic*] for Prospero (II.3).[50]

Although Johnson cut Shadwell's lengthy opening narration of the play's overture and its orchestration, alongside his description of the proscenium arch and its allegorical decoration, he did provide a paraphrase of Shadwell's description of the storm, absent from Dryden and Davenant's text.[51] After describing the music and stage, Shadwell's text continues:

1808); James Maidment and W. H. Logan, eds, *The Dramatic Works of Sir William D'Avenant: with Prefatory Memoir and Notes*, V (London: William Paterson, 1874).

[47] *The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710), A1r. Johnson's versions are hereafter cited without author owing to their complex melding of texts.

[48] The source texts for Johnson's other Dryden works has not been established. Whilst the 1701 folio seems his most likely source, the possibility that these works were also supplemented with consultation of alternative versions would be a rewarding subject of enquiry.

[49] Shadwell, *The Tempest* (1674), pp. 14, 20, 26.

[50] *The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710), pp. 26, 31, 39.

[51] See Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest* (1670), p. 1.

> Behind this [arch] is the Scene, which represents a thick Cloudy Sky, a very Rocky Coast, and a Tempestuous Sea in perpetual Agitation. This Tempest (suppos'd to be rais'd by Magick) has many dreadful Objects in it, as Several Spirits in horrid shapes flying down amongst the Sailers, then rising and crossing in the Air. And when the Ship is sinking, the whole House is darken'd, and a shower of Fire falls upon 'em. This is accompanied by Lightening, and several Claps of Thunder, to the end of the Storm.[52]

Johnson gives us:

> The Scene represents a thick cloudy sky, a very rocky coast & a tempestuous Sea. This Tempest raised by Magick has many dreadful objects in it, as several spirits in horrid shapes flying down amongst the Sailors, then rising & crossing in the air. And when the ship is sinking the whole stage is darkened & a shower of fire falls upon them. This is accompanied with Lightning & several Claps of Thunder, to the end of the storm.[53]

Whilst reducing the elements of Shadwell that recorded a particular performance, Johnson uses his stage direction to immerse us in a very dramatic world indeed. Why he chose to change certain parts of the passage is impossible to recover fully. His alterations of punctuation seem to accord with McMullin's description of him as a 'slightly pedantic copy-editor', but the increased emphasis on the tempest's 'Magick' does suggest some creative reasoning.[54] Note also the omission of 'perpetual agitation', and clarifying of Shadwell's 'House' being darkened to the 'stage' in Johnson's version.

Johnson or his compositor made a significant number of alterations to the first scene of *The Tempest* in addition to inserting the passage quoted above (table 1). In light of the evidence of this one scene, we might expect there to be several hundred changes across the play as a whole. Changes to this scene are most frequently visible in case, punctuation and spelling, and many such changes later in the play result from Johnson's versification of prose passages in the 1701 text.

Table 1: Collation of *The Tempest* I.1

Dryden, *Works* (Tonson, 1701), I		***The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710)**	
229.0 SD	ACT I.	9.0 SD	ACT. I. | SCENE I.
229.1	*Vent*.	9.1	*Ventoso*.
229.4 SD	*Enetr*	10.2 SD	*Enter*

[52] Shadwell, *The Tempest* (1674), p. 1.
[53] *The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710), p. 9.
[54] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 106.

229.7	Ill weather! let's	10.5	I'll weather! Let's
229.14	*Trinc.*	10.15	*Trinc*
229.16	you mar	10.17	You mar
229.19	I, when the Sea is hence;	10.20	Ay, when the Sea is: Hence;
229.20	to	10.21	To
229.22	self: you	11.1	self. You
229.22	Counsellour,	11.2	Counsellour;
229.23	silence:	11.3	silence;
229.24	out	11.5	Out
229.28	us;	11.10	us:
229.36	well! hold	11.19	well! Hold
229.36	nip	11.19	Nip
230.7	we	12.6	We
230.8	Hamocks! cut	12.8	Hamocks! Cut
230.8	Hamocks, come	12.8-9	Ha-|mocks; come
230.9	heave	12.10	Heave
230.17	and	12.18	And
230.18	*Trinc.*	12.19	*Trinc*
230.19	Top-sail	12.21	Top sail
230.21	Foresail	12.23	foresail
230.21	trim	12.24	Trim
230.23	Mackrel-Gale	12.26	Mackrel Gale
230.24	the Wind	12.27	The Wind
230.24	aboard	12.28	aboard,
230.28 SD	Mustacho	13.4 SD	Mustacha
230.29	six	13.5	Six
230.35	shall	13.12	Shall
230.35	ha'	13.13	Ha'
230.37	Pox	13.14	pox
230.43	Nut-shel	13.22	Nut-shell
230.47	Crimes,	14.4	Crimes;
230.56	mearly	14.16	meerly
231.2 SD	*Exeunt*	14.20 SD	*Ex.*
231.8	the young Prince	14.28-29	The | Prince

Johnson's consistent use of italicisation to denote songs, and provision of line breaks between these and the surrounding text, must also have improved the play's legibility. In the masque of devils, for instance, Johnson gives a much clearer differentiation of the sung parts and interspersed prose than in the 1701 version.[55] He also removed a redundant speech heading from one of Ariel's songs.[56]

Examples of more conjectural emendations by Johnson are several, and argue for deliberate editorial intention rather than simply a compositor's preference. In scene one, when Trincalo (i.e. Trinculo) asks Stephano 'what cheer?', Johnson changes this from 'Ill weather!' to 'I'll weather!' (see above), a reading which does not appear in the Restoration quartos. When in Johnson's edition (in the same scene) Gonzalo urges Trincalo 'good Friend be patient', his response in the 1701 text is 'I, when the Sea is hence; what care these Roarers for the name of

[55] *The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710), pp. 28-29; Dryden, *Works* (1701), I, pp. 236-37.
[56] *The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710), p. 30; Dryden, *Works* (1701), I, p. 238.

Duke?' Johnson's version instead follows a corrected version of the 1670 Dryden and Davenant quarto: 'Ay, when the Sea is: Hence; what care these Roarers for the name of Duke?'[57] It is this corrected version of the Dryden and Davenant quarto that is also followed by the Shadwell quartos, and it seems likely, therefore, that Johnson undertook some general collation between the Shadwell and 1701 texts as well as importing Shadwell's scene divisions. Rowe's 1709 text of Shakespeare's original gives 'When the Sea is; hence.' and since we know Johnson had access to this version as well – it is in the same Rowe volume as *Merry Wives* – it is possible that this too was consulted.[58] Another interesting change (this time in I.2) is Johnson's alteration of Prospero's 'Mated' – in 1701 – to 'fated': 'on a night fated to his design, *Antonio* opened the Gates of *Millan*'.[59] The 1674 Shadwell text also has 'mated', and so Johnson's version suggests more certainly this time reference to Rowe's Shakespeare: 'one Mid-night | Fated to th'Purpose, did Antonio open | The Gates of Millan'.[60] To use a version of the original text – even when varying significantly, as here – to make emendations to its adapted version seems to show real creative inspiration on Johnson's part.

Most of *The Tempest*'s later editors (excluding Maidment and Logan) have retained the loose amalgamation of verse and prose appearing in Dryden and Davenant's and Shadwell's texts. Johnson however, as already noted, undertook several quite significant changes to lineation and versification, regularising existing verse and transposing passages which were previously prose into verse. The 1701 Dryden text, for instance, gives:

> *Ariel*. All hail great Master, grave Sir, hail, I come to answer thy best pleasure, be it to fly, to swim, to shoot into the fire, to ride on the curl'd Clouds; to thy strong bidding, task *Ariel* and all his qualities.
> *Prosp*. Hast thou, Spirit, perform'd to point the Tempest that I bad thee?
> *Ariel*. To every Article.
> I boarded the Duke's Ship, now on the Beak, now in the Waste, the Deck, in every Cabin; I flam'd amazement, and sometimes I seem'd to burn in many places on the Top-Mast, the Yards and Bore-sprit; I did flame distinctly.[61]

This passage in Dryden and Davenant is a direct lift from Shakespeare's original, and Johnson versifies the text as it also appears in Rowe:

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[57] Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest* (1670), p. 2. The variant states of this quarto are listed in Maximilian E. Novak and George Robert Guffey, eds, *The Works of John Dryden*, X (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), p. 494.
[58] Shakespeare, *Works* (1709), I, p. 4.
[59] Dryden, *Works* (1701), I, p. 232; *The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710), p. 18.
[60] Shadwell, *The Tempest* (1674), p. 7; Shakespeare, *Works* (1709), I, p. 9.
[61] Dryden, *Works* (1701), I, p. 232.

Ariel. All hail great Master, grave Sir, hail I come
To answer thy best pleasure, be 't to fly,
To swim, to shoot into the fire, to ride
On the curl'd Clouds; to thy strong bidding, task
Ariel and all his qualities.
Prosp. Hast thou, Spirit,
Perform'd to point the Tempest that I bad thee?
Ariel. To every Article.
I boarded the Duke's Ship, now on the Beak,
Now in the Waste, the Deck, in every Cabin,
I flam'd amazement; and sometimes I seem'd
To burn in many places on the Top-Mast,
The Yards and Bore-sprit; I did flame distinctly.[62]

Although the second unpunctuated 'hail' of line one here is a departure from the comma of Dryden's text and exclamation mark of Rowe's edition – and may seem a deliberate pun on 'hale' – Johnson's second-series edition reverts to 'hail,' suggesting his care in revising.[63]

This second Johnson edition appears to have taken his first as its copytext, which was also his practice elsewhere.[64] Nevertheless, even a brief perusal of the later edition of *The Tempest* suggests that Johnson made many further emendations, probably with reference to an early Shadwell quarto.[65] For instance, 'Boy!' in Johnson 1710 and Tonson 1701 becomes 'Boy! Boy!' as it appeared in the Shadwell quartos.[66] Likewise 'Work you then.' in Johnson 1710 and Tonson 1701 is expanded to 'Work you then, & be damn'd.' which seems a deliberate reworking of the Shadwell quartos' 'Work you then and be poxt.'[67] 'Seere-Capstorm' in Johnson's first edition is altered to 'Steer-Capstorm', in which form it also appears in the two Shadwell editions of 1676 and the misdated edition of 1692, which narrows down further which text he was most probably using.[68] However, despite these changes, a general drive to slim down the amount of paper used by each play which is visible across the second-series *Collection* (each one frequently taking up fewer pages than Johnson's first editions),

[62] Quotation from *The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710), p. 19; compare Shakespeare, *Works* (1709), I, p. 10.
[63] *The Tempest* ([Johnson], [n.d.]), p. 17.
[64] See Jordan, 'Oroonoko', p. 57. The repeated misprint of 'Sakespeare's Stile' on the title pages of Dryden, *All for Love* ([Johnson], 1710) and (Johnson, 1720) also seems to point to Johnson's second edition of this work being set from his own first edition.
[65] This revision process is also noted by Jordan, in 'Oroonoko', p. 57.
[66] *The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710), p. 10; Dryden, *Works* (1701), I, p. 229; *The Tempest* ([Johnson], [n.d.]), p. 10; Shadwell, *The Tempest* (1674), p. 2.
[67] *The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710), p. 13; Dryden, *Works* (1701), I, p. 230; *The Tempest* ([Johnson], [n.d.]), p. 12; Shadwell, *The Tempest* (1674), p. 4.
[68] *The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710), p. 11; *The Tempest* ([Johnson], [n.d.]), p. 11; Shadwell, *The Tempest* (1676A-C), p. 2. Cf. Shadwell, *The Tempest* (1674), p. 3, which has 'Seere-Capstorm'. The correct reading is apparently 'jeere-capstorm': see Novak and Guffey, eds, *The Works of John Dryden*, X, p. 351.

presumably undertaken to reduce costs, also leads to further alterations which seem pragmatic rather than editorial. Various stage directions are shifted and a quantity of passages which Johnson had previously made into verse are transferred back into prose.[69] The second edition of Johnson's play also has significantly more wrong case punctuation, and considerably less capitalisation than the 1710 text, which perhaps points to a different compositor – this is perfectly possible whether or not Johnson was his own printer.

In summary, then, Johnson's first edition of *The Tempest* used the 1701 Dryden and Davenant folio text as its copytext, although it incorporated a number of changes from a Shadwell quarto, most noticeably his scenic divisions and stage directions. Johnson's text also shows compelling evidence for further emendations from Rowe's 1709 Shakespeare *Works*; Johnson had already used this text for other of his Shakespearean editions. Such comparison and use of multiple copytexts has not been generally attributed to non-Guild publishers in this period, and marks Johnson's work out as unique – at least until the potential editorial work of other reprinters undergoes further investigation. Johnson's second edition of *The Tempest* was printed from his first, but with further consultation of a Shadwell quarto, probably of 1676 or of the 1692 edition which carries a date of 1676 (see above). This second Johnson edition is nevertheless to some degree marred by a compression of the text visible across many of Johnson's second-series publications. The evidence suggests that the over-riding editorial strategy of Johnson's *The Tempest*, and perhaps of the *Collection* in general, was governed by a desire to marry the editorial rigour more usually associated with authorial works editions to plays as they were enjoyed in the theatres.

Johnson's edition of *The Tempest* is important since it corroborates and extends McMullin and Grant's similar findings regarding his meticulousness as an editor. Indeed, the collation of three versions of what was, in essence, a popular performance text shows a degree of commitment to the quality of his editions by Johnson that must be seen to be believed. I know of few British publishers or editors of drama in the first half of the eighteenth century who have been shown to use multiple editions in this way (especially if we exclude Shakespeare's editors), and there has been even less investigation over whether such work was undertaken by publishers working at the fringes of the trade. As is shown in the following chapters, a large number of readers and later publishers appreciated Johnson's editions, although whether they knew the full detail of his editorial practices is rather harder to discover.

[69] For stage directions see, for instance, *The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710), p. 12 and ([n.d.]), p. 11; for verse into prose see (1710), p. 14 and ([n.d.]), p. 13.

One previous reader of Johnson's *The Tempest* who does seem to have afforded it serious editorial appraisal is Montague Summers, who refers to the text in both *Shakespeare Adaptations* and his *Works* of Dryden.[70] In telling the textual history of the Dryden and Davenant *Tempest*, Summers suggests that Johnson's text 'contains, it is true, more of the comedy than most editions supply, although even in this case Shadwell's elaborate scenic directions are freely interpolated throughout, and the text is very faulty, whole lines and speeches having been carelessly dropped.'[71] This is very unfair criticism: as has been shown, Johnson's departures from the 1701 Dryden and Davenant folio text should usually be explained as deliberate editorial choices rather than carelessness. Indeed, despite his criticism, Summers' *Shakespeare Adaptations* follows Johnson's versification of the 'All hail […]' section quoted above.[72] Summers' *Works* of Dryden also refers to Johnson's edition regarding various disputed readings.[73] Although Summers' editions are by no means perfect, his consultation of Johnson does point the way to the rewards that might be gained in consulting this early eighteenth-century publisher in our own editorial endeavours. Johnson made large numbers of emendations to his texts based on the comparison of multiple editions and his knowledge of contemporary usages and, whilst we might not always agree with his decisions, they certainly merit a fair degree of consideration.

Summary

This chapter supplements the work of Grant and McMullin by applying similar strategies of comparison to Johnson's Shakespearean texts as these authors have afforded other of the publisher's works. In doing this it provides a more accurate and detailed itinerary of his Shakespearean texts and their sources than has hitherto been available, and uncovers Johnson's extremely unusual comparison and collation of at least three different versions of *The Tempest* in preparing his editions of that work. It also points up further work that needs to be done in uncovering how far his edition of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* might constitute an independent version of this play. My own interpretation of Johnson's work – besides noting the extraordinary care it shows – is that the publisher was applying editorial practices usually reserved for more esoteric texts, or at least playwrights' complete works editions, to a selection

[70] Montague Summers, ed., *Shakespeare Adaptations* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1922); Montague Summers, ed., *Dryden: The Dramatic Works*, II (London: Nonesuch Press, 1932).
[71] Summers, ed., *Shakespeare Adaptations*, p. xii.
[72] Summers, ed., *Shakespeare Adaptations*, p. 17. Cf. Summers' own copytext for this edition, Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest* (1670), pp. 7-8, which like the 1701 folio presents this passage as prose.
[73] Summers, ed., *Dryden: The Dramatic Works*, II, pp. 422, 423, 432.

of plays by multiple authors chosen largely for their popularity on the contemporary London stage. Nevertheless, choosing his copytext for each play based on its own individual circumstances, Johnson was by no means a slave to theatrical practice. He relied on Rowe when he saw that this provided the best text for his readers, or when Rowe's apparatus provided a better reading experience and (apparent) record of performance than a version of the text as it was actually performed, but lacking in stage directions. *Contra* Summers' criticism of Johnson (the author does not provide examples of his faults), Johnson's meticulousness in these editions may have been developed in conjunction with his practice on more expensive publications, such as the *Oeuvres* of Bayle. Although Johnson's letters regarding Bayle do not discuss the minutiae of editorial decisions revealed by comparison of texts, the evidence they present regarding his desire to source the best supplementary items for his publications tallies with his use of multiple alternative editions in preparing his Shakespearean texts, and the reproduction of Buckingham's songs alongside Rowe's *Julius Caesar*. The study of these letters, and Johnson's desire to collaborate with Des Maizeaux, might also provide some answer to the relatively negative assessment of Johnson's dealings with others that is presented in the latter half of McMullin's article, especially his supposed attempts to 'defraud' La Motraye in preparing the author's *Voyages*.[74] Although McMullin absolves Johnson of the majority of La Motraye's accusations – 'the offender seems always to have been Van Duren' i.e. Jean Van Duren, Johnson's partner on the project – McMullin suggests that both Van Duren *and* Johnson appear to have extorted excess profit from the second volume of the *Voyages* when they 'pocketed' La Motraye's subscription payments.[75] This seems hard to believe of the publisher who provided what were essentially free copies of Bayle to Des Maizeaux and – at least by Johnson's account – argued so assiduously for his interests with his co-publishers.

[74] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 110.
[75] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 111.

Chapter Five: *Best English Plays* in Print

Distribution, Provenance and Bindings as Evidence of Sales

We do not have records of exactly how many copies of each of his plays Johnson printed. However, if we follow standard print runs of the time, then we can assume that at least 500 copies of every Johnson play was printed in each edition.[1] Furthermore, when we consider the greater survival rate of second-series editions of Johnson's plays (see below), we might conclude that these were printed in even greater number than his first-series works, which indicates Johnson's growing belief in the popularity of his *Collection*. However far this is the case, since we know that Johnson printed 111 different editions of his plays, it is apparent that he made tens of thousands of relatively inexpensive playtexts available (at *c.* 6*d* or 8*d* each) that were not previously there to be read, and this alone qualifies him for greater consideration within the history of English drama publishing. Indeed, considering that there were no other major printers of English plays in Europe at this time (as is attested by their absence from the *ESTC*), and that the current distribution of his books suggests continental Europe was an important market for Johnson, he must bear significant responsibility for the dissemination of English culture in Europe at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Furthermore, as is demonstrated in Chapter Six, Johnson's plays continued to be a readily saleable product on the continent long after his decease.

This chapter considers the distribution, binding arrangements and provenance of Johnson's plays as a means of uncovering Johnson's markets for these works. Although such a methodology is by no means perfect – since books move around and are rebound, only a selection survive, and the dating and attribution of provenance marks can be ambiguous – because of the sheer quantity of Johnson's books still extant some highly suggestive trends can be identified.[2] No-one has previously attempted to catalogue existing copies of Johnson's plays

[1] On print runs see Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, pp. 98-100.

[2] Of the various sources for the history of copies that I use in this chapter, provenance marks are the most certain in their interpretation, and are used wherever possible. My taking the current location of books as an indicator for their original area of reception (which is used when other provenance information is lacking) is of course imperfect. Whilst a variety of methods and sources do exist to uncover the exact provenance of each copy (such as owners' marks, accession records, probate inventories, wills, and catalogues and bindings), as outlined by Pearson in *Provenance Research*, such deep investigation goes beyond the scope of the overview of Johnson's plays undertaken in this thesis. This more detailed excavation would indeed be a valuable undertaking, and could do much to confirm or complicate my findings, but the outline I provide below is a necessary starting point at this early stage of research on Johnson. Where I adopt the working assumptions that 'books often (but by no means always) circulated in particular localities for some time' (Pearson, p. 66; see also p. 159), and that, therefore, the majority of copies currently in Britain were sold to British people, and most of those currently on the continent to Europeans, we should also expect occasional exceptions to occur (see Pearson, p. 2).

and their copy-specific features, although this is essential if we are to understand the scale and reach of Johnson's business, how his books were treated by readers (and thus why they wanted to buy plays from Johnson), and the *Collection*'s potential impact on later publishers. The current *ESTC* records for Johnson's plays are relatively incomplete, and the complex range of ways in which a collection might be organised, and what works or editions of those works it contains, with or without general volume titles, is often lacking from library records; this chapter provides a clearer description of these copies than is available elsewhere. I have also identified many hundreds of previously unknown copies of Johnson's plays that are entirely absent from *ESTC* records. All large multi-volume collections for which I have been able to verify contents are listed below, and these are supplemented with a representative sample of some smaller multi-play volumes and singletons. This record of copies should mark a starting point for any future investigation of Johnson's work.[3]

The survey of copies of Johnson's plays undertaken in this chapter is not in itself intended as a history of reading or of their reception. I use marks made by readers in their books as a means of understanding their provenance – and to offer some slight indication as to the background or possible expectations of an owner – but do not attempt to uncover reading mentalities. Several authors have provided fascinating and important studies on this subject, and have used readers' marks in books as a key source in their work. William Sherman, Heather Jackson and Stephen Orgel, for instance, have each written highly illuminating studies of readers' marks in books, and all of their writings have been influential in my thinking on this subject.[4] Nevertheless, the essential concern of their writings – with readers rather than publishers – makes the applicability of their findings to this particular thesis tangential. Of far more use in this instance is Mark Towsey's *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment*, where the author uses provenance information to construct a broad history of reading materials and their availability in eighteenth-century Scotland as well as reconstructing the interests and concerns of individual readers.[5] Indeed, the structure and methodology of Towsey's work, which in its

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Nevertheless, since it seems as likely (without evidence to the contrary) that any movement of books between British and European libraries has gone both ways, such exceptions should balance each other out. This at least works as our guiding principle before further investigative work can be done.

[3] My full findings lists, documenting every copy of Johnson's plays that I have identified, of which over half are unrecorded by *ESTC*, are currently a work in progress. An updated text of these lists will form an appendix to any subsequent version of this thesis that is revised for publication.

[4] William H. Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); H. J. Jackson, *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001); Stephen Orgel, *The Reader in the Book: A Study of Spaces and Traces* (Oxford: OUP, 2015).

[5] Towsey's first stated aim, in *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment*, p. 2, is to prove that in provincial Scotland 'consumers of the great texts of the Scottish Enlightenment – the men and women who read them, and whose

first half uses a large group of sources (primarily library catalogues and borrowing records) to explore 'the means by which Scottish Enlightenment books were encountered in provincial Scotland' (in 'Private Libraries', 'Subscription Libraries', 'Circulating Libraries' and 'Religious and Endowed Libraries'), is far more applicable to our study of the geographical and social range of Johnson's plays than the much more in-depth discussion of individual readers or copies undertaken by Sherman, Jackson and Orgel.[6] As stated in the Introduction to this thesis, where Towsey uses records of book borrowing and book ownership to uncover communities of readers, 'the circulation and social impact of the books of the Scottish Enlightenment in provincial Scotland', I use the evidence of extant copies of Johnson's books to identify the markets of this single publisher, and the potential field of influence of one of his works, the *Best English Plays*.[7] Nevertheless, whilst Towsey's principal concern is with readers, he also uncovers the crucial roles of a variety of booksellers and library proprietors in making these books available: 'the Enlightenment would not have been possible in Scotland had it not been for enterprising booksellers'.[8] Finally, just as Towsey uses library records to demonstrate that 'some of the most challenging books of the Scottish Enlightenment could indeed be encountered by readers quite far down the social scale', the evidence of Johnson's books also implies that a wider geographical and social community was afforded access to English plays during the first half of the eighteenth century than is necessarily apparent from other sources.[9]

Another profound influence on my work in this chapter is Jeffrey Todd Knight's *Bound to Read*, which offers an important example of how historical engagements with texts can be uncovered not just through markings in printed books, but by the analysis of binding styles, textual associations made through shared bindings, and library records. Each of these sources provides evidence for the author's concept of a '"material intertextuality" – an intertextuality based on physical rather than purely discursive proximity – […] excavating early compilations

interest made them commercially viable – reflected seriously on what they read and through doing so participated in the experience in a way that modern scholarship has so far grossly underestimated.'

[6] Towsey, *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment*, p. 18, and 'Contents', unpaginated. As the seminal work on uncovering a particular individual's reading strategies see Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, '"Studied for Action": How Gabriel Harvey Read his Livy', *Past & Present*, 129 (1990), 30-78.

[7] Towsey, *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment*, p. 18.

[8] Towsey, *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment*, p. 295.

[9] Towsey, *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment*, p. 19. The author goes on to suggest (p. 20) that his provincial readers 'developed their own brand of Enlightenment, which was distinct in a number of important ways from that produced by the Edinburgh *literati*.' He adds the caveat, however, that 'before we can consider reading such elaborate meaning into individual readers' experiences it will be necessary to show that Scottish readers could get hold of the books that formed its [i.e. the Enlightenment's] principal achievement.'

and assessing the interpretive implications of their varying logics of assembly.'[10] Most particularly, the author's chapter on 'Making Shakespeare's Books: Material Intertextuality from the Bindery to the Conservation Lab' reveals how a material reading of historical copies of Shakespeare's texts in early bindings uncovers a radically different history of the author's reception to that which is generally understood from apparently pristine exemplars: 'Behind the modern-looking, individually bound book lies a significantly wider range of material contexts within which Shakespeare's works might have been encountered.'[11] Like those writers discussed above, Knight's work is also, to a degree, preoccupied with individual reading practices. Nevertheless, whereas Sherman, Jackson and Orgel are concerned mostly with readers' mentalities, Knight comes closer to my own concerns in this thesis by also engaging with readers' (and writers') 'organization and physical assembly' of books.[12] For instance, the case studies that conclude his chapter on Shakespeare explore volumes that 'combine Shakespearean and non-Shakespearean works in formats not set out in advance by producers, but that embody distinct possibilities for interpretation grounded in historical forms of text assembly.'[13] Although my study does not delve so deeply into individual copies of books as Knight undertakes, I do use the arrangements in which Johnson's books are preserved to identify *why* readers might have chosen to buy plays from him specifically or, looked at the other way, what Johnson's *Best English Plays* offered that was not available from any other publisher. One simple answer is its versatility. Extant copies of the *Collection* demonstrate that many customers wanted and could afford the full range of Johnson's plays. However, since these could also be purchased individually from Johnson for a relatively small price, he catered to those with smaller purses as well, and acknowledged and encouraged such self-determination in readers' organisational strategies at the beginning of the eighteenth-century as Knight shows were similarly integral to book-collecting, 'a culture of compiling', in the early modern period.[14]

Knight's 'broader methodological claim' is that 'book-collecting practices – from early modern compiling to modern library curatorship and conservation – have deep and largely unacknowledged interpretative effects, both in literary criticism and in perceptions of literary history and periodization', and *Hamlet* provides his chief example in this regard: 'The material contexts and organizing categories that for early readers informed the text's status and range

[10] Knight, *Bound to Read*, p. 16. The author later refers to this concept as 'proximate' intertextuality (p. 82).
[11] Knight, *Bound to Read*, pp. 54-84 (quotation from p. 64).
[12] Knight, *Bound to Read*, p. 3.
[13] Knight, *Bound to Read*, p. 70.
[14] Knight, *Bound to Read*, p. 3.

of potential meanings have been replaced by a modern, circumscribed idea of what *Hamlet* should be.'[15] This is of course intensely relevant to Johnson's edition of the play, published alongside other plays (sometimes adapted, and not just by Shakespeare) that were popular in performance, and bound by readers in a wide variety of both high- and low-status contexts (see below), which indicate these readers' understandings of the work and, more importantly here, Johnson's willingness to cater for such customers with his extremely versatile *Collection*. Where, in Chapter Three, I reconstructed the production history of *Best English Plays*, and an ideal schema of organisation as it left Johnson's printshop, this chapter takes serious account of Knight's advice that we can 'ground historical interpretations – and discover new ones – in […] largely reader-driven, recombinant productions', in this instance examining how the many ways in which readers selected Johnson's texts can inform our understanding of his markets, and the popularity and significance of his *Collection*.[16]

My first concern in this chapter is to reveal the wide distribution of Johnson's books, with relatively contemporaneous marks or records of ownership for large numbers of his plays recording their circulation in England, Scotland, Ireland and much of continental Europe. However, following Knight's methods of interpreting bindings and textual arrangements, we are also able to learn much about what other texts readers read with Johnson's plays, which adds to our understanding of why they bought them. Their low cost and versatility (as singletons) meant that many were gathered with works by other publishers – with no regard for modern distinctions between legitimate and reprinted texts – and were simply one convenient form in which an author or play might be read. Many were used to create nonce collections of the works of one author, and offered a cheaper alternative to any official works of that author that might have contained much a reader wasn't interested in.[17] Johnson's selection of plays

[15] Knight, *Bound to Read*, p. 11.
[16] Knight, *Bound to Read*, p. 56.
[17] Shakespeare's plays offer the most extreme price comparison (prices for Johnson's plays are quoted in *stuivers*). Johnson's first-series editions of *Caesar* (6), *Macbeth* (6), *Hamlet* (8), *Othello* (8), *Henry IV* (6), *Merry Wives* (6), *The Tempest* (8) and *The Jew of Venice* (6) would have cost 54 *stuivers* in total (prices from advertisement in Smith, *Phaedra and Hippolitus* (Johnson, 1711), F2r), which is around 5*s*. Rowe's 1709 *Works* of Shakespeare cost 30*s* (St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, p. 700). To take another example, the five Rowe plays published by Johnson (*Jane Shore* (1714), *Jane Gray* (1718), and *The Ambitious Step-Mother*, *Fair Penitent* and *Tamerlane* (all n.d.)) would have cost *c.* 35 *stuivers* (taking an average per play price of 7 *stuivers*, since no prices are recorded for these works), which translates to something under 3*s*. Milhous and Hume, in *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 220, report that around 1720 Curll was offering 'Mr Rowe's *Poems* and *Plays* in 3 Volumes' for 10*s*, more than triple the price of Rowe's plays from Johnson. Curll's collection seems most likely to be a dual issue of any of Curll's several editions of Rowe's *Poems on Several Occasions*, alongside the same author's *The Dramatick Works of Nicholas Rowe, Esq*, 2 vols (London: Printed: And Sold by T. Jauncy, 1720).

based on their presence in the London repertory also ensured that anything purchased from him was currently popular.

This chapter is organised into four parts: collections of first-series plays; collections of second-series plays; plays in extensive collections in arrangements that differ significantly from Johnson's original design; and plays preserved as singletons or bound into nonce collections, frequently with other texts not published by Johnson.[18] Whilst each individual copy has its own story to tell, one clearly identifiable trend is the greater consistency in the ordering of plays under first-series volume titles (with contents lists) and, therefore, the greater consistency in the ordering of collections of first- rather than second-series plays. That other copies of first-series plays *do* survive in arrangements other than Johnson intended suggests that his removal of contents lists from second-series title pages was probably a response to customer demand, and one that was well-received. Copies of Johnson's plays are preserved across the British Isles and mainland Europe, but copies preserved in Europe are more likely to exist in extensive multi-volume collections containing only Johnson, and those in Britain in smaller collections bound with plays by other publishers (see below). This seems likely to reflect the relative availability of those works by other publishers to the various readers of Johnson's plays. European readers were more likely to purchase and preserve the full range of works in Johnson's *Collection* because they could not easily acquire them from any other source. For those British readers who *did* have access to other plays, Johnson's *Collection* was instead frequently seen as part of the general range of English publishing, and the plays contained therein as just one of several options by different publishers from which one might choose.[19] The survival of other, complete collections in the British Isles also indicates that for readers of *these*, the comprehensiveness and presentation of Johnson's *Collection* – with volume titles – was a more important part of its attraction than its malleability. Johnson's unique method of assembling the *Best English Plays* enabled him to attract both these categories of British readers.

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[18] As stated above, many of Johnson's plays were reissued by later publishers. Those copies prefaced by the volume titles of these later publishers (Scheurleer, Brindley, Richter, and the anonymous publisher of *The Best Tragedie's and Comedie's* (1761, 1762, 1765, 1781)) are discussed in Chapter Six, below. Although such copies are essential for understanding the impact of Johnson's works across the eighteenth century, they are less relevant for uncovering the circulation of his plays in his own lifetime.

[19] The variety of arrangements in which Johnson's plays are preserved in Britain – as opposed to their more usual appearance in extensive, multi-volume collections in Europe – might also reflect a greater wish to preserve already-purchased *Collection*s in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe and not break them up into other, smaller arrangements. This would again point to the scarcity of English plays on the continent other than those published by Johnson, and consequent rarity-value accruing to a large collection of Johnson's works. See also Chapter Six, where I provide further historical discussion of alternative editions in Europe, including those in translation.

As already suggested, the bindings of Johnson's plays, and marks of reading visible in these books – whether in Britain or elsewhere – also tells us much about their history.[20] Some copies are well thumbed and show signs of multiple readings, but others are still crisp and appear to have spent most of their existence untouched. In many copies this correlates with the quality of binding of the plays, be that in fine tooled leather or, in other instances, what appear to be the original card covers in which plays were purchased from Johnson. In general, the more prestigious a binding, the less any individual play by Johnson appears to have been read.[21] We might conclude, therefore, that wealthy collectors were more likely to buy the full *Collection* with volume titles – and leave it on a shelf – but avid readers to purchase individual plays that they then bound with whatever other works they had bought from other publishers, also in a less expensive format.[22] A few copies of Johnson's plays show signs of being used to learn English as a foreign language (one almost certainly whilst in its original trade covers), and another copy was apparently a script for amateur performance. This volume, which was uniformly bound as part of a ten-volume *Collection*, was purchased by me from a different bookseller to the rest of this same *Collection* (with which it is now reunited).[23] We might speculate that it became separated from the other volumes either when it was marked up for performance (and thus used as a script rather than for reading), or afterwards, because the presence of those markings affected its collectability.[24]

As will be shown, ownership marks demonstrate that Johnson's plays were owned, and frequently seem to have been read, by both men and women, apparently from a variety of financial and social backgrounds. Both of these categories (of gender and of wealth) also seem to correlate with the degree of wear and quality and form of bindings of the *Best English Plays*. What are most usually nonce collections owned by women frequently exist in cheaper bindings, and are tattier, than those multi-volume collections in prestige bindings carrying the bookplates

[20] David Pearson, in *English Bookbinding Styles, 1450-1800: A Handbook* (London: The British Library, 2005), p. viii, writes that original copies of books should be understood 'as artefacts, whose bindings and other copy-specific characteristics are an irreplaceable part of our historic fabric.'

[21] This correlates with Raven's emphasis, in *The Business of Books*, p. 195, on the attraction of fine bindings for collectors rather than readers, and that 'many collections were sought as necessary fillers to the *de rigueur* house library.'

[22] Williams, in *The Social Life of Books*, p. 98, suggests that 'The capacity to spend large amounts of money on new books […] must have been pretty narrowly restricted to the upper reaches of society.'

[23] I now have five volumes of this *Collection* in total. Volumes three, five, seven and eight were purchased together from the Ebay seller 'rare-books-vinyl-etc' in 2015 for £250. Volume ten, with the performance markings, was bought in 2016 from '18 Bunker Books' for £79.80. Their identical bindings and ownership marks nevertheless indicate that these are from a single set that was previously broken up.

[24] Sherman's chapter on 'Dirty Books? Attitudes Toward Readers' Marks', in *Used Books*, pp. 151-78, provides extensive discussion on collectors' attitudes to marks in books, and the effect of these attitudes on books' preservation.

of socially-privileged male readers.[25] Such broad deductions regarding the wealth and gender of readers provides important supplementary information on the demographic scope of Johnson's customer base, but I leave exploration of the mentalities of these readers to those who are more particularly concerned with marks in books as evidence for the history of reading, such as Sherman, Jackson and Orgel.

Previous commentators on Johnson, especially Milhous and Hume, have generally assumed that Britain was Johnson's principal market.[26] This current chapter shows that whilst Britain was very important to Johnson's business, a significant portion of his customers were not living in Britain, nor were they residents of the British Isles sojourning on the continent (such as the students catalogued by Mijers, and discussed in Chapter Two), but were native Europeans. The prevalence of Johnson's texts in continental Europe suggests a real interest by such customers in these English plays made widely available to them for the first time by Johnson. In Germany, for instance, which has the largest holdings of Johnson's plays, I have confirmed the presence of 478 individual copies of his plays, preserved at eighteen different libraries. Narrowing our focus to just one play, I have found thirteen copies of Johnson's 1720 *All for Love* preserved on the continent.[27] According to the *ESTC*, Tonson's 1709 edition of the same play appears in no European library, and the same is true of another London edition of 1720.[28] An Irish reprint of 1723 is also absent from any European collection.[29] To take another example, Johnson's *Macbeth* of 1711 appears in two continental libraries; Tonson's

[25] Pearson, in *Provenance Research*, p. 124, confirms that 'choices exercised over the quality of a binding may give clues as to the wealth or background of the purchaser.' He later reiterates (p. 156) 'A book's binding should always be considered when analysing its chain of provenance. Even if it is not marked with names or arms, it should be possible to assess where and when it was bound, and how much was spent on binding it, all of which provide clues relating to its former ownership and use […]. Each binding […] represents a choice, based on a mixture of individual preference, affordability and the value placed upon the book.' More particularly, the author also suggests (p. 156) 'An early binding in fine original condition suggests a text which has not been much read or taken off library shelves.'

[26] For an account of Milhous and Hume's work see Chapter One, above, especially 'The Circulation and Influence of Johnson's Plays'.

[27] These appear at Bibliothèque Mazarine, 8° 22147 Nx-2; Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 8- BL- 16669 (2); Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KW 849 A 2 [3], KW 3037 G 20, and KW 846 E 19 [6]; Kungliga Biblioteket, 137 D d z Collection; Universitätsbibliothek Basel, AO VII 3; Ostfriesische Landschaftsbibliothek, O 1504 (3); Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, P.o.angl. 395-1; Landesbibliothek Oldenburg, SPR XIV 3 37:1; Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Göttingen, 8°P.dr.IV,2790:3, and 8°P.dr.IV,2800:1; Polska Akademia Nauk, 142485-3.

[28] John Dryden, *All for Love: or, The World well Lost. A Tragedy, Acted by Her Majesty's Servants* (London: Printed for J. Tonson: And Sold by J. Knapton, G. Strahan, and E. Sanger, 1709), *ESTC* T16359; *All for Love: or, The World well Lost. A Tragedy. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal, by His Majesty's Servants* (London: Printed for J. T. and Sold by T. Jauncy, 1720), *ESTC* T161490.

[29] John Dryden, *All For Love: or, The World Well Lost. A Tragedy* (Dublin: Printed by and for George Grierson, 1723), *ESTC* N15788.

1710 edition, with alterations by Davenant, is not recorded in any.[30] It thus seems likely that Johnson's editions of these plays were far more accessible to continental readers than those of his contemporaries working in Britain. Finally, as noted above, such a difference between the preservation rates of these first- and second-series texts (of *Macbeth* and *All for Love*) is typical amongst Johnson's publications, and second-series editions generally survive in far greater numbers. Encompassing all copies of which I am aware, there are 21 surviving copies of Johnson's 1710 *All for Love*, as opposed to 31 of the 1720 edition.[31] I have identified 16 surviving copies of the 1711 *Macbeth* in total, compared to 27 copies of Johnson's later edition.[32] This significant difference in survival rates (continued across the *Collection*) is most likely indicative of Johnson increasing print runs between the first and second series, probably as a result of his growing confidence in the popularity of the *Collection*.

First-Series Collections

Collections of Johnson's first-series plays published between 1710-12, with or without general title pages, are by far the most likely to contain the plays in the order listed on Johnson's volume titles. Of those I have seen which do carry first-series volume titles, a copy at the Folger Shakespeare Library best conforms to Johnson's ideal schema of contents.[33] It is complete in ten volumes and contains all forty first-series plays in the order advertised on Johnson's volume titles. The University of Sydney's collection also follows Johnson's ideal schema, but consists of volumes one, three, four and six only.[34] The University of Chicago Library's collection consists of thirteen volumes, with volumes one to ten appearing to carry first-series volume

[30] William Shakespeare, *Macbeth. A Tragedy. With all the Alterations, Amendments, Additions, and New Songs. As it is now Acted at the Queen's-Theatre* (London: Printed for J. Tonson: And Sold by John Phillips, 1710), *ESTC* T62186. Johnson copies at Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, M: QuN 618, and Biblioteka Narodowa, Warsaw, XVIII.1.31976.

[31] Dryden, *All for Love* ([Johnson], 1710) appears on the *ESTC* with fourteen copies listed (T204329 and T161489). Dryden, *All for Love* (Johnson, 1720) has only five copies listed (T14899).

[32] The *ESTC* records for Shakespeare, *Macbeth* ([Johnson], 1711) (T14956 and N34327) comprise a total of seven copies only. Shakespeare, *Macbeth* ([Johnson], [n.d.]) (T14957) appears with just eleven known copies.

[33] Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.J6. In establishing a term for the *Collection* as Johnson envisaged it, we are beset by similar problems to those encountered in naming the various forms of the collection, for which I settled on 'series'. Referring once more to Gaskell's *A New Introduction*, we find 'ideal copy' – which seems on first impressions to be the most likely descriptor – categorised as 'the most perfect copy of the work as originally completed by its printer and first put on sale by its publisher' (p. 315). This is, however, a 'notional' ideal copy which there is no guarantee exists in fact, but is rather made up by imagining a book made out of the most perfect sheets from multiple copies. Since we are recording actual copies of Johnson's *Collection*, and since this is a collection of multiple publications rather than a single publication, I use 'ideal schema' to denote the contents and order of the *Collection* as it was advertised on Johnson's volume titles. This leans on Gaskell's description of 'ideal', but moves away from the various connotations concerning stop-press corrections and the mechanical processes of printing that are inevitably associated with 'ideal copy'.

[34] University of Sydney Library, RB C386.

titles, and the relevant plays appearing in each volume specified on these titles, but not necessarily in the right order.[35] Volumes eleven to thirteen, of which twelve and thirteen, at least, seem to carry inter-series volume titles (see Chapter Three), contain all twelve of Johnson's inter-series plays in the order they were published. This may suggest a reader who had purchased the initial collection of ten volumes, and had enjoyed it so much that they went on to buy every new play published by Johnson, as it came out, right up until 1719; alternatively, the collection may have been purchased in its entirety right at the end of the first-series period, i.e. in 1719. However, whilst volumes one to twelve of this collection have the bookplates of the Scottish politician George Baillie of Jerviswood (1664-1738), volume thirteen has the bookplate of Christopher Tower, MP (*c.* 1694-1771), which might instead imply that this volume was added to the collection at a later date. In either instance the preservation of such a complete first-series collection implies the importance to its owners of the comprehensiveness of Johnson's *Collection*, and that the value afforded such a collection exceeded the sum of its contents. Its bookplates also indicate the interest of Johnson's *Collection* to members of the social and political elite in Britain.

The *Collection* belonging to the University of Toronto library retains volumes one, two, and five to eight – each with Johnson's ideal contents – and two supplementary volumes containing inter-series plays: *Cato* (1713), *The Distrest Mother* (1712), *Volpone* (1714) and *Timon* (1712); and *The Non-Juror* (1718), *The Relapse* (1717), *Jane Shore* (1714) and *Lady Jane Gray* (1718).[36] The presence of these plays, but none of the four inter-series plays published in 1719, implies that this *Collection* might well have been purchased in late 1718 or early 1719. This collection also suggests the availability of Johnson's plays in Scotland (or even more probably to Scottish travellers in Europe), carrying as it does the bookplates of William Duff, Earl of Fife (1697-1763), who seems likely to have been its original owner. The Universitätsbibliothek Mannheim has ideal examples of volumes four, seven and eight of the *Collection*, and the Friedrich-Alexander Universitätsbibliothek a collection with ideal examples of volumes four to five and seven to nine.[37] A collection held at the Kongelige Bibliotek in Copenhagen also seems to conform with Johnson's ideal schema of contents, and consists of volumes one to ten with three supplementary volumes containing the inter-series

[35] University of Chicago Library, PR 1245.C655 1711.
[36] Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, B-10 04840.
[37] Universitätsbibliothek Mannheim, MF e 033; Friedrich-Alexander Universitätsbibliothek, Erlangen-Nürnberg, H00/R.L 105.

plays.[38] The presence of these German and Danish copies implies that the first-series *Collection* was sold in its entirety to European as well as to British customers.

The copy belonging to the Fondren Library at Rice University apparently carries first-series volume titles, and contains only plays published in the first series, but is arranged in its reader's own choice of order, and consists of volumes three to eight only, with no Shakespearean plays.[39] As is implied by Knight's study of collecting practices – and corroborated by my own analysis of Johnson editions – works by Shakespeare are particularly likely to be separated from their original arrangements because of their high financial and cultural value, which may be the case here, and for the Danish copy discussed below.[40] Dryden and Lee's *Oedipus* (in volume four of the Fondren Library *Collection*), which the library's catalogue records as published in 1713, is really the 1710 edition, a mistake which appears in many catalogues owing to the poor printing of the date on this text. The Syddansk Universitetsbibliotek, Denmark, holds ideal copies of volumes three to six (with volume titles), and two further volumes without general title pages, listed in the catalogue as volumes one and two of this collection, but containing eight inter-series plays.[41] These are clearly a supplement to what was originally a larger collection made up by an enthusiastic reader, and since reallocated to supply a first and second volume when the real first and second volumes (most probably containing Shakespeare) were no longer associated with the collection.

There is only one volume of plays gathered under a *Collection* title page at Glasgow University Library, and even this is incomplete.[42] It has a first-series volume one title page, followed by first-series editions of *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth*, but is completed with London editions of Addison's *Cato* and Otway's *Caius Marius*.[43] That a volume title page should

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[38] Det Kongelige Bibliotek, 176:3, 16.
[39] Fondren Library, Rice University, PR 1241.P53.
[40] Knight, in *Bound to Read*, p. 57-58, writes 'Texts now considered literary […] often reach us as the most heavily processed of all early printed materials […]. Within that subset, the dramatic works by Shakespeare […] were eventually of the utmost value and thus subject to all forms of bibliographical intervention that may have come into fashion. As a result, the surviving archive of Shakespearean texts has a particularly varied morphology'. The profusion of singletons of Shakespearean texts (as opposed to other works by Johnson) in American libraries is conspicuous, and these libraries hold a far higher proportion of surviving singletons of such plays than any British or European institution, which probably reflects nineteenth and twentieth century collecting practices. As an initial point of comparison, the British Library holds no copies of Johnson's 1710 or 1720 *Hamlet* editions as a singleton, and the same is true of Cambridge University Library and the Bodleian Library. The Folger Shakespeare Library, by contrast, has four copies of *Hamlet* ([Johnson], 1710) (PR 2807 1710 copy 1, copy 2, copy 3, copy 4), and three copies of the 1720 edition (PR 2807 1720 copy 1, copy 2, copy 3).
[41] Syddansk Universitetsbibliotek, 66-718.
[42] Glasgow University Library, Sp Coll S.M. 3059.
[43] Joseph Addison, *Cato. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for J. and R. Tonson, 1735); Thomas Otway, *The History and Fall of Caius Marius. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for W. Feales; A. Bettesworth; F. Clay, R. Wellington, and C. Corbett; and J. Brindley, 1735).

appear alongside the first two plays of the *Collection* only may suggest that Johnson was giving these away with a customer's initial purchase as a means of encouraging the later extension of their collection. The volume as it stands, juxtaposing Johnson's editions with those of Feales and the Tonsons in a contemporaneous binding, suggests that whoever assembled it drew little distinction between plays by Johnson and plays by copyright-holding London publishers. A solitary copy of volume one at the University of Illinois contains the first-series volume title, and first-series copies of *Caesar*, *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, but is completed with *The Jew of Venice* rather than *Othello*, as Johnson had originally intended.[44] One might speculate that having rejected conforming their choice of plays to Johnson's ideal schema, as listed on his volume titles, at such an early stage, the owner of this volume never got any further with their collection.

There exist several relatively extensive collections containing only Johnson's first-series plays, but without general title pages. The copy belonging to the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Bibliothek, Hannover, which has ten volumes in total, contains 38 first-series Johnson plays in its first eight volumes.[45] Unusually, all of those plays dated 1710 occur in volumes one to five, with no later plays interspersed, which suggests that its owner may have begun collecting and binding their plays *before* Johnson released his first-series volume titles (in 1711-12). Each volume also contains a variable number of plays, which similarly implies its *ad hoc* assembly. Volume nine of this collection contains the inter-series *Distrest Mother* (1712) and *Cato* (1713), and another play by a different publisher, and the tenth volume contains ten further plays by other publishers, of which five are from the seventeenth century. It seems possible that after purchasing just about everything Johnson had to offer, the owner of this collection was so interested by what they had read that they managed to source other English plays printed in Britain more quickly than Johnson produced them, although they were restricted in their choice to some very outdated works that were no longer in the acting repertory.[46] The University of Michigan Library's collection consists of five volumes catalogued one to five, although only volume two has a first-series volume title.[47] The other volumes, going by their contents and order, are actually volumes three, five, eight and ten from a first-series collection. A collection belonging to Trinity College Dublin consists of 43 plays across eleven volumes, of which there are the full 40 first-series plays, alongside the inter-

[44] Illinois Library, University of Illinois, x822.08.C6853.
[45] Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Bibliothek, Ll 1180.
[46] See, for instance, George Digby, *Elvira: or, The worst not always true. A Comedy* (London: Printed by E. Cotes for Henry Broom, 1667).
[47] University of Michigan Library, PR 1241.C72.

series *Cato* (1713), *Distrest Mother* (1712) and *Timon of Athens* (1712).[48] Many volumes follow the reader's own ordering, but others seem to echo Johnson's pattern: volume four contains *Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *Timon of Athens* (reflecting the original volume one, of *Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet* and *Othello*); and volume six contains *Henry IV*, *Merry Wives*, *The Jew of Venice* and *The Tempest* (which plays appear in volume two under Johnson's original schema). This collection carries the mid-eighteenth-century bookplates of one S. J. Collins, and the rear endpaper of volume two is inscribed 'Catharine Maria Charleville & given to me by my Lord 1804'.[49] Even if these books did not find their way to Ireland immediately on leaving Johnson's shop – given the later date of the Charleville inscription – they were there at the turn of the nineteenth century, and seem to have been considered an appropriate gift from an earl (Charles William Bury) to his wife. My own collection of first-series plays consists of volumes three, five, seven, eight and ten ordered as Johnson intended, but without volume titles.[50] These are in uniform eighteenth-century bindings and have the name 'Samuel Wilson' in an eighteenth-century hand in volumes seven and ten.[51] Steele's *The Funeral*, in volume ten, is annotated extensively in a nineteenth-century hand with notes for an amateur performance, including scene locations, cuts and changes, and prop and cast lists.

Two copies of the *Collection* owned by the British Library are both made up from multiple collections. Cup.403.z.52 consists of nine volumes. Volumes one, two, five, seven and ten carry first-series volume titles, and contain the expected plays in the anticipated order, but these are a mixture of both first- and second-series editions. In light of this copy, it would seem that Johnson began issuing second-series plays in conjunction with his remaining first-series volume titles (probably replacing plays which had run out) before he reprinted the volume titles themselves. Volumes three and six have Johnson's transitional title pages and plays of mixed dates, but again follow the order of the first series (see Chapter Three). Two further volumes, one without a general title page, and one with the rare inter-series volume twelve title page, contain nine inter-series plays. Those in volume twelve, with title page, follow the order stated on that title page. The same library's 1345.b.16-25 is simpler, with volumes one and ten ideal copies from a first-series collection, with volume titles. Volumes

[48] The Library of Trinity College Dublin, OLS B-8-976 -986.
[49] Information from The Library of Trinity College Dublin Catalogue <https://www.tcd.ie/library/collections/> [accessed 17 January 2020]. 'Catharine Maria Charleville' i.e. Catherine Maria Bury, *née* Dawson, Countess of Charleville (1762-1851), and wife of Charles William Bury, first Earl of Charleville, presumably 'my Lord'.
[50] See above for provenance information.
[51] Further work might certainly be done in identifying Wilson and other named but untraced owners of Johnson's books although, as Pearson suggests in *Provenance Research*, p. 382, 'this can quickly become a game of diminishing returns and there are plenty of inscriptions which elude definite identification.'

two to nine all carry second-series volume titles, and whilst they broadly follow Johnson's first-series pattern of ordering and contents, with four plays per volume, there are also a small number of changes, and first-series, second-series and inter-series editions are all included.[52] The Radboud Universiteitsbibliotheek copy consists of thirteen volumes of four plays each in matching vellum bindings.[53] These contain a range of first-, second-, inter-series and later plays (such as *Cato* of 1730) all by Johnson and, along with other copies surviving in the Netherlands (see below), demonstrate that, *contra* the assumptions of Milhous and Hume, Dugas and Murphy, Johnson was selling a good number of copies locally as well as abroad, or to international purchasers.[54]

These seventeen copies of the *Collection*, each containing a good proportion of first-series editions of Jonson's plays, suggest several important revisions to our knowledge. Johnson was selling his first-series *Collection* to British, Dutch, and other continental purchasers, and some of these emanated from the social or political elite (who used high-quality bindings and put their bookplates in extensive multi-volume collections). The *Best English Plays* were available with or without general title pages. Johnson's use of contents lists on these volume titles means that most first-series collections with volume titles follow Johnson's ideal schema, and even those that do not usually adhere relatively closely to his intended structure for the *Collection*. Several readers were enthusiastic about the *Collection* and bought the supplementary plays and volume titles issued by Johnson between 1712-19, but a small number also appear to have been satisfied with just one incomplete volume – it seems possible that such readers might have *intended* on collecting more of Johnson's plays, but their own mobility caused them to lose touch with Johnson; perhaps they were such customers as the students described in Chapter Two. Other important lessons from these volumes concerning Johnson's publication strategies include further evidence that his first-series plays were available for sale before volume titles were issued (as suggested by the Hannover *Collection*, ordered by the date

[52] Volume four, for instance, which should contain *The Indian Emperor*, *The State of Innocence*, *Don Sebastian* and *Amphitryon* in an ideal first-series copy, actually contains second-series editions of *The Indian Emperor*, *The State of Innocence* and *Amphitryon*, and the 1714 *Volpone*. The original schema of volume eight was *The Mourning Bride*, *Phaedra and Hippolitus*, *The Adventures of Five Hours* and *The Plain-Dealer*, which all occur in volume eight of the British Library copy, but with *Mourning Bride* and *Plain-Dealer* in second-series editions, and *Phaedra and Hippolitus* and *Adventures of Five Hours* in first-series editions.
[53] Radboud Universiteitsbibliotheek, Nijmegen, OD 490 c 177, 182-93.
[54] Although none of these authors states explicitly that Johnson *didn't* sell his plays in the Low Countries, they all focus on Britain in their discussion of Johnson's trade, and ignore the possibility of European sales: see Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, pp. 107-08; Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, pp. 166-67; Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, pp. 103-04.

of each play), and that Johnson began issuing second-series plays in conjunction with first-series volume titles before printing his second-series volume titles (L Cup.403.z.52).

Second-Series Collections

There are copies of Johnson's second- as well as first-series *Collection* preserved in the Netherlands; that belonging to the Koninklijke Bibliotheek is an extensive second-series example of sixteen volumes, all of which are reported as in uniform binding and prefaced by second-series volume titles (which were without contents lists; see Chapter Three).[55] This collection has 63 plays in total, containing inter-series (1712-19), second-series (*c.* 1720-22) and later works (*c.* 1723-31). The earlier volumes generally follow Johnson's ideal schema, but this breaks down in the later volumes. Volume sixteen, for instance, contains Johnson's editions of Buckingham's *Cesar* and *Brutus* (both printed in the author's *Works* of 1726), with *The Siege of Damascus* (1720 and second-series), *The Committee* (n.d., but late) and Thomson's *Sophonisba* (1730). Its enthusiastic first owner must have persuaded Johnson to separate *Cesar* and *Brutus* from Buckingham's *Works*, or have separated them themselves, as these were only published as an integral part of its bibliographic whole.[56] The Boston University Libraries copy is also in sixteen volumes in uniform contemporaneous bindings, with second-series volumes titles, and contains 64 inter-series, second-series and later plays.[57] These are regularly ordered with four plays per volume but, as with the Koninklijke collection, are more likely to follow Johnson's ordering in the early volumes. Both examples replace *The Jew of Venice* with *Timon* in their second volumes which, as I suggest in Chapter Three, is a move made in so many extant copies that it was probably a recommendation by Johnson – certainly he never reprinted *The Jew of Venice* after 1711, but printed *Timon* in both 1712 and as part of the second series.

Overall, the implications of second-series copies following Johnson's order in some volumes (especially earlier ones, with Shakespeare and Dryden), but not others, are several. It seems most likely that Johnson suggested an ideal order to his customers, based on his arrangement of the plays in the first-series collection, but left them to their own devices if they wanted to alter this – as was encouraged by his removal of contents lists from second-series

[55] Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, KW 849 A 2.
[56] *Cesar* runs from sigs G1r-M2r (pp. 113-79), and *Brutus* sigs N1r-R4r (pp. 185-255), both in Sheffield, *Works* ([Johnson], 1726), I.
[57] Boston University Libraries, PR 1241.C72 1717.

volume titles.[58] We might also observe that since the original first-series *Collection* extended to ten volumes only, but the second-series *Collection* to sixteen, there could only be an ideal schema (based on first-series volume titles, with contents), for the first ten volumes (or possibly thirteen, if inter-series titles are included) of any collection. Since, as I have shown, Johnson probably began issuing second-series plays in conjunction with first-series volume titles (in 1720) before second-series volume titles were printed (*c.* 1721-22), collections are perhaps more likely to follow the original ideal schema when first-series title pages were still available for reference, rather than later, when all of these can be assumed to have been sold. As is demonstrated below, volumes (or indeed collections) with later plays (such as *The London Merchant* of 1731) are more likely to be in their own arrangements than those containing no works that are later than the second series, especially if first-series works are also included (implying their early assembly date). It is also possible that so many collections begin with two volumes of Shakespeare and/or two volumes of Dryden simply because most readers thought this was the best way to begin their collections (like Johnson) rather than because they were forced to do so in any way.

A collection at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France contains a mixture of mainly inter-series, second-series and later plays, and consequently only really pays attention to Johnson's order in its early Shakespeare and Dryden volumes.[59] The collection was of sixteen volumes, but is lacking volume three. Its reader appears to have been as keen on extending their collection as the owner of the Koninklijke volumes, since volume fourteen, in this instance, also has *Cesar* and *Brutus* separated from Buckingham's *Works*. Since these works appear in two copies of the *Collection*, it is even possible that Johnson printed an excess number to be sold individually, or broke up certain copies of the *Works* if these were not selling well. However, if the first were true, we might ask why the plays were not printed with their own pagination and register, and if the second is true, what Johnson expected to do with the mutilated copies of the *Works* that he was left with. Although it is also reasonable to suppose that Johnson *may* have broken up the Sheffield *Works* if he were running low on stock, and lacking other plays to make up these collections to the extent his customers demanded, the extremely wide-ranging reissue of Johnson's works undertaken by Scheurleer (see Chapter

[58] Readers' treatment of Johnson's *Collection* in some ways also seems to mirror the various organisational structures in which the Shakespeare Pavier quartos appear. These texts, discussed by Knight in *Bound to Read*, pp. 69-70, appear to have their own ideal schema in a manner similar to the *Collection*, but (p. 70) 'early owners and retailers, enabled by the built-in flexibility of printed products like the Pavier quartos, could make books – and frameworks for reading – both within and outside prescribed schemes of organization'; this might equally describe Johnson's plays.
[59] Bibliothèque Nationale de France, YK- 1958-2012.

Six) problematises this interpretation by demonstrating just how many plays Johnson still had available even at the time he ceased trading. Whatever the precise events, my own belief is that the addition of *Cesar* and *Brutus* to *Collection*s was only ever occasional, and not part of any sustained policy. The *Collection* held by the Kungliga Biblioteket, Sweden, is again of sixteen volumes, but is lacking volume thirteen.[60] It has a range of 61 plays (as it stands), and a similarly relaxed relationship to Johnson's ordering as the other collections. Volume eight is notable as being extended to five plays (most of the volumes contain four) so that five of Congreve's works could be gathered together in the order they appeared in Johnson's first-series collection, where Johnson's ideal schema dictated that volume seven should have four Congreve plays, with *The Mourning Bride* appearing as the first item in volume eight.

A copy of the *Collection* at the Polska Akademia Nauk, consisting of volumes one to three and five to seven, may have been purchased earlier than most of these already mentioned (which each contain some plays published after 1723), since it contains inter-series plays, and second-series plays of *c.* 1720-22 only.[61] *Timon of Athens* nevertheless replaces *The Jew of Venice* (suggesting Johnson's involvement in this shift), *Volpone* appears in the usually Dryden-orientated volume three (albeit alongside three plays that *are* by Dryden), and a variety of other substitutions and changes are made throughout the collection. That *Volpone* is the first item in volume three may suggest that its owner wanted to group the oldest plays (by or adapted from Shakespeare, or by Jonson) at the start of their collection. The Landesbibliothek Oldenburg copy – in sixteen volumes with volume twelve lacking – is extremely regular in supplying four plays per volume, but more than usually cavalier in organising its plays with little regard for authorial groupings.[62] Volumes one and two, for instance, contain *All for Love*, *Aurenge-Zebe*, *The Tempest* and *Timon*; and *The Indian Emperour*, *The Spanish Fryar*, *Merry Wives* and *Henry IV* (rather than eight plays by or adapted from Shakespeare). Volume four (where plays by Dryden are most usual) has *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and George Lillo's *The London Merchant* (1731), and Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* is in volume fourteen (which has no original ideal schema) with Rowe's *Tamerlane* (n.d., but second-series), John Hughes' *The Siege of Damascus* (1720) and Steele's *The Conscious Lovers* (1723). The presence of later plays (published after *c.* 1723) in this *Collection* – as in many others – suggests that Johnson's ongoing release of new successes paid dividends in attracting customers: that Johnson's final play, *The London Merchant* (1731) appears in volume four here implies that the collection's

[60] Kungliga Biblioteket, 137 D d z Collection.
[61] Polska Akademia Nauk, 142485.
[62] Landesbibliothek Oldenburg, SPR XIV 3 37.

owner may have purchased (or at least bound) the majority of their plays around the same time in or after 1731, rather than adding additional works in new volumes onto an already made-up collection, as might be the case in some first-series examples that have supplementary inter-series volumes. Further analysis of such later collections, such as this, and the comparison of the dates of plays across the collections I have listed, could do much in establishing the probable times at which Johnson may (or may not) have run out of earlier plays, as well as when he added new ones. This would tell us a great deal about the popularity of such plays at the beginning of the eighteenth century, although this is a separate project in itself.

A fragmented second-series collection at the Folger Shakespeare Library, with only its first and fifth volumes remaining (with volume titles), wreaks havoc with Johnson's original design: volume one contains Dryden's *Amphitryon* (1721; second-series), Edward Young's *Busiris* (1719; inter-series), and Dryden's *Aurenge-Zebe* and *Oedipus* (1721 and n.d.; both second-series) rather than Shakespeare's tragedies as Johnson had intended; volume five has Lee's *Theodosius* and *Sophonisba* (both 1719; both inter-series), and Otway's *The Orphan* and *Venice Preserv'd* (both n.d.; both second-series) – Johnson's original fifth volume also contained *The Orphan* and *Venice Preserv'd*, but with *Oroonoko* and *Abra-Mule*.[63] As has been suggested, such a relaxed attitude to Johnson's ideal schema is visible across second-series *Collection*s, and is most visible in high-numbered volumes containing later plays, rather than low-numbered volumes containing Shakespeare or Dryden. This is probably a consequence of readers agreeing with Johnson that Shakespeare and Dryden were the best authors with whom to begin their collections (which reflects their reputations) and that Johnson himself only had an ideal schema for those plays that had also appeared in the original first series. Date of assembly is also quite likely an important factor here – the earlier the second-series collection, the more likely it is to follow Johnson's ideal schema, presumably reflecting a time when he still had first-series volume titles in stock.

Overall, excepting the made-up British Library collection referred to above (1345.b.16-25), with volumes two to nine carrying second-series volume titles, there are no second-series collections with volume titles currently surviving within the British Isles. This seems to imply that Johnson sold more complete first-series collections to British customers than he did

[63] Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.J61. Other examples of the *Collection* that I have not seen, but which seem likely to be prefaced by Johnson's second-series volume titles, include 8- BL- 16613 (in sixteen volumes), at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, and the same library's YK- 1959-2016 (apparently with 58 plays, although volume divisions are not specified). The Furness Collection at the University of Pennsylvania Libraries also has a range of volumes of Johnson's first- and second-series plays, although the relationship between these is far from clear.

second-series ones, and that the second series in its fullest form was more readily patronised by his European customers (of the five collections of sixteen volumes discussed above, four are preserved in mainland Europe, and one in America). However, as is shown below, this difference in survival rate does not mean that Johnson did not sell any of his second-series plays to British customers, but rather that when he did so these were more often individual works, or small groups of works, rather than the *Collection* – with volume titles – as a whole. As is discussed in the Introduction to this chapter, and in Chapter Six, below, this probably reflects the fact that alternative editions of English plays were not as readily available to European readers as they were to British ones.

Other Multi-Volume Collections

There are two significant collections of primarily second-series editions of Johnson's plays without volume titles currently held in Britain, at the British Library and Trinity College Dublin.[64] The British Library collection contains 25 plays across five evenly-sized volumes, dating from *Volpone* (1714) to *The Conscious Lovers* (1723). The Dublin collection contains 37 plays across eight volumes (with no Shakespearean works), encompassing the same range of dates. Neither collection bears any resemblance to Johnson's original organisational structure, demonstrating that their owners must have valued the wide selection of plays that Johnson offered – and perhaps also their uniform appearance – but not the specific format of his *Collection* (with volume titles and a recommended schema of contents). If the owners of these volumes lived outside London (or Dublin or Edinburgh) it is even possible that they had readier access to Johnson's plays than to some British publications.[65] A copy now held in Göttingen is similarly independent in its organisation.[66] It has seven volumes of three plays each, with two plays not by Johnson. Since one of these plays is Foulis' Glasgow edition of *The Conscious Lovers*, not printed until 1744, the collection must post-date this, suggesting the ongoing interest in Johnson's plays in Europe even after he had stopped publishing.[67] The presence of Foulis' *The Conscious Lovers* might also suggest some Scottish connection for the collection or its owner. Unusually, volume one of this collection contains Johnson's 1710 *and*

[64] L 1487.a.14-18; The Library of Trinity College Dublin, Fag.C.12.73-80.
[65] Williams, in *The Social Life of Books*, pp. 108-10, records the growth in provincial provision of books across the eighteenth century, but prefaces this with the explanation that 'In England, the organization of the book trade depended on a transportation network radiating out from London' (p. 108).
[66] Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Göttingen, 8°P.dr.IV,3150.
[67] Richard Steele, *The Conscious Lovers. A Comedy* (Glasgow: Printed and Sold by Robert Foulis, 1744). The other play not by Johnson in this collection is *Measure for Measure*, although I have been unable to ascertain what edition this is in.

1721 editions of Dryden's *Amphitryon* (alongside a second-series *Othello*), which seems to imply the collection was made up from what its owner already had, rather than what he sought for the occasion. Nevertheless, the revisions Johnson made between his 1710 and 1721 editions of *Amphitryon*, with Dryden's epistle 'To the Honourable, Sir William Levison Gower, Bar' absent in 1710 but included in 1721, might suggest that the owner of this collection saw the two editions as distinct texts with their own merits – they also differ in appearance, with the title page of the 1710 edition carrying Johnson's fountain and goats device, but that of the later edition a version of the TJ monogram.[68] A smaller selection of plays held at the National Trust's Chirk Castle in Wrexham, Wales consists of sixteen first-series and early inter-series plays across three volumes (of which the first is given entirely to the five Congreve plays) in matching eighteenth-century calf bindings.[69] The Congreve volume, at least, was identified in the house's 1796 inventory, indicating the presence of Johnson's plays in a high-status country house library in Wales at this time.[70]

Although the analysis of extant collections as a means of uncovering Johnson's original markets and the development of his *Collection* is by no means a precise science – resulting in a large quantity of 'probably' and 'generally' – it is an invaluable tool where no alternative resource exists (excluding the hints in Johnson's letters). The collections of plays without volume titles preserved in the British Isles demonstrate that a small number of British collectors did purchase an extensive quantity of these works, and bind them together, just as the owner of the Göttingen collection restyled Johnson's works in their own unique arrangement. Nevertheless, as can be seen in the following discussion of singletons and nonce volumes – and even more so in the subsequent chapter on the reissue of Johnson's plays – it was British readers who were especially prone to picking and choosing from Johnson's plays and binding them with works by other publishers, while his and later publishers' European customers took most advantage of Johnson's volume title pages and extended 'collection' format.

Singletons and Nonce Collections

Single-volume arrangements of Johnson's plays survive in such a bewildering variety of configurations as to make classification almost impossible. Nevertheless, perhaps the most common means of organising the plays outside a larger collection was by author, and the

[68] Epistle in Dryden, *Amphitryon* (Johnson, 1721), A2r-3v.
[69] Chirk Castle, A.5.1, C.5.9, C.5.10.
[70] National Trust Catalogue <http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/3036275> [accessed 18 January 2020].

relatively large number of volumes with plays just by Dryden or Congreve is notable – against a surprisingly small number of volumes that contain Shakespeare only. Looking at Avery's *The London Stage 1700-1729*, Dryden and Congreve were both popular playwrights and had enough of their works published by Johnson (in seventeen and ten editions, respectively) to make this practice of collecting by author viable. Dugas characterises Johnson's Shakespeare plays as a 'genre-based "Shakespeare's greatest hits" collection'.[71] Whilst some readers must have been interested in this reduced but popular selection, as discussed in the Introduction to this chapter, and elaborated below, it seems that many of those who wanted to buy a large number of Shakespeare's plays might instead have chosen to spend considerably more money on a genuine complete works edition published by the Tonsons, rather than Johnson's much smaller and cheaper selection. Nevertheless, any preference for a Tonson edition must also have been predicated on the availability of such an edition and, as I demonstrate in the next chapter, such availability was probably limited for collectors in Europe or even at the geographical margins of Britain. As already shown, Johnson's plays appear with much more frequency in continental collections than contemporaneous plays published in London.

A volume of Johnson's Shakespearean plays held by the Tresoar archives in the Netherlands seems to corroborate this phenomenon – that Johnson's plays provided access to English letters for many who might otherwise have been unable to read them.[72] The Tresoar volume has eight second-series copies of Johnson's Shakespearean plays arranged as he ordered them in his first series although, as in so many cases, *The Jew of Venice* is replaced with *Timon of Athens* which, considering the late date of this volume, probably reflects the relative availability of these two plays. The volume also has a variety of manuscript apparatuses (commendations, a list of Shakespeare's complete plays, a contents list) added to its front endpapers which present it as such a mini authorial works edition as imagined by Dugas, even though two of its texts (*The Tempest*, *Timon*) are adapted. This points to an owner with limited access to a London-produced authorial works, who sought to create his own authorial works with Johnson's plays and his manuscript additions. All the notes were made by the Dutch-named 'G. C. Gonggryp' in 1798, as he wrote on the front pastedown, which was many years after Johnson had ceased trading. Despite the passage of almost a century, therefore, Johnson's plays were still an interesting product for Gonggryp, who went on to describe:

> Of W. Shakespear, or his Works.

[71] Dugas, *Marketing the Bard*, p. 167.
[72] Frysk Histoarysk en Letterkundich Sintrum, Leeuwarden, A 2858.

> Begun the first of July 1798, after-noon at one hour.
>
> For Writers of Plays, and such as had been Players themselves, William Shakespeare and Benjamin Johnson, have specially left their Names recommended to Posterity. R. Baker Chronicle of te [*sic*] Kings of England. London 1674 in fol. mai. p. 400 col. 2.

Gonggryp must have been a real enthusiast of English culture and drama to go and look for this reference in Baker's *Chronicle* (which is not even particularly concerned with the stage) but, also, to have had very limited access to English resources to be choosing to cite this seventeenth-century work in the first place.[73]

On the next page Gonggryp records 'Above the Plays collected in this Volume, I find that Mr. Shakespar, has written the following Plays', which the author goes on to list. His knowledge of Shakespeare's complete plays seems to be second-hand, rather than taken from an authorial works edition, since his list of plays is not entirely accurate – there is no catalogue of Shakespeare's plays in Baker's *Chronicle* that Gonggryp might have referred to. His list conflates *1* and *2 Henry IV* and *1*, *2* and *3 Henry VI*, and omits *Love's Labours Lost*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Pericles* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, which were all included in the Tonsons' London editions of Shakespeare's works. Thus, since Gonggryp provided such extensive manuscript additions to Johnson's plays but was, apparently, limited in his resources when constructing these additions, it appears that his interest in Shakespeare exceeded the availability of his texts. The eight plays by Johnson that are included in the volume may well have provided the only opportunity Gonggryp had to read Shakespeare.

Before concluding his introductory materials with a list of contents for this volume in particular (with descriptions of the plays lifted directly from Johnson's title pages), Gonggryp also included two further commendatory notes on Shakespeare. The first of these does not have an identifiable source:

> SHAKESPEAR hath been the first English Poet who hath writed [blank, o[r]] not rimed Verses, imitating Trissin the Inventer of that Kind, called

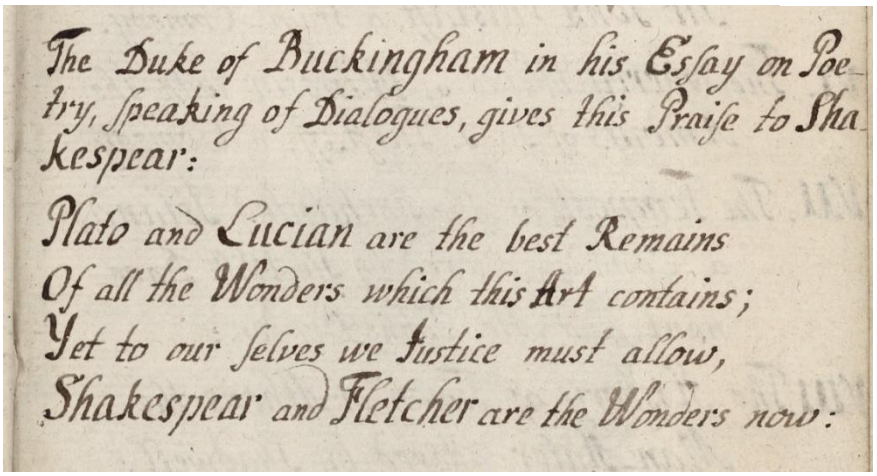
[73] Gonggryp's quotation is from Richard Baker, *A Chronicle of the Kings of England From the Time of the Romans Government unto the Death of King James* (London: Printed for George Sawbridge, And Thomas Williams, 1674), p. 400 (misprinted p. 500).

> by the Italians Versi Sciolti, and other Italian Poets who writ~~ed~~ Tragedys after the sayd Tressin [*sic*].[74]

The second commendation, as Gonggryp suggests (see figure 1), is taken from Buckingham's *Essay on Poetry*, first printed by Joseph Hindmarsh in 1682, but also reprinted by Johnson in his *Works* of Buckingham (1726).[75] Although it is tempting to imagine that Gonggryp's quotation here is taken from Johnson's edition (since he was reading Johnson's plays), the punctuation and capitalisation of Gonggryp's text is in fact identical to that in Hindmarsh's second edition, with parallel Latin and English, of 1691 (also reprinted in 1697), whereas it differs from Johnson's and other editions in several points.[76] As can be seen in figure 1, Gonggryp even emended his original 'art' to 'Art', which attention to detail correlates with his accurate citation of the Baker volume. If either of these 1691 or 1697 editions *was* Gonggryp's source, then this (again alongside his use of the equally antique *Chronicle* of Baker) provides further evidence for the relative dearth of English letters not published by Johnson available to this later-eighteenth-century resident of the Netherlands.

Against this comparatively rare volume of Johnson's Shakespearean plays, volumes containing only Dryden's plays are multitudinous. This shows the popularity of Johnson's editions of this author, and exemplifies many readers' use of Johnson's publications to create their own small 'works' volumes. A book held by the University of North Carolina Libraries contains a first-series *Don Sebastian*, alongside second-series copies of *The Indian Emperor*, *The State of Innocence* and *Amphitryon*.[77] Ohio University has a volume with first-series editions of *Amphitryon*, *The Indian Emperor* and *The State of*

Figure 1


The Duke of Buckingham in his Essay on Poe-
try, speaking of Dialogues, gives this Praise to Sha-
kespear:
Plato and Lucian are the best Remains
Of all the Wonders which this Art contains;
Yet to our selves we Justice must allow,
Shakespear and Fletcher are the Wonders now:

[74] 'Trissin' i.e. Gian Giorgio Trissino (1478-1550), an Italian writer.
[75] For the quoted passage see John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, *An Essay upon Poetry* (London: Printed for Joseph Hindmarsh, 1682), p. 14; Sheffield, *Works* ([Johnson], 1726), I, p. 74. Figure 1 is taken from Frysk Histoarysk en Letterkundich Sintrum, A 2858, front endpaper. Image courtesy of Ids de Jong.
[76] John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, *An Essay on Poetry* (London: Printed for Jo. Hindmarsh, 1691), p. 21; *An Essay on Poetry* (London: Printed for F. Saunders, 1697), p. 21. Johnson's Sheffield, *Works* (1726), I, p. 74, gives us the quite different: '*Plato* and *Lucian* are the best remains | Of all the wonders which this Art contains: | Yet to our selves we justice must allow, | *Shakespear* and *Fletcher* are the wonders now.' This has considerably less capitalisation, and a terminal stop rather than a colon.
[77] University of North Carolina Libraries, PR 3415.I5 1721.

Innocence.[78] A volume belonging to Bishop's University, Quebec, again contains first-series editions only, this time of *Amphitryon*, *The Indian Emperor*, *The State of Innocence* and *Don Sebastian*, which pattern is also found in a John Rylands copy.[79] A pair of volumes in the British Library contain all eight of Johnson's first-series Dryden plays in contemporaneous binding.[80] These British Library volumes also display multiple variant ownership marks of one 'Fran Hussey' (on the *Indian Emperor* title page), 'Frances Hussey' (on the title page of *All for Love*) and, helpfully, 'Francis Hussey 1744' (on the *Spanish Fryar* title page). The volume thus demonstrates that Johnson's plays were available to at least one British (presumably) female reader relatively soon after their publication.

As already suggested, Johnson's editions of Congreve's plays were also frequently collected as authorial volumes distinct from the wider *Collection*, and were obviously a popular choice of playwright by Johnson. Indeed, going by the quantity of Johnson's plays that are *not* found associated with *Collection* volume titles, the sale of the plays individually, or in small groupings, must have been a very lucrative part of Johnson's innovative business model (selling the plays individually as well as part of the set). A nonce volume at Edinburgh University Library has four first-series Congreve editions, and 'Magdalene Stead 1792' written on the front paste-down.[81] Since she was writing in 1792 Stead is unlikely to have been the volume's first owner, but its current location correlates with the circulation of Johnson's plays in Scotland in the eighteenth century.[82] A Brotherton Library volume also has four first-series Congreve plays, and one belonging to the Vrije Universiteits-Bibliotheek, Amsterdam, all five – this suggests the interest of collections of Johnson's plays gathered by author on the continent as well as in Britain.[83] Such an interest in authorial collections persisted across the time Johnson was publishing, as volumes exist that include his second- as well as first-series Congreve editions. A collection of Congreve plays at Cambridge University Library – which also has

[78] Ohio University Libraries, PR 3415.I5 1710x.
[79] Bishop's University Library, PR 3415.I5 1710; John Rylands Library, University of Manchester, 821.48 D5.
[80] L RB.23.a.7515.
[81] E^2 S.21.95.
[82] Pearson, in *Provenance Research*, suggests that 'many books stayed in the ownership of particular families for several generations, sometimes for several centuries', and that it is not uncommon for later owners of a book even within the same family to mark it with their own name (p. 42). Whilst it is therefore possible that Stead and other owners of Johnson's books who lived in the latter part of the eighteenth century inherited his works, it also seems probable that a significant proportion were resold within the Scottish, or wider British markets across the eighteenth century, and were available for purchase by entirely new owners. Tracing the fate of Johnson's books within individual families might tell us much about the way in which plays were regarded in the eighteenth century; see also Pearson, p. 227, who notes: 'Books are often found divided within families so that English-language and devotional books are left to wives and daughters, and learned or professional books to sons – not, perhaps, a surprise, but important confirmation of the ways in which different kinds of books tended to be used and regarded.'
[83] Brotherton Library, University of Leeds, 1710-19 1710 CON; Vrije Universiteits-Bibliotheek, XN.05751.

extensive underlining and marginalia, although much of this has been destroyed in rebinding – contains second-series editions of *The Double-Dealer*, *The Old Batchelour* and *Love for Love*, alongside later London editions of *The Way of the World* and *The Mourning Bride*.[84] As with many other examples (see below) it seems here that an authorially unified volume was more important to its owner than who published the various works, and whether that publisher was operating within the British Isles. Since this appears to have been the case with so many readers, it has been a false assumption to separate Johnson from broader histories of English dramatic publishing on account of his location and dubious printing rights. A collection containing various works by Steele at the Library of Birmingham has just one first-series Johnson play, *The Funeral*, but three more works by Steele by other publishers.[85] It seems likely that this collection, now in a modern library binding, was made up by a reader in England, and that a singleton copy of a Johnson publication was just one of several options available to them.[86] Even more than Milhous and Hume acknowledge, Johnson's publications seem to have been a visible part of the English-language play-publishing scene during the eighteenth century, and must be more fully considered in future studies of that industry. In light of their visibility in the historical record, Johnson's plays also warrant greater consideration in studies of the effect of publishing trends on the reception of English drama; Dugas' *Marketing the Bard*, for instance, gives publishers a crucial role in the increase in Shakespeare's popularity in the first half of the eighteenth century, but dismisses Johnson's potential contribution to this phenomenon in just a couple of pages.

Many other less coherent combinations of Johnson's publications also survive. Thus, whilst some readers were interested in Johnson's *Collection* in its largest form (in multiple volumes with volume title pages), and others in using the collection to construct their own authorial works, others seem to have used the wide range of plays offered by Johnson just to pick and choose a few plays that they were particularly interested in, or that might have been lacking from their existing collections. A nonce volume from my own collection, in a low-cost and well-thumbed marbled card binding (probably of the later eighteenth century), contains

[84] C 7000.d.1088. William Congreve, *The Way of the World. A Comedy* (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1735); William Congreve, *The Mourning Bride. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for J. and R. Tonson, 1742).
[85] Library of Birmingham, A 808.82. 'The Tender Husband' and 'The Lying Lover' from Richard Steele, *The Dramatick Works of Sir Richard Steele* (London: Printed for J. T. And Sold by Bernard Lintot, 1723); Richard Steele, *The Conscious Lovers. A Comedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, By His Majesty's Servants* (London: Printed for J. Tonson, 1730).
[86] The blank endpapers to this volume include a manuscript contents list in an eighteenth-century hand cross-referenced to marked-up passages in all four of the remaining plays and, also, *Measure for Measure* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (perhaps another Johnson edition), which must have been extracted when the volume was rebound.

second-series editions of Vanbrugh's *The Provok'd Wife*, Dryden's *The Indian Emperor*, Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and Congreve's *The Way of the World*. Second-series title pages are also preserved in this volume, with a volume one title glued to the first page of *Julius Caesar*, and a volume five title sewn to the first page of *The Way of the World*. The volume also includes Robert Dodsley's second edition of William Whitehead's *The Roman Father*, which was printed in London in 1750 and appears as a supplementary text in many copies of Hendrik Scheurleer's 1750 reissue of Johnson's works, his *Select Collection*. The volume must, therefore, have been assembled after 1750 and seems to be made up from a truly bizarre array of Scheurleer's stock, including, as it does, Johnson's volume titles, which make no sense in this context. Two even more eclectic volumes are preserved at the Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel. One volume has first-series editions of Johnson's *Macbeth*, *Don Sebastian*, and *Love's Last Shift* alongside a Dutch translation of Johann Schuppius' philosophical *Dissertatio De Opinione*.[87] The other volume at the same library – apparently compiled around the turn of the nineteenth century – contains English-language drama from all the corners of the earth: Johnson's second-series edition of Fenton's *Mariamne*, an English translation of a German tragedy, two London editions of English plays, and a comic opera published in America.[88] A volume at the National Trust's Ham House (no classmark) places Johnson's *The Jew of Venice* (1714) alongside five contemporaneous plays by London publishers (some of whom owned the copyrights for these works and some of whom did not), Rowe's *Poems* by Edmund Curll (1714) and, also, *Callipaediae; or, An Art how to have Handsome Children*, which was translated by Rowe.[89] An eighteenth-century manuscript note on a front end-paper to this volume suggests its contents were 'exceedingly well wrote'. A Cambridge University Library volume again has just one Johnson play, Grimston's *Lawyer's Fortune* (1728), and associates this with eleven works printed in Britain of mostly political or ecclesiastical interest.[90] This suggests such an alternative way of reading Grimston's play – as a comment on current affairs rather than as just

[87] Herzog August Bibliothek, M: QuN 618. Johann Balthasar Schuppius, *De Steel-pop van de Geheele Weerelt* (Gedrukt in Meeningland: By Adrianus vander Meening, 1703) [*sic*].
[88] Herzog August Bibliothek, M: Lq 1263. August Wilhelm Iffland, *Conscience. A Tragedy. In Five Acts*, trans. by Benjamin Thompson (London: Printed by J. Cundee, for Vernor and Hood, 1800); Thomas Otway, *The Orphan: or, The Unhappy Marriage. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for the Proprietors, and sold by R. Randall, and all Booksellers in England, Scotland, and Ireland, [n.d.]); Nicholas Rowe, *The Fair Penitent. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for T. Lowndes; T. Caslon; W. Nicoll; W. Griffin; and S. Bladon, 1771); John Burgoyne, *The Lord of the Manor, a Comic Opera, in Three Acts. As performed with universal applause by the American Company* (Philadelphia: Printed and sold by Henry Taylor, 1791).
[89] Nicholas Rowe, *Poems on Several Occasions* (London: Printed for E. Curll, 1714); Claude Quillet, *Callipaediae; or, An Art how to have Handsome Children* […]. *To which is Added, Paedotrophiae; Or, the Art of Nursing and Breeding up Children*, trans. by Nicholas Rowe (London: Printed for J. T. and Sold by J. Peele, 1718).
[90] C S727.d.72.3.

entertainment – which marries with Knight's study of copies of Shakespeare's plays.[91] Taken together, these volumes show the interest of Johnson's plays to readers in Britain and mainland Europe for many decades after they were published, and that the owners of such volumes had no qualms about mixing and matching copyrighted or reprinted plays by publishers within or without the British Isles (probably dependent on the availability of each of these). Since these readers included Johnson's works in their nonce volumes, future histories of the development of English drama in print might take such occasional arrangements of plays as their starting point, rather than prioritising authorial works or published collections. Indeed, as we have seen, readers' autonomy in the arrangement of their first-series collections probably influenced Johnson, the publisher's decisions in his presentation of his second-series collection. Such a study – one starting with readers' arrangements of works – would give us a much more nuanced rather than catch-all history (such as is most apparent in St Clair's *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*) of the availability of English drama.[92] A survey of such volumes could do much to marry the copy-specific methodologies spearheaded by historians of readers' marks and copies, such as Orgel, in *The Reader in the Book*, or Knight, in *Bound to Read*, with the more expansive histories of the circulation of print materials offered by Milhous and Hume, in *The Publication of Plays in London*, or Mary Pollard, in *Dublin's Trade in Books*.[93] Taking account of readers and their collections in this way should form just as important a part of publishing history – since readers constitute the market for publishers' books – as readers currently enjoy within wider book history (visible in Roger Chartier's *The Order of Books*, for instance).[94]

Although copies of Johnson's plays are associated with all manner of editions by other publishers, the most common examples include works printed in London or in Dublin.[95] One volume of plays owned by the Massachusetts Historical Society Library contains five plays by

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[91] Knight, in *Bound to Read*, pp. 75-77 (especially p. 77) explores how a nonce collection at the Folger Shakespeare Library might reframe Shakespeare's *Pericles* with 'a new political significance' in consequence of the work it is bound with, and of the annotations in this volume. The author characterises such associations as 'a material base for reading across traditional genres and literary categories – according to the classification systems of early book owners instead of those of modern book culture' (p. 9). He also suggests that 'early composite volumes […] not only help us reconstruct habits of book collecting and organization; they also help us read literary works historically' (p. 82).

[92] On St Clair's own description of his methodology, and its privileging of what is essentially an economic history of the circulation of literature, from a very top-down perspective, see *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, pp. 2-10.

[93] Mary Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550-1800* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989).

[94] Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).

[95] On London's dominance of the English book market see Raven, *The Business of Books*, pp. 141-53, 228-29 and *passim*.

five different authors: *Henry IV* (1721), Thomson's *Sophonisba* (1730), *Volpone* (1714) and *The Adventures of Five Hours* (1712) are all by Johnson, and Granville's *Heroick Love* (1726) by George Risk of Dublin.[96] George Risk seems to have been inspired by Johnson's prominent monogram device in the presentation of some of his own works, and these are discussed in Chapter Seven. The presence of such a contemporaneous Irish-printed edition in a volume principally consisting of Johnson's works, in addition to Risk's own debts to Johnson, are clear evidence for the circulation of Johnson's plays in Ireland, and its importance as a market for Johnson, which no previous author has identified. Johnson's *The Old Batchelour* (1720) at the UCLA library is bound with four Irish-printed plays also of the 1720s, which suggests that it might also have been assembled in Johnson's lifetime.[97] A Bodleian collection with one play by Johnson – the later but undated *The Provok'd Husband* – is bound with four further plays by Irish publishers all issued in the 1740s and 1750s, which again correlates with an interest in Johnson's plays in Ireland across the eighteenth century.[98]

An Edinburgh University Library volume contains seven plays ranging in date from 1716-31, of which the only one not by Johnson (which was published in London) was also not available from him, perhaps reflecting its owner's loyalty to Johnson.[99] If the copies of Johnson's works bound with Irish plays suggest the sale of his works into another peripheral British market (in addition to Scotland), their binding with London editions suggests that he might also have sold to customers in London itself (or, at least, England). Since such readers would have had a wealth of other editions available to them, they clearly saw a distinct value in the copies they acquired from Johnson – alongside their price, this may even be due to the aesthetic quality of Johnson's plays, as is emphasised by Ford and Grant, amongst others.[100] A British Library volume again combines one play by Johnson – *The Non-Juror* (1718) – with five published in London, of which the latest was published in 1736.[101] Since, in many instances, Johnson's plays must have been considered alongside whatever else was available

[96] Massachusetts Historical Society Library, DA 27. George Granville, *Heroick Love. A Tragedy* (Dublin: Printed by S. Powell, for George Risk, 1726).
[97] UCLA Library, PR 3364.O44 1720.
[98] Bodleian Library, Don. f. 283.
[99] E^2 E.B. .82204/1. Francis Beaumont, *The Prophetess: or, the History of Dioclesian* (London: Printed for J. T. and Sold by W. Mears, and J. Browne, 1716).
[100] Grant, in 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 20, suggests 'The most notable thing about *Best English Plays* is the sheer quality of the physical book.' Ford, in *Shakespeare 1700-1740*, p. 47, believes 'The plays published at The Hague were printed on exceptionally good paper, in good clear type, and not inferior to the best productions of the London printers'. See also Chapter One, above.
[101] L 642.b.28. Colley Cibber, *Venus and Adonis: a Masque. And Myrtillo: a Pastoral Interlude. Performed at the Theatre Royal* (London: Printed for Henry Lintot; and sold by W. Feales, 1736).

to a collector when putting their library together, they must be given equal consideration in histories of English drama in print as anything published in Britain.

Collections of works which may suggest some Scottish provenance include a volume at the Bodleian which has three second-series Johnson plays bound with a 1715 Edinburgh edition of Farquhar's *The Beaux Stratagem*.[102] Since George Stewart, one of its publishers, was, as we have seen, a distributor of Johnson's texts in Scotland, it seems probable that the works contained in this volume might all have been purchased from his shop. Thus, by combining the information contained in Johnson letters on his contacts (see Chapter Two) with the bibliographical evidence of extant copies of his works, we can confirm that Scotland was an important area of sale for Johnson's plays. A State Library of New South Wales volume associates Johnson's second-series editions of Dryden's *The Indian Emperor* and *The State of Innocence* with two works published in London and one in Edinburgh, which might also suggest some Scottish connection.[103] Considering the spheres of influence of London and Edinburgh booksellers, and the Scottish provenance of the *text* of the Edinburgh play (which was never reprinted south of the border) it seems more likely that a Scottish collector might have bought the London editions, than an English collector a work 'Acted at the New Edinburgh Theatre' and 'Written by a Young Scots Gentleman.'[104]

An itinerary of other notable copies of Johnson's plays that survive is perhaps best begun with those that display their earliest bindings. The consistency of such simple card covers, stabbed and sewn, that appear at Birmingham Library and Cambridge University Library, associated with plays from both Johnson's first and second series, suggests that this may have been the original form in which Johnson issued his plays in all instances.[105] The issue of his plays already bound individually, rather than as 'loose sheets' without formal covers, also tallies with the evidence of Johnson's advertisements – 'Plays […] in small Volumes fit

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[102] Bodleian Library, Vet. A4 f. 139. George Farquhar, *The Beaux Stratagem. A Comedy* (Edinburgh: Printed for David Scot, and George Stewart, 1715).

[103] State Library of New South Wales, DSM/782/PA5. Charles Johnson, *The Village Opera. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal, By His Majesty's Servants* (London: Printed for J. Watts, 1729); George Lillo, *Silvia; or, the Country Burial. An Opera. As it is Perform'd at the Theatre-Royal in Lincoln's-Inn Fields* (London: Printed for J. Watts, 1731); Adam Thomson, *The Disappointed Gallant, or, Buckram in Armour. A New Ballad Opera. As it was Acted at the New Edinburgh Theatre* (Edinburgh: 1738). This volume, formerly belonging to the Australian collector David Scott Mitchell, carries his signature, and was added to the State Library along with the rest of his collection in 1907, but has no other provenance information. See 'David Scott Mitchell Library' <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/research-and-collections-about-our-collections/david-scott-mitchell-library> [accessed 13 February 2020].

[104] Thomson, *The Disappointed Gallant* (1738), A1r.

[105] See Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* ([Johnson], 1711), at Library of Birmingham, S329.1711, and the same library's Shakespeare, *Othello* ([Johnson], 1710), S341.171. See also Wycherley, *The Plain-Dealer* ([Johnson], [n.d.]), C Brett-Smith.1053.

for the pocket' – and indicates their facility to be read as soon as they were purchased.[106] This was extremely unusual at the time, and suggests another important innovation undertaken by Johnson.[107] David Pearson writes that such covers were only generally used on pamphlets and other very small works at this time, and only became widespread in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, but Johnson was using covers for his plays from 1710 at the latest, as indicated by the Birmingham examples.[108] However, where Pearson is primarily interested in the introduction of 'paper' wrappers into English bookbinding (which Pearson's Fig. 6.12 shows were extremely ephemeral), Johnson's plays were actually presented in a much more durable kind of thin card, and Pearson identifies this with an older tradition in continental practice.[109] It therefore seems possible that Johnson's plays might have been influential in introducing these semi-permanent heavy paper or thin card bindings for longer works into England from the continent; William St Clair notes that many literary books from the latter part of the eighteenth-century 'normally reached the public in paper wrappers stitched with thread or temporarily bound in cardboard covered with blue or grey sugar paper', which is also very reminiscent of Johnson's plays.[110] What is important about such covers for both Pearson and St Clair is that they offered the text for immediate reading without the need to have it bound by another party, and this sort of treatment is illustrated by an example from Johnson's works. A singleton copy of Johnson first-series *The Provok'd Wife* by Vanbrugh – which is now in a more durable binding – contains a variety of French glosses in an eighteenth-century hand that suggest the book was used to practice English, especially colloquialisms.[111] Vanbrugh's 'Wench', 'Strumpet', 'Whores' and 'Punk' are all translated as 'putain'.[112] We also find

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[106] Pearson, *English Bookbinding Styles*, p. 147; Smith, *Phaedra and Hippolitus* (Johnson, 1711), F2r. See also *Journal Literaire*, 10.1 (1718), A4v, where Johnson advertises: 'On trouve chez T. JOHNSON, Libraire à la Haye, un Recuëil des meilleures Comédies & Tragédies Angloises, choisies de tous les meilleurs Poëtes de cette Nation […] Il vend aussi les Piéces séparées, pour la commodité des Lecteurs.'

[107] Williams, in *The Social Life of Books*, p. 103, also identifies 'it was usual in the eighteenth century for books to be sold in sheets and bound by the purchaser'. She later suggests (with relevance as well to the different bindings given to Johnson's plays), p. 124, 'Because books were largely bought in sheets, and bound according to the tastes and income of their owners, to pick up a book, any book, enabled users to read in it an indication of the status of its owner, or the perceived value of the work.' The prevalence of books sold in sheets, rather than trade bindings, is problematised by Raven, in *The Business of Books*, pp. 138-39, 228.

[108] Pearson, *English Bookbinding Styles*, pp. 148, 156.

[109] Illustration in Pearson, *English Bookbinding Styles*, p. 157. On continental practice see p. 159: 'a greater range of paper or card-based binding options was employed in continental Europe during the handpress period than was found in Britain. Wrappers of rough plain card (sometimes called cartonnage), folded round a text-block and treated like a vellum wrapper in terms of lacing in or other attachment methods, began to be used in Italy in the sixteenth century and were commonly used in France, Germany and other parts of Europe during the centuries that followed, but are only very occasionally known in English practice.'

[110] St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, p. 192.

[111] L 1342.n.15.

[112] L 1342.n.15, pp. 14 ('Wench'), 30 ('Strumpet' and 'Whores'), 42 ('Punk').

‘salope’ for ‘Slut’, ‘fille’ for ‘Hussy’, and ‘jan pottagie’ for ‘*Jack Pudding*’.[113] Because the annotations are buried deep in the book’s margins it seems probable that they were made when it was still in its original, and looser, trade covers. Although I have seen just a handful of such covers in the hundreds of Johnson books I have examined – since most were replaced with more permanent bindings – their innovation, in allowing Johnson’s plays to be read immediately on purchase, must have offered a good incentive to his customers to buy them. Furthermore, the fact that they could be read without further binding meant that they were an even better bargain relative to new London editions than their prices alone suggest, where a reader had to buy the (more expensive) book *and* pay to have it bound.[114]

Copies of Johnson’s plays with perhaps relatively contemporaneous ownership marks, in addition to those mentioned above, include an authorial volume (now in Victorian cloth binding) containing second-series editions of Rowe’s *Jane Shore*, *The Ambitious Step-Mother* and *Tamerlane*, alongside a 1727 Dublin edition, again by George Risk, of *Lady Jane Gray* (which also ties in with the circulation of Johnson’s plays in Ireland, and Risk’s debt to Johnson’s works).[115] This Dublin play has the Scots-Irish name ‘Robert Colich’ written on its title page, and Johnson’s *Jane Shore* has the equally un-English ‘Allan Ramsay’. Thus, even if Johnson’s plays were only bound with the Dublin play by someone other than their original purchaser, Ramsay – who may have been Johnson’s customer – seems likely to have had Scottish connections. *The Ambitious Step-Mother* has three holes in its inner margin which are consistent with the early card bindings of those singletons already discussed. Eton College has two volumes of plays by Johnson, each containing a mixture of six inter-series and second-series plays without general title pages.[116] The second of these volume carries a bookplate recording its bequest to the college by Nicholas Mann in 1754.[117] So, in addition to showing how a reader arranged Johnson’s plays, these two volumes give some indication of the

[113] L 1342.n.15, pp. 78, 94, 24.

[114] Knight, in *Bound to Read*, p. 4, notes ‘because these handmade bindings [i.e. all pre-mechanised bindings] were vastly more expensive than the printed sheets of the texts themselves, it was financially necessary to gather multiple works of normal length into single bound volumes’. Generally speaking, Knight agrees that many early modern books were sold unbound, so that ‘Often the task of having sheets turned into books fell to the owner at the time of purchase’, but also suggests that certain standard works, such as religious texts or schoolbooks, might be sold ready bound.

[115] C S721.d.72.5. Nicholas Rowe, *The Tragedy Of the Lady Jane Gray* (Dublin: Printed by S. Powell, for George Risk, 1727).

[116] Eton College, Bm.11.7, Bm.11.8. This second volume also contains Steele’s *The Conscious Lovers* (1723) which, as already suggested, is by far the most prevalent ‘later’ play in most examples of broadly second-series collections, presumably because of its relatively early date and the permeable boundary between second-series and later plays (*c.* 1720-22, *c.* 1723-31).

[117] Eton College Library Catalogue <collections.etoncollege.com/B12991> [accessed 19 January 2020].

perception of quality or interest of Johnson's publications relatively soon after his death, i.e. in their owner considering them suitable as a bequest.

As suggested in the Introduction to this chapter, and by the wide-ranging work of Sherman, Jackson and Orgel, amongst others, analysis of extant copies of books reveals the essential individuality of their reception in every instance; although this is not something these writers are usually explicit about, the sheer profusion of their sources and structures of interpretation demonstrates the difficulty of any catch-all interpretation of readers' responses to printed books.[118] Thus, whereas Mann (or the Countess of Charleville) might have thought very highly of Johnson's books as objects, this seems less likely of those who left them in trade covers, or, at least, of the owner of one incredibly dirty nonce volume at the John Rylands Library, now in library bookcloth, that I discuss below.[119] We are therefore on much firmer historical ground using binding arrangements, provenance history and readers' marks in books to illuminate a publisher's area of sale and the market for his works *in general* (as I do here) rather than particular readers' mentalities.

We have so far identified several important trends in the distribution and reception of Johnson's books, including: the circulation of Johnson's plays across the British Isles and Europe; their parallel treatment as high status, being bound in uniform series with title pages, and as low status, being left in their trade covers; a greater freedom in their organisation by readers during the second-series period and later, when Johnson's volume titles did not specify contents; and differences in binding associations between British and continental exemplars, probably on account of the availability of works by other publishers. Whilst certain copies might *appear* to stand out as having a particularly illuminating or full history or range of implications, such as a copy of *The Lawyer's Fortune* (1728) now held by Yale University Library, what is *really* important about such examples is how they contribute to our overall

[118] Whilst this chapter refers primarily to more focussed studies of readers' marks in books, Towsey's survey of the wider field of histories of reading and book history, relying most particularly on the works of Robert Darnton and Roger Chartier, in *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment*, p. 14, outlines 'what might be possible by recovering important aspects of the relationship that developed between certain readers and the texts they read, historicising the process by which meaning was created by each individual reader.' Towsey continues, 'The history of reading has so far remained rooted in the individual case study, however, with very few monographs moving beyond this historiographical impasse. This is particularly true for Britain in the eighteenth century'. The author later reiterates 'the sheer diversity of personal reading experiences' (p. 301), and also refers to St Clair's *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* – and its abandonment of the evidence of historical readers – 'since every act of reading is unique' (Towsey, p. 15; St Clair, p. 401).

[119] John Rylands Library, University of Manchester, Sc 4963a. Dryden's *The Indian Emperor* ([Johnson], 1710), which begins this volume, has a title page that is even more soiled than the rest of the volume, indicating that although the plays appear to have been gathered together at an early stage, they were also probably without covers (or missing their front cover) for a considerable period.

picture of Johnson's business strategies.[120] The Yale play appears in eighteenth-century binding alongside George Ruggle's *Ignoramus* and Thomas Warton's *The Union: or, Select Scots and English Poems*, and carries bookplates of both Timothy Bigelow Lawrence (*d.* 1869) and Horace Walpole, who also provided a manuscript contents list.[121] The volume was bought alongside other items including 'four volumes of plays' (perhaps by Johnson?) by one Thorpe at the Strawberry Hill sale for eighteen shillings, and sold on by Thorpe – probably to Lawrence – in 1842 for 7*s* 6*d*. Although Walpole is unlikely to have been the original purchaser of Johnson's play (he would have been eleven at the time of its publication) it may well have been him who had it bound with the other two works. It is perhaps surprising, then, that the Yale catalogue suggests he was singularly unimpressed with Grimston's text, describing it as 'a schoolboy play maliciously reprinted'.[122] When one observes that Warton's *The Union* carries a false imprint and was actually printed by William Jackson in Oxford, and Ruggle's *Ignoramus* (concerned with lawyers, like Grimston's play) was also an opportunistic reissue of what was intended as a coterie play on the back of Ravenscroft's adaptation for the public stage, it seems that this volume might in fact be a deliberate rogues' gallery.[123] Taking all this into account, the broader lesson that should be taken from Walpole's copy is that since the plays in the *Collection* were made available singly as well as *en masse*, this must have encouraged a significant number of such one-off purchases that aligned the plays with whatever other low-cost publications their owners wished – for their own personal reasons. A more sympathetic reader of Johnson's work who also mixed his plays with those by other publishers might have been William Vesey (1677-1755), a fellow of Lincoln College Oxford and 'rather unexpectedly' the owner of over 500 plays.[124] A volume with his bookplate in the Bodleian Library juxtaposes Johnson's *The Plain-Dealer* (1710) with two London-printed plays and the second volume of Tooke and Wellington's *Plays Written by Mr. William Wycherley*, thus mixing Johnson's text with a variety of works by London publishers and, indeed, treating an authorial works edition as something that might also be broken up and used as one wished, in

[120] Yale University Library, LWL 49 1896. The following provenance information is from the Yale Library Catalogue <http://search.library.yale.edu/catalog/1737356> [accessed 19 January 2020].
[121] George Ruggle, *Ignoramus. Comoedia Coram Rege Jacobo Primo et Totius Angliae Magnatibus, ab Academicis Cantabrigiensibus habita* (Westmonasterii: Printed for the Editor, and Sold by B. Barker; L. Gilliver and J. Clarke; and J. Nourse, 1737); Thomas Warton, ed., *The Union: or Select Scots and English Poems* (Edinburgh: Printed for Archibald Munro & David Murray, 1753). For further information on the history of Walpole's bookplates see Pearson, *Provenance Research*, p. 89.
[122] Yale Catalogue. 'four volumes of plays' also from Yale Catalogue.
[123] Edward Ravenscroft, *Ignoramus: or, the English Lawyer. A Comedy. As it was Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane* (London: Printed for W. Feales, 1736). On *The Union* see *ESTC* T8389, and T142331.
[124] 'William Vesey (1677-1755)' <https://www.lincoln.ox.ac.uk/William-Vesey> [accessed 19 January 2020].

a similar manner to the *Best English Plays*.[125] The first volume of Tooke and Wellington's *Plays* originally contained *The Plain Dealer* and *The Country Wife*, and the second volume, retained here, *The Gentleman Dancing-Master* and *Love in a Wood*. Thus, although the other two publications contained in this volume are *not* by Wycherley, Johnson's *Plain-Dealer* sits alongside Tooke and Wellington's texts (from a genuine authorial works) to make up something resembling an authorial collection.[126] A study of readers' collections of plays, and the textual associations they made with these – Knight's 'material intertextuality' – could do much to revise our understanding of how readers saw authorial works editions; like *Best English Plays*, the integrity of these seems sometimes to have been contingent on readers' own interests rather than, necessarily, perfect and unchangeable.[127] Vesey, with his extensive collection, was obviously an enthusiast of English drama, but he still mixed multiple works by different publishers, and does not seem to have viewed any particular form in which plays were published as necessarily higher in status, or less malleable, than any other.

The several examples of Johnson's plays owned by female readers accords with his imagined readership for the *Collection* in his Dedication to Princess Caroline. In addition to those books owned by women mentioned above, a volume in eighteenth-century binding held by Cambridge University Library, containing Johnson's edition of Dryden's *The State of Innocence* (1721) alongside five Irish play editions, the latest of which is dated 1742, has 'Sarah Gore' written prominently on every play's title page.[128] Since Johnson's work is in a contemporaneous binding with Irish plays, this volume also confirms that at least some of his plays were circulating in Ireland in the first half of the eighteenth century. A volume owned by the National Library of Scotland, containing second-series editions of *Merry Wives* and *The Tempest*, Dryden's *The Indian Emperor*, Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer*, and Steele's *The Conscious Lovers* (1723) is signed 'Miss Betty Anny Bray | her book May 29 1752 | Miss Bray Miss Betty Bray' on the front paste-down.[129] The facing endpaper also has 'Miss Betty Bray | her Book'. On the back paste-down Bray repeats her name and adds the manuscript verse 'thay turned ther sides and to | each other spok | I sa thei words break out in fire | and smok', which

[125] Bodleian Library, Mal. 907. William Wycherley, *Plays Written by Mr. William Wycherley. In Two Volumes*, 2 vols (London: Printed for B. Tooke, and M. Wellington; and Sold by A. Bettesworth, and F. Clay, 1720).
[126] Other items in this volume are 'The Rehearsal', itself extracted from George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, *Two Plays* (London: Printed for M. Wellington, 1718), and Colley Cibber, *The Careless Husband. A Comedy* (London: Printed for J. Tonson; and Sold by W. Taylor, 1718).
[127] Knight, *Bound to Read*, p. 16.
[128] C Hib.8.721.1. *The Political Rehearsal. Harlequin Le Grand: or, The Tricks of Pierrot le Primier. With The Adventures and Humours of Punchinello, Scaramouchi, Mezetino, and Variety of other Personages* (Dublin: 1742).
[129] National Library of Scotland, NG.1589.D.32.

reproduces Dryden's lines from *The Indian Emperor* in Bray's own Scots idiom.[130] This suggests Bray's engagement with the play, and the potential importance of Johnson's books to a variety of readers within the British Isles – Bray's repeated ownership marks are also typical of what Pearson describes as 'humbler, less well-educated' readers.[131] Other of Johnson's plays owned by women include a Folger copy of his 1710 *Hamlet* signed by 'Miss Nelly C[?u]rnegy', and a Cambridge University Library volume containing Congreve's *The Old Batchelour* and *Love for Love*, and Etherege's *She Wou'd if She Cou'd* (all 1710), which is inscribed 'Viola Pringle'.[132] Although the evidence of these many disparate copies is extremely hard to interpret, one further trend that might be discerned is the greater evidence for female ownership in singleton copies or nonce collections of Johnson's plays than in larger multi-volume collections; this may be a consequence of the cost of a full collection, or that individual plays could have been gifts (perhaps from family members who had travelled abroad and purchased them from Johnson directly). One might also observe a greater number of women's ownership marks *in general* than one would necessarily expect, especially based on the evidence of subscription lists appearing in other contemporary dramatic publications, such as Pope's *Works* of Shakespeare, which names just a handful of women amongst its several hundred subscribers.[133] If female readers were more likely to own plays published in cheaper formats (like the singletons Johnson sold) than London-produced authorial works editions, then the omission of Johnson's and other reprinters' books from histories of the reception of individual dramatists must have done much to skew our understanding of who was reading them, as well as in what part of the British Isles they were doing so.[134] Although there has been considerable work on women readers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with an emphasis on devotional or didactic texts – by Heidi Hackel, for instance – there has been much less attention paid to female readers of plays in the eighteenth century, and copies of Johnson's work would serve as an important resource in this research.[135]

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[130] See Dryden, *The Indian Emperor* (Johnson, 1721), A6v: 'All turn'd their sides, and to each other spoke, | I saw their words break out in fire and smoke.'
[131] Pearson, *Provenance Research*, p. 27.
[132] Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 2807 1710 copy 4; C 7720.c.228.
[133] Shakespeare, *Works* (1725), I, E4v-F3v.
[134] Knight's study of early modern books, in *Bound to Read*, p. 10, also provides a parallel example of how the neglect of less instantly attractive sources, such as Johnson's plays, can lead to a skewed understanding of book (and also literary, publishing and reception) history. Although Knight himself is not especially interested in differences of gender, his suggestion that 'histories of print and the book have "tended to concentrate on the most eye-catching achievements of the new art," neglecting the unbound and uncollected texts, the uncatalogued or unexhibited items in archives, the imperfect and composite volumes […] that tell a different story of literate culture', seems particularly appropriate to copies of Johnson's plays owned by women.
[135] On sixteenth and seventeenth-century female readers see, for instance, Heidi Brayman Hackel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England: Print, Gender, and Literacy* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), or Helen Smith,

Finally, we might draw attention to some additional examples of Johnson's plays that show marking by a reader beyond the writing of their name, and hence suggest that reader's critical engagement with these texts. A volume in the John Rylands Library contains four first-series Dryden texts by Johnson, and the title page of *Don Sebastian* has some very damaged notes suggesting this play was 'His [i.e. Dryden's] highest effort in dramatic […]', with its 'Highly finished character' also noted in a different hand.[136] A different reader was clearly less impressed with Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1711), which appears in an unnumbered volume without general title page alongside the three other first-series plays that constituted volume six of Johnson's first-series collection.[137] *The Man of Mode* has a range of entertainingly dismissive notes, and the following exchange is marked as 'wretched':

> *Handy*. 'Tis all one, Sir; if they're up, you indulge 'em so, they're ever poaching after whores all the morning.
> *Dor*. Take notice henceforward who's wanting in his duty; the next clap he gets he shall rot for an example.[138]

The reader also judges a subsequent reference to a 'Flasket of guts' as 'quite low'.[139] Dorimant's speech on 'This fine Woman […] that she may look sparkishly in the fore front of the King's box, at an old play', is bracketed, and condemned as 'sad stuff & quite unlike a gent.'[140] Medley's '*Dorimant* my life, my joy, my darling sin how dost thou?' is 'unaccountable ridiculous -'.[141] Although my own impression is that these notes are nineteenth-century, or at least from the very final portion of the eighteenth-century, this book by Johnson provides

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'Grossly Material Things': Women and Book Production in Early Modern England (Oxford: OUP, 2012). Hackel's '"Rowme" of its Own: Printed Drama in Early Libraries', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. by John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (NY: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 113-30, also contains much information on female readers of plays in the seventeenth century. As two outstanding but relatively isolated studies of particular eighteenth-century female readers see Naomi Tadmor, '"In the even my wife read to me": Women, Reading and Household Life in the Eighteenth Century', in *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, ed. by James Raven, Helen Small and Naomi Tadmor (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), pp. 162-74; and John Brewer, 'Reconstructing the Reader: Prescriptions, Texts and Strategies in Anna Larpent's Reading', in the same volume, pp. 226-45. Williams' *The Social Life of Books* also contains a variety of important work on female readers in the eighteenth century, focussing on (p. 5) 'the lesser known world of the everyday uses of books and reading in company, in the homes of the middling sort and lesser gentry.'

[136] John Rylands Library, University of Manchester, Sc 4963a. This is the very dirty copy described above. The style of these annotations (taking account of both the hand and the sentiments) seems to mark them as having been made around the turn of the nineteenth century.

[137] Worcester College, Oxford, Y.Y.3.23.

[138] Etherege, *The Man of Mode* ([Johnson], 1711), A3v.

[139] Etherege, *The Man of Mode* ([Johnson], 1711), A3v.

[140] Etherege, *The Man of Mode* ([Johnson], 1711), A3v.

[141] Etherege, *The Man of Mode* ([Johnson], 1711), A4r.

important evidence for the history of the reception of Etherege's play.[142] Although few other readers have provided such extensive notes as this one, other copies of Johnson's plays with various markings include a British Library volume in parchment binding of eight Johnson plays by various authors printed between 1712-26.[143] This has a manuscript contents list, is signed by one 'E. Atwood', and a large number of passages in *Phaedra and Hippolitus* (n.d., but second-series), and *Venice Preserv'd* (1712) are underlined. Many other copies have just one or two passages marked.[144]

Although perhaps anti-intuitive, we cannot assume that just because a book has been purchased, it has also been read.[145] These marks demonstrate that all the plays they are associated with *have* been read (or at least referred to) by their owners, and thus that Johnson's publication of his *Best English Plays* must have had some direct influence on these readers' encounters with English drama. Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis, speculation on the symbolic value of these and other readers' marks can occasionally run wild.[146] Nevertheless, beyond their self-evident status as recording the act of reading, the most sensible interpretation of many of these marks (such as the underlining in *Phaedra and Hippolitus* and *Venice Preserv'd*, above) – especially when considered in the context of what they are marking – is as denoting phrases or sentiments that the reader might particularly wish to remember, or be able to refer back to.[147] This certainly seems to have been the case with a copy of Johnson's 1720 *Hamlet*, the reader of which marked just one passage (with a line in the margin) that makes an ideal sententia:

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[142] For an assessment of the uses and propriety of earlier drama in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century home see Williams, *The Social Life of Books*, especially 'Drama and Recital'.
[143] L Cup.404.a.30.
[144] See, for instance, Lee, *Theodosius* (Johnson, 1719), p. 26, in E^2 E.B. .82204/1; Rowe, *Jane Shore* ([Johnson], [n.d.]), pp. 7, 25, 32, in E^2 E.B. .82204/3; Lee, *Sophonisba* (Johnson, 1719), p. 14, in C Brett-Smith.b.9.
[145] Towsey, in *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment*, p. 19, introduces his discussion of 'the reading experience itself' by suggesting 'to show that readers had the opportunity to read a specific book is not to prove that they ever actually read it. Nor is it to demonstrate why they read it, whether they understood it, or how they responded to its ideas.' Even more fundamentally, Pearson, in *Provenenance Research*, p. 219, implies the value of a reception-sensitive approach to the history of books more generally, since 'It is one thing to know that books were being printed, and another to know that they were being bought and retained on people's shelves.' See also Williams, *The Social Life of Books*, p. 108, on these problems.
[146] Although the interests of Juliet Fleming stretch far beyond the marking of books, her *Graffiti and the Writing Arts of Early Modern England* (London: Reaktion, 2001), and *Cultural Graphology: Writing after Derrida* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016), provide the most speculative accounts of the symbolic meaning of readers' marks that still sit within the broad field of studies of marginalia, especially of the early modern period. For the most practical account of readers' marks see Pearson, *Provenance Research*.
[147] Writings on commonplacing are multiple, but see, for instance, Hackel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England*, pp. 145-49. Although Hackel, and others, often focus more on commonplace books rather than commonplacing *in* books, Orgel, in *The Reader in the Book*, p. 23, makes an explicit connection between these practices, and refers to 'passages indicated by underlinings, scorings, and manicules […] – for these, the book's blank spaces served as a commonplace book'.

> But Virtue, as it never will be moved,
> Though Lewdness court it in a shape of Heaven
> So Lust, though to a radiant Angel link'd,
> Will sate it self in a celestial bed; and prey on garbage.[148]

One last, relatively unusual volume now held by Cambridge University Library is inscribed 'Trehern 1761', and has five first-series Johnson plays: Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *Macbeth*, Smith's *Phaedra and Hippolitus* and Granville's *The Jew of Venice*.[149] Although the volume does not contain notes as such, the final leaf of *Othello* (H8) has been exchanged for a new leaf that replaces the lost printed text with a manuscript alternative. Its eighteenth-century writer reproduces the running titles and catchwords of the print original, and in repairing the text in this laborious way shows us just how valuable Johnson's works could be, perhaps especially if the owner of this particular volume had only limited access to alternative copies. The writer also added a delightful hand-drawn ornament to complete their text, showing an impish face peering through the centre of a decorated cross.

Reading Johnson's *Collection*

As suggested in the Introduction to this chapter, the copies of Johnson's plays detailed here, especially those in small nonce volumes or preserved as singletons, are just a small proportion of many thousands of examples held in libraries around the world. I have provided a survey of all of those relatively extensive collections that I have had access to, in order to get the best possible grasp of how Johnson's large-scale collection format was manifested in practice, but a similarly comprehensive study of less copious volumes of his work has been unfeasible within the context of this thesis. Nevertheless, in the course of my research, I have compiled spreadsheets of all of those copies of Johnson's plays I have been able to identify (which is several times as many as those listed on their *ESTC* records), and a finalised version of this data will be prepared for any publication deriving from this thesis. Whilst much credit is due to Johnson for the pioneering scope of his *Collection*, much is also owed for his policy of making all of his plays available as individual works at affordable prices, and of offering these to readers who had not previously enjoyed easy access to such works. Further investigation of the many singletons and smaller collections of Johnson's plays that I have barely touched on in this chapter would do much in revealing who exactly these readers were. This would provide an alternative history of the circulation and reception of English drama to the one suggested in

[148] Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (Johnson, 1720), p. 26, in Library of Birmingham, S317.172.
[149] C S724.d.71.9.

studies of more elite publications, especially the Shakespeare works editions issued by the Tonsons.[150] The study of further examples of Johnson's texts would also, of course, add even more detail to our understanding of Johnson's field of sale and customer base (in addition to its obvious benefits in determining his printing order and print runs), and offer more evidence for differences in the take-up, organisation and even understanding of his plays (and their reasons for purchasing them) by readers in different locations and from different socio-economic and gender groups.[151]

Another significant area of investigation I have necessarily avoided here, and which is explored in Chapter Six, is the huge numbers of Johnson's plays preserved in collections bearing volume titles by other, later publishers. These are most frequently found on the continent (even more so than copies of the plays with Johnson's own volume titles), and confirm the particular value Johnson's plays must have had for European readers with only limited access to English productions, and the persistence of this value across the eighteenth century. Whilst Johnson was selling plays to both British residents and also European customers, his successors seem instead to have focussed on Europe as their principal market, and to have had more limited access to British customers than Johnson with his extensive range of contacts (see Chapter Two). Johnson's plays are more likely to be preserved in variant arrangements or as singletons in Britain, but on the continent they are more likely to be part of larger collections, with or without general title pages. This is most probably due to the lack of works by British publishers available in Europe (and the consequent desirability of Johnson's

[150] Although this emphasis on the importance of the Tonsons' editions is visible across most writing on eighteenth-century publishing, Jacob Tonson the Elder's biographer Harry M. Geduld is especially fulsome. In his *Prince of Publishers*, p. 139, Geduld writes that 'With Rowe's Shakespeare, Tonson began a popularizing movement that was continued by his nephew and maintained throughout most of the century'. The extent to which the Tonsons' editions could be considered 'popular', based on their price, has already been problematised by a number of critics, and Geduld's further claim that Tonson 'was able to satisfy the demand for Shakespeare' is clearly undermined by the presence of other editions by other publishers. See also Hamm, 'Rowe's "Shakespear"', p. 188: 'Tonson's fellow Kit-Cats appear to represent the ideal audience for whom he intended his vernacular classics [i.e. including Shakespeare]. Certainly, the editions' retail prices indicate that he expected an elite readership, rather than a popular one.' Dugas, in *Marketing the Bard*, p. 81, suggests that the price of Tonson's and Henry Herringman's works editions 'effectively cut themselves [i.e. the publishers] off from the majority of their already limited number of readers'; Dugas also argues that Pope's 1725 edition of Shakespeare's *Works* (p. 195) 'was an exercise in niche marketing aimed at the very wealthiest level of society.' Whilst each of these authors (Hamm, Dugas) thus deconstruct earlier assumptions about the Tonsons' editions, they nevertheless provide studies that are essentially Tonson-centric, and any extended field of study revealing how other publishers *did* popularise Shakespeare or other dramatists in the first half of the eighteenth century has yet to emerge.

[151] Hackel's *Reading Material in Early Modern England* includes a chapter on 'Noting readers of the *Arcadia* in marginalia and commonplace books' (pp. 137-95), which provides multiple examples of how the analysis of different types of evidence reveals different groups of readers (principally male and female, and rich, middling and poor), and how members of each of these groups engaged with this single text. For other studies of multiple copies of the same book see Pearson, *Provenance Research*, p. 2 n. 1.

plays), as opposed to the obvious prevalence of English publications within England. Overall, the copies of Johnson's works I have described in this chapter include a higher proportion of examples with British rather than European associations and marks of ownership. Nevertheless, a far greater number of Johnson's plays also survive in Europe – and seem to have been owned by Europeans – than previous critics have been aware of, emphasising as they do the British market for his books.

Copies of Johnson's plays survive across Britain, and the Scottish associations of several volumes corroborate the evidence of Johnson's letters that this was an important outlet for Johnson. The potential significance of Ireland to Johnson's business is not even hinted at in this correspondence, so the evidence of extant copies of his plays are a significant resource in uncovering this part of his trade as well. So far as we can tell at this stage, for these readers at the geographical margins of the British publishing industry, in Ireland or in Scotland, Johnson's works seem, often, to have been collected alongside locally-produced texts, perhaps in preference to those published in London. This is probably because Johnson's plays were both cheaper than London editions and, also, directly available from certain regional booksellers, such as George Stewart in Edinburgh or George Risk in Dublin (see Chapter Seven). Other British collectors who purchased Johnson's books, whether in England, Scotland or Ireland, seem to have drawn little distinction in assembling their volumes between works published by their copyright holders, and those such as Johnson's with a more dubious relationship to legality.[152] If contemporary readers saw Johnson's plays as an integral part of the English-language publishing industry, then we should also include his work in histories of that industry. Although Milhous and Hume make important advances in this regard, this present chapter on copies of his works supplements Chapter Two by providing a more solid foundation for understanding how Johnson's books participated in the market for English plays.

We might also ask what more immediate conclusions can be drawn from this survey of copies of Johnson's plays. How well did the *Collection* sell? How did it change in response to customer demand? Fewer first-series books are found bound in arrangements without *Collection* volume titles, and in arrangements that differ from Johnson's ideal schema of contents, than is the case with Johnson's second-series and later publications. Furthermore, first-series plays are usually found primarily with other first-series plays, whereas inter-series, second-series and later plays tend to be arranged in mixed groupings. Almost no first-series

[152] On the implications of the Copyright Act (1710) for the legality of Johnson's work see Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, pp. 74-84, and 'The Circulation and Influence of *Best English Plays*' in Chapter One, above.

plays appear in the collections of Johnson's plays reissued by later publishers (see Chapter Six). Thus, whereas the absence of first-series copies from most collections post-dating 1720 implies that Johnson must have sold out of the majority of these works by the time of reprinting them (indicating that his *Best English Plays* was very popular), the association of inter-series, second-series and later plays in multiple examples of the *Collection* reflects cumulative growth in the range of Johnson's stock from the inter-series period onward – which might also point to larger print runs. This suggestion, that Johnson increased his print runs for later play editions (which reiterates the *Collection*'s popularity), is also corroborated by the survival rates of first- and second-series plays, as evidenced by my own catalogue of copies. That Johnson changed the format of his volume titles at the same time – from listing contents to omitting them – also seems to be a response to his customers' interests.[153] Variation in the contents of a limited number of examples of the first-series *Collection* (and of first-series nonce volumes) suggests that certain customers, at least, wanted to choose how to organise their plays. The explosion in this variety of organising with second-series copies shows how willingly Johnson's customers embraced his new format. Nevertheless, the persistence of certain elements of the first-series structure (with collections beginning with Shakespeare or Dryden) also suggests that many readers allowed themselves to be guided by Johnson in this important aspect of his original schema.

Finally, as for the questions of who purchased and read Johnson's plays, the simple answer is – all manner of people. Some readers seem to have been permanent residents of Britain, and to have had their books delivered there or to have returned there with them (or even bought them locally), and others were residents of the Low Countries or other parts of mainland Europe who carried Johnson's books all over the continent. There is significant evidence for a variety of female readers owning and engaging with Johnson's texts. There are many collections preserved in prestige bindings and carrying ownership marks of members of the social and political elite, but also a great number of individual plays or small nonce volumes in cheap bindings that could have been afforded by much less wealthy readers.[154] The significant cost of authorial works in the first half of the eighteenth century, treated most extensively by St Clair in *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, means that these were

[153] Alexandra Gillespie, in 'Poets, Printers, and Early English *Sammelbände*', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 67.2 (2004), 189-214, discusses several incunable period printers who were also responsive to readers' opinions as to how their texts should be organised. She suggests (p. 208) 'it was in the interests of the early English producers of printed books to predict but not preclude the sort of consumer-driven choices that led to sales.'
[154] Williams, in *The Social Life of Books*, pp. 105-06, suggests that even some domestic servants seem to have been buying and reading plays in the eighteenth century.

only available to a small number of potential customers. The study of Johnson's much cheaper plays helps to reveal the reading material and reading habits of other, sometimes overlooked members of society, and of Johnson's interests in this market sector. Such readers, binding Johnson's plays with works by a variety of publishers, probably chose their editions principally in accordance with what was cheapest and most readily available. Nevertheless, consideration of the more prestigious and finely bound copies of Johnson's *Collection* also implies that the owners of these – who could afford whatever editions they wanted – chose Johnson's plays because they really did think they provided the best overview of English drama available at the time.

Chapter Six: European Reissues of the *Best English Plays*

English Plays in Europe

In the decades following Johnson's death, several publishers acquired and reissued large numbers of his plays under new volume titles, re-forming them as their own collections. Some of these publishers and their work have received the briefest of comments by previous writers on Johnson, notably Ford and McMullin, but others have gone completely unnoticed. This chapter tells the story of how unsold copies of Johnson's plays came to be reissued by later publishers, with a history of how they might have passed through each of these publishers' hands. It also provides a brief bibliographical summary of these reissues, which has not been attempted before. I provide a short itinerary of some copies of these later collections, which constitute a significant body of Johnson's work that has frequently escaped notice due to being repackaged in other forms. This chapter is important for several reasons. It helps clarify the later history of many copies of Johnson's plays, and demonstrates their ongoing popularity, especially in Europe, in the latter half of the eighteenth century. It thus, by extension, provides further evidence for the high quality of Johnson's *Best English Plays*, and its uniqueness in making English plays readily available in Europe, since so many later publishers continued to see them as a promising business opportunity. It shows the flexibility of Johnson's original design of the *Collection* – with plays available individually or as sets – and how other publishers modified or adhered to this plan. Finally, as already suggested, an itinerary of copies that survive in this form adds considerably to our knowledge of extant examples of Johnson's work, and is essential for any complete collation or record of his plays.

The majority of this chapter is forthcoming under the title of 'Perceptions of England: The Production and Reception of English Theatrical Publications in Germany and the Netherlands during the Eighteenth Century'.[1] In this essay I use the evidence of Johnson's plays and their reissue by later publishers to explore the development of Dutch and German interest in English culture, and especially in Shakespeare, during the eighteenth century. In particular, I argue that the assumption that English drama only became available to be read in Germany and the Low Countries when it was translated in the final quarter of the century is incorrect, and that the many English-language plays published by Johnson and his followers

[1] Emil Rybczak, 'Perceptions of England: The Production and Reception of English Theatrical Publications in Germany and the Netherlands during the Eighteenth Century', in *Pen, Print and Communication in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Caroline Archer-Parré and Malcolm Dick (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press), forthcoming 2020.

challenge this belief. In asking *why* so many European readers might have been interested in English drama, accessible through Johnson's plays, the conclusions I draw are essentially political, and to do with Britain's growth as an international power during the eighteenth century. Although one might be shy of applying too definite a motive to individual readers' choice of books – as I explain in Chapter Five – this current chapter offers just one possible interpretation of European engagement with English letters *as a whole*, and so, by extension, of the wider implications of our study of Thomas Johnson. This political interpretation is rooted in the military and economic relationships between Britain and the Continent at the time that these works were published, and in current interpretations of the translation of English drama into German in the eighteenth century.

Since most of those publishers who reissued Johnson's plays were, like him, exempt from English copyright laws, they were able to issue more extensive collections of English drama containing works owned by multiple copyright holders than were generally available in England until after the ending of perpetual copyright with Donaldson v. Becket (1774), and the large collections by John Bell and the London copyright holders to which this decision contributed.[2] Whilst the collections of plays reissued by Johnson's followers were presented by these publishers in diverse ways, they have common structural and presentational debts to Johnson's work (in all its forms) that belies their differences. They also, of course, use the actual remainders of Johnson's *Best English Plays* as their primary building blocks. Hendrik's Scheurleer the Younger's *A Select Collection of the Best Modern English Plays* (1750) was as

[2] *Bell's British Theatre, Consisting of the most esteemed English Plays*, 20 vols (London: Printed for John Bell, and C. Etherington, 1776-78). As an edition by the London copyright holders see, for instance, *The New English Theatre in Eight Volumes, Containing the Most Valuable Plays which have been Acted on the London Stage*, 8 vols (London: Printed for J. Rivington & Sons, W. Strahan, W. Johnston, C. Bathurst, J. Davies, L. Davis, J. Dodsley, J. Longman, T. Lowndes, B. Law, J. Caslon, J. Becket, W. Nicoll, R. Horsfield, J. Bladon, B. White, E. Dilly, R. Baldwin, G. Robinson, J. Cadell, W. Flexney, W. Woodfall & J. Bew, 1776). For further information on these collections see Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, pp. 262-72. For the best summary of Donaldson v. Becket and the consequences for drama publishing arising from this case see Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, pp. 131-37. See also Thomas F. Bonnell, *The Most Disreputable Trade: Publishing the Classics of English Poetry, 1765-1810* (Oxford: OUP, 2008), pp. 32-34, who provides an important critique of St Clair's interpretation of this decision, argued across his *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*. Bonnell's 'When Book History Neglects Bibliography' also provides a corrective account of Bell's innovations in publishing later poetry collections, as well as plays (see especially pp. 249-50). On the importance (or otherwise) of Donaldson v. Becket see, in the same article, pp. 254-56. Raven downplays the importance of such legal decisions entirely, and places them in a much wider context of the general decline of the London Guilds in the face of economic change, suggesting, in *The Business of Books*, p. 203, 'Legal actions, acclaimed in many histories as the signposts of defeat and victory, more often confirm the practices and evasions of a generation or more.' He later repeats (p. 222) 'the challenge to monopolistic practices was then and is now open to conflicting interpretation.' See also 'The challenge to perpetual copyright', pp. 230-38, where the author again states (p. 231) 'The 1774 Lords' ruling has gained an importance in histories of the trade quite in excess of its true worth', although admits that the ruling was probably more significant for established literature than for new or non-fictional genres.

broad in its contents, and versatility, as Johnson's second-series *Collection*. Scheurleer also reissued Johnson's Congreve editions as his own *Works* of the author (1752). When the London-based James Brindley provided new volume titles for another selection of Johnson's old stock, framing it as *The British Stage* (1752), the contents of these volumes, like Johnson's first-series *Collection* in its ideal schema – but unlike Scheurleer's *Select Collection* – were delimited by the editor. *The British Stage* was, however, considerably less expansive that Johnson's *Collection*, and by 1752 its contents were somewhat out of date. An anonymous continental publisher then issued another recycling of Johnson's texts as *The Best Tragedie's and Comedie's* – again with an ideal organisational schema, but one that was more negotiable than Brindley's – between 1761-81. The German Gottlob Richter, by contrast, in addition to reissuing even more copies of Johnson's plays in 1776, again as *A Select Collection of the Best Modern English Plays* (which appears similar in form to Johnson's second-series *Collection*, and Scheurleer's *Select Collection*) published his own original *A Collection of New Plays by Several Hands*.[3] This was obviously inspired by Johnson's work, but was also an important undertaking in its own right, and took the possibilities of a dramatic collection in entirely new directions. *New Plays* combines short and relatively low-brow afterpieces with more literary main-pieces in the same bibliographical unit, and so provided its continental readers with a unified representation of contemporaneous English theatrical culture entirely absent from books published in England.

An International Perspective

Long before Johnson began publishing his *Best English Plays*, European audiences had access to translated versions of English renaissance drama through the performances of the Elizabethan and Jacobean *Englische komedianten* and the wide variety of plays they performed.[4] Such actors and their plays had nevertheless disappeared from continental courts and marketplaces by the dawn of the eighteenth century, dissipated by the upheaval of the Thirty Years' War (1618-48) and superseded by a new 'Gallomania'.[5] Little evidence has

[3] *A Select Collection of the Best Modern English Plays. Selected From. The Best Author's*, ?10 vols (London [Altenburg]: Printed for T. Johnson, and sold by Gottl. Eman. Richter, 1776); *A Collection of New Plays by Several Hands*, 4 vols (Altenburgh: Printed for Gottl. Eman. Richter, 1774-78).

[4] See Albert Cohn, *Shakespeare in Germany in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: An Account of English Actors in Germany and the Netherlands and of the Plays Performed by them During the Same Period* (London and Berlin: Asher & Co., 1865); or Zdeněk Stříbrný, *Shakespeare and Eastern Europe* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), pp. 6-25.

[5] See Julian K. Hilton, 'The "Englische Komedianten" in German-speaking States, 1592-1620: a Generation of Touring Performers as Mediators Between English and German Cultures' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, Brasenose College, 1983), especially p. 10.

hitherto been uncovered to suggest any widespread availability of or interest in English drama in Europe in the first half of the eighteenth century, before the blossoming of translations, adaptations and performances of Shakespeare that justified Schlegel's claim that the poet was 'ganz unser' – completely ours – in 1796.[6] Although critics concur that 'no other nation has ever made a foreign poet so completely its own, as the Germans have done in the case of Shakespeare', they assume that translations (such as Schlegel's) – which did indeed facilitate the German adoption of Shakespeare as 'one of three national poets' – were the only form in which he was encountered during the long eighteenth century.[7] Thus, so the story goes, Shakespeare was not and could not be read in Germany and, by extension, most of Germanic and central Europe, until Wieland's seminal prose translations of twenty-two plays published between 1762-66.[8] This belief is problematised by Johnson's issue of his *Best English Plays*, and by the many reissues of this work undertaken by other continental publishers in the century following his death.

Whilst the reception of Shakespeare in Germany is more extensively catalogued than that of any other European country, histories of the reading and performance of English drama at Johnson's home in the Netherlands adopt these same critical assumptions.[9] That is, that the reception of foreign texts by an alien culture is always necessarily a process of adaptation and assimilation, in which works are reformed and reconceptualised in line with native values and structures of thought. Modern commitment to translation as appropriation (spearheaded by postcolonial critics, particularly of 'global' Shakespeare) imagines Shakespeare – or indeed any other dramatist – as a universal property whose works can, are and should be 'owned' by any people, whatever their language.[10] However, the exact significance of translation or, more broadly, the reading of international texts as a means of understanding and interacting with other cultures – either as Other, or as assimilated into one's own culture – is far from closed.

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[6] See Roger Paulin, 'Shakespeare and Germany', in *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Fiona Ritchie and Peter Sabor (Cambridge: CUP, 2012), pp. 314-30 (323, 326).
[7] Cohn, *Shakespeare in Germany*, cxxxvii; Lukas Erne, 'Eighteenth-Century Swiss Peasant Meets Bard: Ulrich Bräker's *A Few Words About William Shakespeare's Plays* (1780)', *Theatre Research International*, 25.3 (2000), 255-65 (p. 255).
[8] William Shakespeare, *Theatralische Werke*, trans. by Christoph Martin Wieland, 8 vols (Zurich: 1762-66).
[9] See Dirk Delabastita, '"Hamlet" in the Netherlands in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries. The Complexities of the History of Shakespeare's Reception', in *European Shakespeares: Translating Shakespeare in the Romantic Age*, ed. by Dirk Delabastita and Lieven D'hulst (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1993), pp. 219-33; or Ton Hoenselaars, 'Recycling Shakespeare in the Low Countries', *The Low Countries*, 6 (1999), 203-11.
[10] See, for instance, many of the essays contained in Delabastita and D'hulst, eds, *European Shakespeares*; Ton Hoenselaars, ed., *Shakespeare's History Plays: Performance, Translation and Adaptation in Britain and Abroad* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004); or John J. Joughin, ed., *Shakespeare and National Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997).

Although the rewriting of English drama in the native language and cultural context occurred across the German-speaking lands in the eighteenth century – from translation by poets to critique by peasants – the publications of Johnson and his successors demonstrate a parallel and entirely overlooked tradition of Shakespeare and other writers' reception in English, as English.[11] This alternative history seems to display a greater sense of curiosity about English culture, whilst maintaining some critical distance, than it does a wish to adopt it as one's own. It suggests that such ambivalence regarding alien peoples as Stephen Greenblatt describes between European explorers and Native Americans also occurred amongst the more familiar and socio-economically equal nations of Europe. Greenblatt's enigmatic assessment of the linguistic exchanges that took place as a result of these encounters, arguing that '[t]o learn a language may be a step toward mastery, but to *study* a language is to place oneself in a situation of dependency, to submit', might also be applied to intra-European cultural relations as expressed in the reading of English plays in English.[12] One way to interpret the take-up of Johnson's *Best English Plays* and its various reissues in the Low Countries and German states in the eighteenth century is that their producers and (European) readers took a curatorial interest in such texts, and perhaps understood them as providing an insight on the English nation. In some ways, the packaging and ordering of these plays seem to evidence or express a wish to understand, catalogue and perhaps even contain England as a geo-political entity through knowledge of her culture. Observing a different perspective on cultural development to that of Greenblatt, Edward Said argues that knowledge of another people's means of self-representation affords one a degree of power over that culture. More specifically, Said introduces his masterwork with the claim that all international cultural representations are politicised, and that such representation '*is*, rather than expresses, a certain *will* or *intention* to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternative and novel) world'.[13] Bearing each of these claims in mind, the dissemination of English books in Europe suggests that rather simply absorbing themselves in this alien culture, or making it their own, many publishers after Johnson, and many of the readers of his English plays, may instead have looked upon them as an ethnographic source.

[11] On the artisan Ulrich Bräker's extraordinary tale see Erne, 'Eighteenth-Century Swiss Peasant Meets Bard', or Eric A. Blackall, 'Shakespeare as Viewed by a Swiss Peasant of the Eighteenth Century', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 117.2 (1973), 112-16.
[12] Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), p. 104.
[13] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (Penguin: St Ives, 1995), p. 12. See also pp. 4-5 and *passim*.

Although the accession of the Hanoverian George I in 1714 might have elicited sympathetic curiosity amongst some German readers (and indeed Johnson himself, as evidenced by the *Collection*'s Dedication) many Dutch citizens must have held a more circumspect attitude towards England as an emergent world power. The accession of their stadtholder William of Orange (William III) to the English throne in 1689 was – from the Dutch perspective – intended to ensure English assistance in containing French ambitions in the Low Countries. However, England's consequent involvement in the Nine Years' War (1688-97) and War of the Spanish Succession (1701-14) was the direct cause of a massive increase in her trade and wholesale modernisation of English financial institutions. The constitutional stability that resulted from William's accession allowed an increase in English shipping that both benefited from and contributed to such financial reforms and trade. Whilst it was expected that the king's personal and military ambitions and the European interventionism these entailed might combine with those of the Dutch, the means by which he could achieve these (fiscal, mercantile, naval) frequently encroached on former Dutch prerogatives. Furthermore, the imperial growth that was facilitated by such changes to England's economy ensured the terminal demise of the Netherlands' own status as a world power.[14] If we afford any value to Greenblatt's belief that the desire to comprehend the Other is always in some sense a search for ourselves – or even the less radical assumption that the Other is something against which we seek to define ourselves – then Dutch readers across the eighteenth century must have been far from indifferent to the nation they helped transform itself from European inconsequence to global dominance.[15]

Since the plays Johnson included in his *Collection* were chosen based on their popularity on the London stage, they guaranteed his customers an up to the minute representation of London's theatrical scene and, therefore, its culture. Furthermore, through such topical texts as Addison's *Cato* (1713, 1730), they also offered a ready commentary on the English political landscape. Looked at from a European perspective – and as we have seen European readers provided an important market for Johnson – his customers might have

[14] On Dutch relations with England and economic reform – and the revisionist interpretation I follow – see Jonathan Israel, ed., *The Anglo-Dutch Moment: Essays on the Glorious Revolution and its World Impact* (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), especially Dwyryd Wyn Jones, 'Sequel to Revolution: The Economics of England's Emergence as a Great Power, 1688-1712', pp. 389-406, and P. J. A. N. Rietbergen, 'A Fateful Alliance? William III and England in Dutch Historiography, 1688-9 to 1988-9', pp. 463-79. On English intervention in Europe see Stephen Conway, *Britain, Ireland, and Continental Europe in the Eighteenth Century: Similarities, Connections, Identities* (Oxford: OUP, 2011), which offers (p. 2) 'a case for our regarding eighteenth-century Britain and Ireland as integral parts of Europe', including in Chapter Two, on 'The Continental Commitment in British Foreign Policy'.

[15] See Greenblatt, *Marvellous Possessions*, especially 'From the Dome of the Rock to the Rim of the World'.

wondered at Johnson's decision not to translate English playwrights into their target culture (in Dutch), but rather to transplant them as a sample of a foreign culture (in English), as his title – *Best English Plays* – makes clear. Certainly other publishers working in the Low Countries, such as Johnson's colleague Hendrik Scheurleer the Elder, saw *actual* translations as their best route to the successful retailing of English texts (see below). One wonders if, in addition to its language, the very comprehensiveness of Johnson's *Collection* (incorporating multiple pre- and post-interregnum authors, tragedy and comedy) might have suggested to its European readers that it could function as a guide to (the success of) English manners as well as to literature. The possibility of a continental market for such an enterprise (in that people could actually *read* the *Best English Plays*) seems likely to have capitalised on the increased visibility of the English (and English language) in Europe during John Churchill, the Duke of Marlborough's ascendancy, as commander-in-chief of the allied forces in Europe.[16] English foreign policy across the eighteenth century made her ever more significant to European affairs, and proficiency in English must have been a desirable accomplishment for both diplomats and the wider cosmopolitan elite.[17] We have already seen in Chapter Five that the British Library's copy of Vanbrugh's *The Provok'd Wife* (1342.n.15) carries extensive French glosses in an eighteenth-century hand. The same library's 1752 *Works* of Congreve – as reissued by Scheurleer – has a similar array of marginal and inter-linear translations.[18]

By considering the sheer extent of Johnson's *Collection* (incorporating 111 individual editions), it is apparent that he made several tens of thousands of copies of English dramatic texts available in Europe in English many years prior to their widespread translation or adaptation into German or Dutch. His works and their reissues thus necessitate a fundamental reappraisal by commentators on the reception of English drama in Europe, having provided relatively easy access to that drama many decades earlier than has previously been assumed. The geographical spread of surviving examples of Johnson's plays (from France to Sweden to Poland) attests to their wide popularity, and the actions of later Dutch and German publishers in reissuing these works – particularly Hendrik Scheurleer the Younger of The Hague, and Gottlob Emanuel Richter of Altenburg (Thuringia) – demonstrate a perpetual interest in English drama in Europe. Those who translated Shakespeare and other English playwrights' works rewrote them in their native tongue and cultural framework as springboards for the

[16] See John B. Hattendorf, 'Churchill, John, first duke of Marlborough (1650-1722), army officer and politician', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5401> [accessed 30 January 2020].
[17] See also Conway, *Britain, Ireland, and Continental Europe*, especially 'Britain, Ireland, and Military Europe'.
[18] Congreve, *Works* ([Scheurleer], 1752), L RB.23.a.19254.

resurgence of their own national ambitions, with particular relevance to the Romantic and *Sturm und Drang* movements.[19] The presentation and organisation of extant copies of Johnson's books, by contrast (and even more so their use to learn English) suggests publishers and readers engaging with such texts to comprehend and define their relationship with the English, and to ground their understanding of England and the English in the documents of its culture.

A Select Collection of the Best Modern English Plays (1750)

Johnson's wife and son, Jane and Alexander, published no new plays following Johnson's death in 1735, and sold off their remaining stock *circa* 1745. Since the first publisher to reissue Johnson's plays with their own volume titles was Hendrik Scheurleer the Younger, trading from 1749-68, it seems most likely that the plays had been purchased by his father, Hendrik Scheurleer the Elder, who might have continued to sell them under Johnson's volume titles.[20] Scheurleer the Elder had collaborated with Johnson previously on Bayle's *Oeuvres*, and his name appears alongside Johnson's in the imprints to that work. There is also some further correlation between the publications of Johnson and Scheurleer: for instance, Addison's *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy*, published by Scheurleer in 1718, was absent from Johnson's 1722 *Works* of that author and, since both texts were in octavo, the publishers might have expected and encouraged customers to bind them together.[21] Scheurleer also published his 1721 translation of Swift's *Le Conte de Tonneau* just one year after Johnson issued its English text in Swift's *Miscellaneous Works* (1720).[22] Furthermore, Jacob suggests that, like Johnson, Scheurleer may have been associated with the Knights of Jubilation.[23] Scheurleer the Younger was also interested in British affairs since he began his *Journal Britannique* in 1750, the same year as issuing his *Select Collection* of English plays.[24] Where Johnson's earlier *Journal Literaire* had been only partially concerned with English matters, it appears that by the mid-century Scheurleer felt they merited their own serial publication in Europe.

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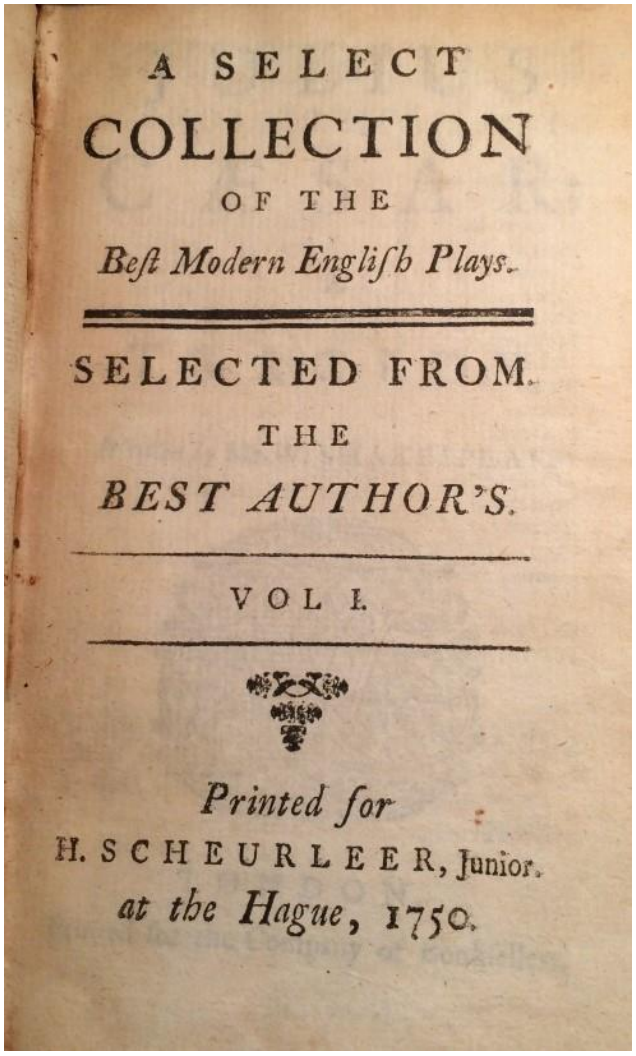
[19] See Paulin, 'Shakespeare and Germany', p. 325 and *passim*, which discusses 'the oldest of preoccupations within German Shakespeare reception: the stimulus for a renewed national literary production', or Stříbrný, *Shakespeare and Eastern Europe*, especially 'Shakespeare and the National Revivals'.
[20] On Scheurleer the Younger see 'Hendrik Florisz Scheurleer (1724-1768)' <http://data.bnf.fr/14482149/hendrik_florisz_scheurleer/> [accessed 26 November 2017].
[21] Joseph Addison, *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy, &c. In the Years 1701, 1702, 1703* (The Hague: Printed for Henry Scheurleer, 1718); Addison, *Works* (Johnson, 1722).
[22] Jonathan Swift, *Le Conte de Tonneau Contenant tout ce que les Arts, & les Sciences Ont de plus Sublime, Et de plus Mysterieux. Avec plusieurs autre Piéces très-curieuses*, 2 vols (A La Haye: Chez Henri Scheurleer, 1721).
[23] Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment* (2006), pp. 165, 170.
[24] Matthieu Maty, ed., *Journal Britannique*, 8 vols (A La Haye: Chez H. Scheurleer, Junior, 1750-57).

Figure 1


A SELECT
COLLECTION
OF THE
Beſt Modern Engliſh Plays.

SELECTED FROM
THE
BEST AUTHOR'S.

VOL I.

Printed for
H. SCHEURLEER, Junior.
at the Hague, 1750.

The *Select Collection* appears to have a maximum extent of fifteen volumes, and the vast majority of items contained in examples of this work are Johnson's plays. Although Scheurleer used his own name and location in the imprint, his title and title-page arrangement are heavily influenced by Johnson's work on the second-series *Collection* (figure 1; see also Chapter One, figure 2).[25] Apart from changes to the volume number, Scheurleer's title pages are uniform across all copies I have seen. He avoids listing any plays or authors on his volume titles and, since Scheurleer seems to have had *no* recommended schema whatsoever, examples of his collection display an even more diverse array of content arrangements than is visible in second-series examples of the plays purchased from Johnson. Because of this, each copy of Scheurleer's work must be assessed individually. Whilst there is not the space here to itemise their contents in detail, with each example differing wildly in its organisational structure, a summary is necessary both to understand the distribution of Scheurleer's works, and just how many plays by Johnson these works represent. Scheurleer's *Select Collection* is an important and generally unrecognised form in which Johnson's plays appear, as is also the case with those other collections by different publishers listed below. As it was legal for Johnson to publish his plays on the continent, so it was also entirely legal for Scheurleer and other continental publishers to reissue them in whatever form they chose. It may have been with a consciousness of this legality that Scheurleer advertised his genuine location in his imprints, perhaps asserting his right as a Dutch citizen to represent English culture on his own terms. Although he did not translate the plays he exerted both practical and symbolic control over them as English literature. His use of 'The Hague' in his imprints is also suggestive of a principally European market for his collection – as I argue in

[25] *A Select Collection of the Best Modern English Plays* (1750), I, title page. Image from Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.S3.

Chapter Three, Johnson's obfuscatory imprints are probably tied to the large British market for his works.

There are two examples of Scheurleer's *Select Collection* still held at The Hague.[26] KW 846 E 19 consists of ten volumes of three or four plays per volume. It includes a range of Johnson's inter-series, second-series and later plays, in addition to Robert Dodsley's 1750 imprint of William Whitehead's *The Roman Father*, to which we will return.[27] Volume three of this collection carries a second-series Johnson title page rather than Scheurleer's own. This may be a stray volume from an unconnected copy of *Best English Plays* imported into Scheurleer's collection at a later stage to make up a gap, or might represent some crossover between Scheurleer selling Johnson's plays under his 1750 volume titles, and at the same time using up Johnson's old volume titles; none of the works contained in this volume appear elsewhere in the collection, so there is no duplication.[28] The second Hague collection, KW 3037 G 20 -24, consists of five volumes. Volume one contains seven plays, and volumes two to five six plays each. All of the collection's plays are by Johnson, and most from his second series. A copy held at the Universitätsbibliothek Basel in Switzerland consists of ten evenly-sized volumes of five plays each.[29] The collection is formed primarily of Johnson's inter-series, second-series and later plays, although these are supplemented with *The Roman Father* and, also, Scheurleer's own edition of Congreve's *Love for Love* of 1752, to which we will also return.[30] The Bibliothèque Mazarine in Paris holds a copy of the *Select Collection* in ten volumes with between three and six plays in each.[31] This copy also contains Scheurleer's *Love for Love*, but not *The Roman Father*.

There are several copies of the *Select Collection* now held in Germany, which may indicate that this was an important market for Scheurleer. A copy held at Göttingen includes ten volumes of between four and six plays each, where a variety of Johnson works are supplemented with both Scheurleer's *Love for Love* and Dodsley's *The Roman Father*.[32] The Ostfriesische Landschaftsbibliothek copy has fifteen volumes of variable length, containing 63

[26] Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KW 846 E 19; KW 3037 G 20 -24.
[27] In this copy, and in most of those I have not seen in person, it is impossible to determine whether *The Roman Father* is in Dodsley's first or second edition (both 1750).
[28] The possibility that Scheurleer used both his own and Johnson's volume titles for a short period also accords with my own nonce volume (described in Chapter Five) combining Johnson plays and volume titles with *The Roman Father*. Further work on the bindings and provenance of this Hague collection would clearly help to determine when the third volume was added, and answer this important question.
[29] Universitätsbibliothek Basel, AO VII.
[30] William Congreve, *Love for Love: A Comedy* (London [The Hague]: Printed for H: Scheurleer F-Z, 1752).
[31] Bibliothèque Mazarine, 8° 22147.
[32] Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, 8°P.dr.IV,2790.

plays in total, all by Johnson.[33] This collection is unusual in being relatively close to Johnson's original schema, grouping Congreve's plays in volume eleven, Shakespearean works in volumes one and two, and five Dryden plays in volume three. This similarity is probably a result of its owner thinking that author was the most important way of grouping their plays – and believing Shakespeare and Dryden should begin their collection – rather than evidence of any direct influence from Johnson's ideal schema. The library of the Universität Konstanz has volumes seven to fifteen of a *Select Collection*, containing only Johnson plays.[34] Of these, volumes seven to nine contain four plays each, and volumes ten to fifteen three plays each.

There are three copies of the *Select Collection* now held in the United States. That belonging to the Folger Shakespeare Library has three to five plays per volume, but consists of volumes one, two, four and twelve to fourteen only.[35] All of the plays contained in these are by Johnson and, like the owner of the Ostfriesische copy, whoever put it together seems to have been concerned to group authorial works together. The Buffalo Libraries copy consists of ten volumes numbered one to ten.[36] It contains 38 plays in total, with 37 by Johnson, but Dodsley's *The Roman Father* concludes the final volume. The Yale copy is again in ten volumes numbered one to ten, but in this instance presents just three plays per volume.[37] *The Roman Father* appears in volume nine, complementing 29 inter-series, second-series and later Johnson plays.

Taking all these copies into account, we can see that Scheurleer left his customers to organise Johnson's plays however they chose, including how many plays they should include per volume. Since fifteen volume titles were available from Scheurleer (being the maximum extent of any surviving collection), this could lead to some very large collections indeed. Nevertheless, since other examples of his collection were gathered in a smaller number of volumes – and contain fewer plays – Scheurleer, like Johnson, seems to have catered to readers with a range of spending capacities and interests. Although some of his readers were interested in particular authors and grouped their works together, it seems overall that the profusion offered by Scheurleer's *Select Collection* must have been one of its most attractive assets, and that large numbers of readers welcomed this profusion as providing a wide sampling of English culture. We can also see that, however interested in English plays these readers might have been, they seem to have had a very slim range of editions to choose from, since none of the

[33] Ostfriesische Landschaftsbibliothek, O 1504.
[34] Universität Konstanz, R 69/137.
[35] Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.S3.
[36] University Libraries, University at Buffalo, PR 701.A1 1750.
[37] Yale University Library, Ib70 Td750.

copies listed above include any publications by publishers other than Johnson, Scheurleer and Dodsley. Dodsley's edition of Whitehead's *The Roman Father* was clearly a special case, and its appearance in multiple copies of the *Select Collection* indicates that it was a regular part of Scheurleer's stock, rather than something that his customers sourced independently.

Whilst Scheurleer's principal interest was in selling Johnson's old stock, he obviously felt this could be updated, and made more interesting, by the inclusion of a new and popular play – especially one that engaged with English political culture. In this respect he behaved as had Johnson, adding new hits to his collection (such as George Lillo's *The London Merchant* of 1731) after the second series had been issued. *The Roman Father* was a great success when it opened in 1750, and took receipts of around £150-200 a night as well as spawning several piracies and spin-offs – this is certainly at the higher end of receipts for this period.[38] Whilst the addition of this play to Scheurleer's *Select Collection* is not in itself so remarkable, what is interesting is the device displayed on its title page. Certain versions (see below) of Dodsley's printing of Whitehead's play – as it appeared in many copies of Scheurleer's *Select Collection* – carry a prominent title-page monogram that is clearly copied from Johnson's own TJ monogram device (figure 2).[39] This makes the play appear as a legitimate part of Johnson's, now Scheurleer's, collection. It also might be seen to have updated retrospectively the rest of

Figure 2

[38] See George Winchester Stone, Jr, *The London Stage 1660-1800: Part 4: 1747-76*, 3 vols (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1962), especially III, pp. 178-81. Piracies and spin-offs include a Dublin edition, William Whitehead, *The Roman Father, A Tragedy. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, By His Majesty's Servants* (Dublin: Printed for G. and A. Ewing; and G. Faulkner, 1750); *A Comparison between the Horace of Corneille and the Roman Father of Whitehead* (London: Printed for M. Cooper, 1750); *Remarks on the New Tragedy, Call'd, The Roman Father. With a Word to the Author* (London: Printed and sold by W. Reeve; and A. Dodd, 1750); *The Story on which the New Tragedy, Call'd, The Roman Father, Is Founded. With some Account of The Author, and His Writings* (London: Printed and sold by W. Reeve; and A. Dodd, 1750).

[39] Whitehead, *The Roman Father* […] *The Second Edition* (1750), title page. Image from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.

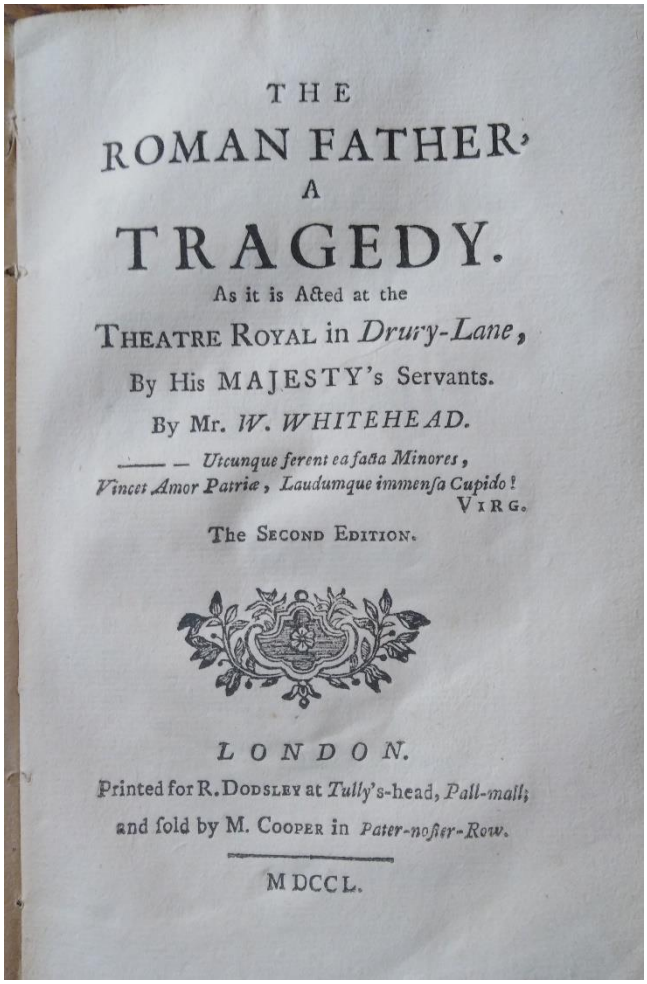
that collection (like Scheurleer's volume titles, dated 1750). Because *The Roman Father* was new and popular, and published in London, the sale of this work by Scheurleer must have given his customers the impression that he could acquire whatever texts he chose for his *Select Collection*. The idea, from Scheurleer's perspective, must have been that by including *The Roman Father* in his *Select Collection* in this way, he could dress up Johnson's old plays as far more current than they in fact were by this time, apparently giving his European readers an authentic window on current English taste.

Since Dodsley collaborated with Whitehead to sell tickets at Dodsley's shop for *The Roman Father*'s benefit night, he was involved with this play from an early stage.[40] The inclusion of the monogram on the title page of this play indicates that Scheurleer as well must have been involved in its publication from the very beginning. This would also have been beneficial to Whitehead, offering as it did a continental market for his work. Scheurleer must nevertheless have gone to considerable pains to persuade Dodsley to commission or accept a new version of this woodcut, and use it on his own publication, and it seems most likely that he did so by agreeing to take multiple copies for inclusion in the *Select Collection*. Although Dodsley's copy of the woodcut stood idle for several years after *The Roman Father* was printed, the publisher later went on to make frequent use of it in a variety of other publications, as is discussed in Chapter Seven.

Dodsley's monogram device appears in all those first-edition copies of *The Roman Father* that I have seen, as well as multiple copies of the second edition (as depicted in figure 2). The *ESTC* records for these items make no mention of an alternative woodcut, and the *ECCO* and other links from their pages all show copies with this 'Johnson' device.[41] My own copy of the second edition of the play, however (in the nonce volume with Johnson's plays and volume titles) has a different device on its title page, and represents an alternative state of this title page that needs adding to bibliographical records (figure 3).[42] The implications of this alternative device for our current study are several. Firstly, Dodsley must have issued a very large number of monogram versions of the title page in order for them to be so much more prevalent in the historical record – which indicates the scale of Scheurleer's order. Secondly, Dodsley seems most likely to have commissioned this version with the floral plaque instead of the monogram for sale in his own shop, which suggests that the monogram device was recognisable in London at this point as being associated with Johnson or Scheurleer's

[40] Stone, *The London Stage 1747-76*, I, p. 178.
[41] *ESTC* T8579, T133178.
[42] Whitehead, *The Roman Father* […] *The Second Edition* (1750), title page. Image from my own copy.

Figure 3



THE
ROMAN FATHER,
A
TRAGEDY.
As it is Acted at the
THEATRE ROYAL in *Drury-Lane*,
By His MAJESTY's Servants.
By Mr. *W. WHITEHEAD.*

—— — Utcunque ferent ea facta Minores,
Vincet Amor Patriæ, Laudumque immensa Cupido!
VIRG.

The SECOND EDITION.

LONDON.
Printed for R. DODSLEY at *Tully*'s-head, *Pall-mall*;
and sold by M. COOPER in *Pater-noster-Row.*

MDCCL.

collections; there is otherwise little reason why Dodsley would have gone to the trouble of having supplementary title pages printed with a different device. This underlines the visibility of Johnson's plays in English markets. Finally, whilst this association between the device and collections may be something that Dodsley only realised for his second edition of the play, it is also possible that a variant state of the first-edition title page also exists, and this certainly warrants further investigation. Why my own copy in particular, being associated with Johnson's texts, has the variant device is something of a mystery. It seems possible that the play was even more popular that Scheurleer anticipated (which also correlates with a second edition being published in the same year as the first) and that he obtained from Dodsley further copies of the work that Dodsley had originally intended to sell himself. Alternatively, Dodsley might have begun printing the second edition with the plaque device, and only printed the monogram title pages once Scheurleer had seen and complained about this substitution. This would go some way to explaining the apparent scarcity of the version without the monogram, and the appearance of my own copy in an occasional nonce volume with remaindered Johnson volume titles (being something that Scheurleer was happy to get rid of) rather than as part of a larger *Select Collection* with his own title pages.

Love for Love, which as we have seen was also included in several copies of the *Select Collection* (alongside *The Roman Father*), was also available as part of Scheurleer's 1752 *Works* of Congreve. This three-volume work amalgamated remaindered second-series Johnson Congreve texts with several new texts by Scheurleer. There were already twelve editions of Congreve's works published in Britain by this date but – rather than thinking the market was saturated – Scheurleer seems to have taken this as a sign that his own *Works* would likewise be a readily saleable product. He might also have speculated that those who enjoyed his *Select Collection* would wish to extend this with more comprehensive reading of individual authors,

perhaps envisaging a whole series of such publications if the Congreve *Works* was well received. That Scheurleer chose Congreve in particular might be attributed to his smaller *oeuvre* than other playwrights such as Dryden or Shakespeare. Scheurleer could fulfil his customers' demands for a complete multi-volume 'works' of an English playwright without such large financial commitment as other more prolific authors would necessitate.

The *Works*' first volume contains Johnson's second-series editions of *The Old Batchelour*, *The Double-Dealer* and *The Way of the World*. The second contains Scheurleer's *Love for Love* alongside what is also his own edition of *The Mourning Bride*, although both of these seem likely to be set from Johnson's editions.[43] The first page of the dedication in Scheurleer's *Love for Love* is a line by line facsimile of Johnson's two versions, even down to the catchword (on A2r in each instance). Scheurleer also used a similar headpiece to Johnson, and whilst other editions of the play divide the title page's Latin tag with a comma, Scheurleer and Johnson use three hyphens.[44]

The second volume of Scheurleer's *Works* of Congreve also included the newly printed *Judgement of Paris*, which Johnson had not included in his original *Collection*. *Love for Love* is bibliographically distinct, having its own pagination and register, but the *Judgement of Paris* carries on directly from *The Mourning Bride*, meaning it was probably printed at the same time. Since there are several copies of Scheurleer's *Love for Love* in arrangements other than Congreve's *Works*, but no examples of *The Mourning Bride* or *Judgement of Paris*, it seems likely that Scheurleer printed an excess number of copies of *Love for Love* to be included in either the *Works* or *Select Collection* when copies of Johnson's edition were running low. Johnson's *Love for Love* appears in just one surviving example of the *Select Collection* (the Ostfriesische copy), but Scheurleer's edition in three.[45] Johnson's *The Mourning Bride* occurs in five of the ten examples of the *Select Collection* of which I am aware.[46] The third and final volume of Scheurleer's *Works* contains Congreve's libretto for *Semele*, and his poems, neither of which were printed by Johnson and which seem likely, therefore, to have been printed from texts that Scheurleer sourced from England. Whilst Jacob Tonson, as the London-based copyright holder of Congreve's works, had previously published his most recent *Works* of

[43] William Congreve, *The Mourning Bride. A Tragedy* (London [The Hague]: Printed for H: Scheurleer, F-Z, 1752).
[44] For an alternative edition see Congreve, *Works* (Tonson, 1710), I, 'Love for Love' title page.
[45] Scheurleer's *Love for Love* (1752) appears in Bibliothèque Mazarine, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, and Universitätsbibliothek Basel.
[46] *The Mourning Bride* ([Johnson], [n.d.]) appears in Ostfriesische Landschaftsbibliothek, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Bibliothèque Mazarine, Universitätsbibliothek Basel and Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KW 846 E 19. Two of the other collections, in which the play is lacking, are those missing multiple volumes.

Congreve in 1730, he issued a new 1753 edition hard on the heels of Scheurleer's.[47] This seems to indicate that Tonson was aware of Scheurleer's edition and considered it as a competitor. Although, as previously noted, many more reissues of Johnson's plays survive in Europe than in Britain, there are two copies of Scheurleer's 1752 *Works* of Congreve that are preserved in Britain, which may suggest there was a small export market for Scheurleer with this work.[48] This is also evidenced by his imprints. Where the *Select Collection* has the imprint 'Printed for H. Scheurleer, Junior. at the Hague', which implies a continental market, Scheurleer's *Works* of Congreve has the false imprint 'London: Printed for Tonson, in the Strand', which suggests that certain copies of these plays were probably intended for covert sale in Britain.

Scheurleer's *Works*, and the *Select Collection* itself, were the leading part of a wider interest by the publisher in the sale of English literature. In addition to the *Journal Britannique*, his 1759 *Catalogue des Livres* details several thousand volumes available for purchase or hire through his innovative library service; a small number of these were English literary texts published in England as well as others of Johnson's English publications apart from his plays.[49] This suggests an even wider interest in English letters in Europe, amongst Scheurleer's customers, than is suggested by his retail of Johnson's plays. The *Select Collection*, as it appears in this catalogue, is listed as *A Select Collection of the Best Modern English Acting Plays*, and the addition of 'Acting' to Scheurleer's title seems likely to derive from *The British Stage* of 1752, which is subtitled 'Being a Collection of the Best Modern English Acting Plays'.[50] *The British Stage* – which is also made up of Johnson's plays – is itself included in Scheurleer's catalogue. Scheurleer was thus offering his European customers Johnson's plays in three distinctive forms – his *Works* of Congreve and *Select Collection*, and the very different *The British Stage* (see below) – quite probably also alongside the option of purchasing the plays individually. If Scheurleer thought it was feasible to retail multiple versions of such dramatic

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[47] William Congreve, *The Works of Mr. William Congreve: In Three Volumes. Consisting of His Plays and Poems. The Fifth Edition*, 3 vols (London: Printed for J. Tonson, 1730); William Congreve, *The Works of Mr. William Congreve. Consisting of his Plays and Poems. The Sixth Edition*, 3 vols (London: Printed for J. and R. Tonson and S. Draper, 1753).

[48] British copies of Congreve's *Works* (1752) at L RB.23.a.19254 (with glosses in French), and Bodleian Library, Vet. B4 f. 163. Other copies include Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, 8°P.dr.IV,6685; University of Sydney Library, RB 4653.37; Library of Congress, PR 3360.D52 Pre-1801 Coll.; New York Public Library, NCP (Congreve, W. Works. 1752); University Libraries, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Spec. Coll. PR 3360.D52. For a full collation of this *Works* see Albert M. Lyles and John Dobson, *The John C. Hodges Collection of William Congreve in the University of Tennessee Library: A Bibliographical Catalogue* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Libraries, 1970), pp. 94-97.

[49] *Catalogue des Livres, Qui se trouvent dans la Bibliotheque Publique Recueillie Par H. Scheurleer, F. Z. Dans une Salle Publique sur le Buytenhof à l'usage des Curieux & de ceux qui aiment la Lecture* (A La Haye: Chez H. Scheurleer, F. Z., 1759), pp. 146-48, items 2292-2318.

[50] *The British Stage* (1752), I, title page.

collections, then there was obviously an extremely ready market for English plays in the Netherlands at this time.

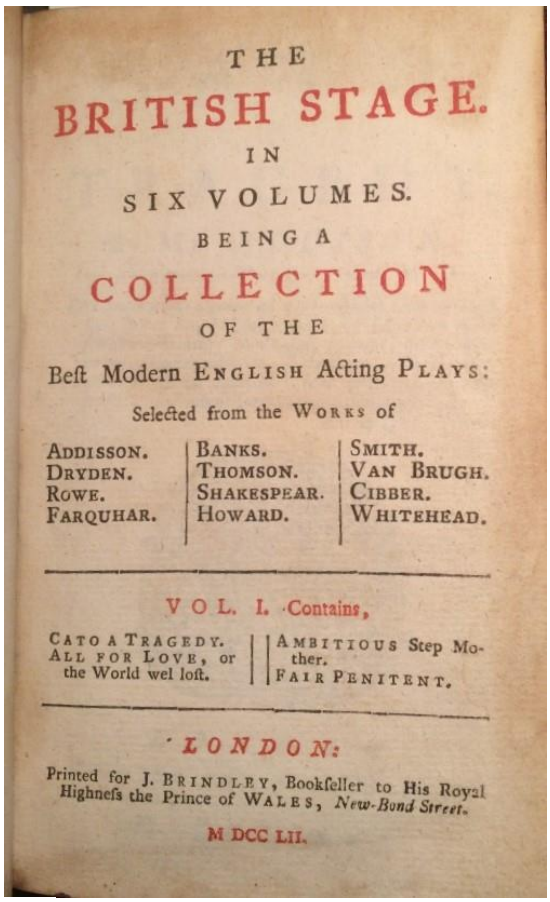
In Scheurleer's *Catalogue* the *Select Collection* is listed as ten guilders for ten volumes, and *The British Stage* at six guilders for six volumes.[51] The publication of a price for Scheurleer's *Select Collection* seems to indicate that he imagined selling a set number of plays in each copy (presumably ten volumes of four plays each, since *The British Stage* had six volumes of four plays each). However, as we have seen, extant copies of the *Select Collection* actually exist in all manner of different sizes. Thus, whilst Scheurleer may have had some sense of the imagined size of a *Select Collection* (if not its precise contents), he was also willing to accommodate customers' preferences. With this *Select Collection*, as with the *Best English Plays*, a full copy-specific analysis is probably our only realistic means of determining the scale of Scheurleer's enterprise, and of understanding who his customers were and why they were attracted to the collection.

The British Stage

The British Stage was published in 1752, and its volume titles record their production by James Brindley of London. Unlike Scheurleer's *Select Collection*, *The British Stage* has a clearly defined extent and contents, consisting of six volumes and 24 plays in total. Brindley traded from *circa* 1726-58, and had interests in drama throughout his career.[52] Although he often worked collaboratively, Brindley also undertook a number of independent ventures, and Plomer suggests that his duodecimo editions of classical authors from 1744, which were 'very well printed', 'became known as *Brindley's Classics*.'[53] The production of these volumes may well have set some form of precedent for Brindley's involvement in *The British Stage*. However, the design of the *British Stage* volume titles (figure 4), which stand apart as very different to Scheurleer's and Johnson's, appears to be inspired most directly by those of William Feales' *The British Theatre* (1736), which the *ESTC* reports also has a partially

[51] *Catalogue des livres* (Scheurleer, 1759), pp. 146-47 (items 2292; 2299).
[52] For plays published at the beginning and end of Brindley's career see Eliza Haywood, *Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh. A Tragedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields* (London: Printed for W. Mears, J. Brindley; and sold by the Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1729); and William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing* (London: Printed for C. Hitch and L. Hawes, H. Lintot, J. and R. Tonson, J. Hodges, B. Dod, J. Rivington, M. and T. Longman, J. Brindley, C. Corbet, and T. Caslon, 1757).
[53] Plomer *et al*., *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers*, p. 34. As an example of Brindley's classical works see Tacitus, *C. Cornelii Taciti Opera Quae exstant Omnia*, 4 vols (Londini: Typis Joannis Brindley, 1754).

rubricated title page (figure 5).[54] Feales' *The British Theatre* was made up of a variety of plays that were also available individually and, although Brindley is not named on the volume titles, he appears in the imprints of a large number of the individual items contained in this work. Milhous and Hume demonstrate Feales' own debt to Johnson in the range of contents of *The British Theatre*, and provide comparative tables of the plays contained in several eighteenth-century collections.[55] Further work might also be done on the design of Feales' work, and how this relates to Johnson's earlier collection, especially in Feales' release of the same titles individually and as part of the set. For our current argument, however, what is obvious about *The British Theatre* is that Brindley was the junior partner to Feales, and it seems that *The British Stage* might have been an attempt to collaborate with Scheurleer on his own similar collection, using Johnson's publications but following Feales' presentational strategies. The existence of *The British Stage* (with its London imprints) seems to suggest that Brindley could get away with selling imported versions of Johnson's texts, and would not be acted against by



THE
BRITISH STAGE.
IN
SIX VOLUMES.
BEING A
COLLECTION
OF THE
Beſt Modern ENGLISH Acting PLAYS:
Selected from the WORKS of

ADDISSON.	BANKS.	SMITH.
DRYDEN.	THOMSON.	VAN BRUGH.
ROWE.	SHAKESPEAR.	CIBBER.
FARQUHAR.	HOWARD.	WHITEHEAD.

VOL. I. Contains,

CATO A TRAGEDY.	AMBITIOUS Step Mother.
ALL FOR LOVE, or the World wel loſt.	FAIR PENITENT.

LONDON:
Printed for J. BRINDLEY, Bookſeller to His Royal Highneſs the Prince of WALES, *New-Bond Street.*
M DCC LII.

Figure 4

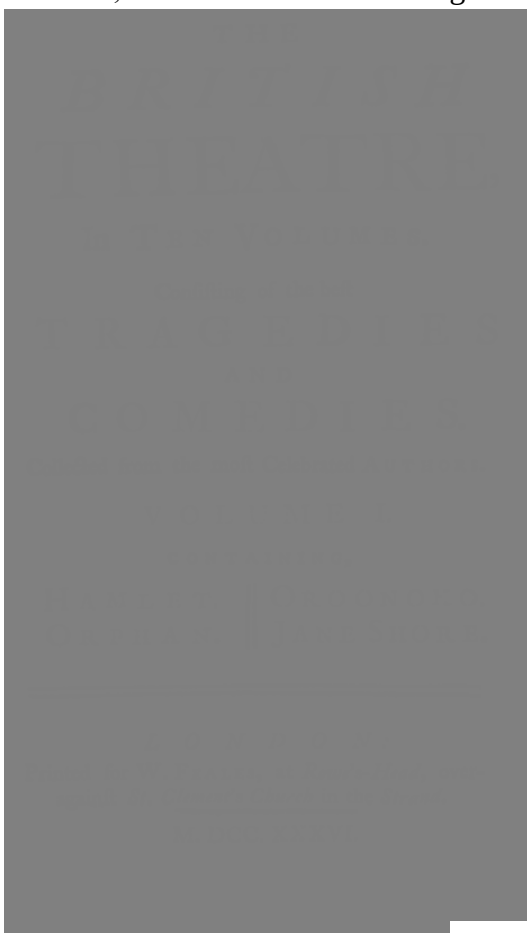


Figure 5

[54] *The British Stage* (1752), I, title page. Image from Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.B8. *The British Theatre, In Ten Volumes. Consisting of the best Tragedies and Comedies. Collected from the most Celebrated Authors*, 10 vols (London: Printed for W. Feales, 1736), I, title page. Image from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online.* On *The British Theatre* see also *ESTC* T226048.
[55] Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, pp. 263, 375-86.

the copyright holders of these. However, the far greater prevalence of *The British Stage* in Europe rather than in Britain (with eight copies in Europe, two in Britain, and two in the United States) might indicate that Brindley did encounter some resistance to his collection from fellow members of the trade, and that it was such resistance that led a considerable number of copies of *The British Stage* to be sold to continental readers, apparently via Scheurleer. In fact, it is perhaps even more probable that *The British Stage* was a collaboration between Scheurleer and Brindley intended principally for the continental market.

As already noted, *The British Stage* had an ideal schema of contents listed on its volume titles, which is followed in most extant copies. Excluding this list and its volume number, the pattern of the first volume title (figure 4) is also followed in volumes two to six. The expected contents of Brindley's collection, consisting mainly of Johnson's works in second-series or later editions, was as follows:

Table 1: Ideal Contents of *The British Stage* (1752)

Vol. 1	Addison, *Cato* (1730)
	Dryden, *All for Love* (1721)
	Rowe, *The Ambitious Step-Mother* ([n.d.])
	---, *The Fair Penitent* ([n.d.])
Vol. 2	Farquhar, *The Twin-Rivals* ([n.d.])
	---, *Sir Harry Wildair* ([n.d.])
	Banks, *The Unhappy Favourite* ([n.d.])
	---, *Vertue Betray'd* ([n.d.])
Vol. 3	Thomson, *Sophonisba* (1730)
	Shadwell, *Timon of Athens* ([n.d.])
	Lillo, *The London Merchant* (1731)
	Howard, *The Committee* ([n.d.])
Vol. 4	Philips, *The Distrest Mother* ([n.d.])
	Trapp, *Abra-Mule* ([n.d.])
	Etherege, *The Man of Mode* ([n.d.])
	Smith, *Phaedra and Hippolitus* ([n.d.])
Vol. 5	Vanbrug[h], *Aesop* ([n.d.])
	Cibber, *The Provok'd Husband* ([n.d.])
	---, *The Non-Juror* (1718)
	Crowne, *Sir Courtly Nice* ([n.d.])
Vol. 6	Granville, *The She-Gallants* ([n.d.])
	Fenton, *Mariamne* ([n.d.])
	Addison, *The Drummer* ([n.d.])

Radicati's *Recueil de Pieces Curieuses* (Chez la Veuve Thomas Johnson et Fils, 1736) was reissued by Brindley in 1749.[56] Since this was long after Johnson's heirs had ceased trading, it seems extremely likely that Brindley acquired the Radicati work, as well as Johnson's plays, from Scheurleer. Dodsley's edition of *The Roman Father* also concludes volume six of Brindley's collection, and it is most improbable that Brindley and Scheurleer should have both independently of each other combined this work – of all the English plays available to them – with Johnson's texts. Furthermore, none of the plays in Brindley's *The British Stage* were not also available as part of Scheurleer's *Select Collection*, as is evidenced by copies of that collection.

One complication that arises in Brindley's collection is the substitution of *Amphitryon* for *All for Love* in the majority of copies that I have seen. The title page of volume one of *The British Stage* indicates that *All for Love* should appear as its second item. Perhaps this substitution suggests some miscalculation on Scheurleer and/or Brindley's part regarding the number of copies they had of *All for Love* and *Amphitryon*, although neither seems to have felt any alteration to the *British Stage* volume titles was required by this change in contents. That the same change occurs across multiple copies indicates that it was undertaken by their publisher, rather than his customers.

Copies of *The British Stage* that contain *All for Love* include sets at the Library of Birmingham, Göttingen, and the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek.[57] The solitary copy of volume one at the Folger also has *All for Love*, so I have seen four copies that contain *All for Love*.[58] Copies at the Bodleian Library, University of Chicago Library, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève and Université de Toulouse have *Amphitryon* instead, although the Sainte-Geneviève copy is imperfect and made up of volumes one to four only.[59] The Württembergische Landesbibliothek copy, which also includes *Amphitryon* (forming a total of six copies with *Amphitryon*), consists of six volumes with Brindley's volume titles, but appears to have been extended with four further volumes which

[56] Alberto Radicati, *Recueil de Pieces Curieuses sur les Matieres les Plus Interessantes* (A Londres: Chez John Brindley, 1749). Information that this is a reissue with cancel title page from *ESTC*.
[57] Library of Birmingham, A 822.O8; Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, 8°P.dr.IV,2800; Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, P.o.angl. 395.
[58] Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.B8.
[59] Bodleian Library, Vet. B4 f. 145-7; University of Chicago Library, PR 1269.B75 1752; Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, A/906; Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, RESERVE: 8 Y 2975-8; Bibliothèques de l'Université de Toulouse, Res Mn 9417.

contain twelve first-series Johnson plays in total.[60] Of these earlier Johnson editions, only *Aesop* (1711) is also included in Brindley's collection (in its second-series edition). It would seem that the owner of these volumes enjoyed the selection of plays offered in *The British Stage* but wished to supplement this with other works, and acquired copies of Johnson's plays from a source other than Scheurleer (who was only offering Johnson's inter-series, second-series and later plays). This suggests that other copies of Johnson's plays were also available for resale in Europe in the middle of the eighteenth century – in addition to those from the publishers detailed in this chapter – and that European readers were prepared to source their plays from a variety of retailers wherever they might be available. It might also indicate the success of Johnson's monogram and uniform presentation of his works, since we can assume that the owner of this collection recognised that – although they were acquired separately and partially repackaged – all of their plays originated from the same original publisher.[61]

Thus, whilst it seems possible that Brindley acquired Johnson's books from Scheurleer because he imagined an opportunity to retail them in Britain, the presence of *The British Stage* in Scheurleer's advertisements, and the significant number of copies of this collection surviving on the continent rather than in Britain, suggests that most were in fact sold in the European market. This may be because Brindley found less take-up in Britain than he anticipated, perhaps owing to the quality of the contents of the collection. The plays included in *The British Stage* are clearly not the cream of Johnson's output; although Shakespeare is named on Brindley's volume titles, he is represented in this collection by Shadwell's *Timon of Athens* only, and Thomson's *Sophonisba* was unperformed in this period.[62] Brindley might alternatively have withdrawn the work from sale because of complaints from such men as Feales who were the copyright holders of the plays it contained, and with whom he frequently collaborated and must have wanted to remain on good terms. Overall, it is perhaps most likely that Brindley printed the volume titles primarily for Scheurleer, and received only a limited number of copies of the plays in return. That the volume titles are not merely false, and printed by Scheurleer in The Hague, is evidenced by their difference from Scheurleer's other publications and their similarity to Feales' and Brindley's works. Whatever the precise arrangements, some copies do seem to have ended up in Britain, at the Library of Birmingham, and at the Bodleian, but whether they were originally purchased in England cannot now be known without further and

[60] Württembergische Landesbibliothek, HBF 3412 1-10.
[61] One further copy of *The British Stage* catalogued at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (8- BL- 16593) appears to be complete in six volumes. Another copy at the Biblioteka Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego in Poland consists of volumes five and six only (1016788).
[62] See Stone, *The London Stage 1747-76*.

extensive provenance research. The outcome of all this was that Scheurleer had the opportunity, in retailing Brindley's collection alongside his own, of offering his customers two different dramatic collections constructed from exactly the same building blocks. As they are described on their volume titles, Scheurleer's *Select Collection* offered his readers 'English' plays, but *The British Stage* 'British' ones, which might have had some relevance for European perceptions of England and/or the British Isles on the international stage. When Johnson was trading the Act of Union between England and Scotland had only just been undertaken (in 1707), but by the mid-century Great Britain (rather than just England and Scotland) had become a political reality in international politics, and British rather than English plays might have seemed of more moment to Scheurleer's customers. *The British Stage* also advertised its trustworthiness as an authentic vision of British culture since its imprints recorded Brindley's status as 'Bookseller to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales' – in contrast to the *Select Collection*'s imprints, 'Printed for H. Scheurleer, Junior. at the Hague'. Organising Johnson's plays in various arrangements and sizes of collection, the *Select Collection* and *The British Stage* catered to a range of tastes and interests and, appearing in libraries across continental Europe, both collections seem to have enjoyed some degree of positive reception from those European customers that Scheurleer was serving.

The Best Tragedie's and Comedie's

Tragedie's and Comedie's, which identifies the third set of general title pages under which Johnson's plays were reissued, is not listed in the *ESTC* and has not been critically identified as a distinctive print enterprise by previous writers on Johnson. It is notable as making no references to England or Britain in its title (as Johnson, Scheurleer and Brindley had done). The omission of this information seems to assume sufficient knowledge and interest in English language and culture for the collection's origins to be self-evident. There exist three extant versions of this work, which consists of four volumes in total. The overlap and divergence of the contents of the various copies make it necessary to list these items in full. The volume titles of this work, which carry dates of 1761, 1762, 1765 and 1781, seem to have been influenced by Brindley's *The British Stage*, most obviously in the layout of authors' names and idiosyncratic spelling of 'Addisson' (figure 6).[63] The 'A Company of Booksellers' imprint is probably copied from the plays themselves. Extant copies of *Tragedie's and Comedie's* contain

[63] *The Best Tragedie's and Comedie's*, I (1781), title page. Image from Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, 8 MS 24858.

no plays that did not also appear in the same Johnson edition in *The British Stage* (consisting of 25 works in total, if we include both *All for Love* and *Amphitryon*). Because a far wider selection of texts was offered in Scheurleer's *Select Collection* – some of which we might expect to find in *Tragedie's and Comedie's*, if the *Select Collection* was a source – it would appear instead that Scheurleer might have offloaded a job lot of unsold copies of *The British Stage* onto another European publisher who broke these up, and rearranged the texts under their own title pages as *Tragedie's and Comedie's*. This also fits in with Scheurleer selling a large number of copies of *The British Stage*, and with the title pages of *Tragedie's and Comedie's* imitating Brindley's design. We can assume the continental origin of this collection not only from the location of extant copies, with none currently held in Britain – and its probable relationship to Scheurleer and *The British Stage* – but also from the unusual apostrophes of its title ('Tragedie's' and 'Comedie's'), which seem unlikely to have been approved by an English printer or publisher.[64]

What is perhaps most surprising about this collection is the range of dates displayed on its volume titles. The volumes belonging to the Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek (8 MS 24858) are arranged as follows, with volumes one to three dated 1781, and volume four 1761:

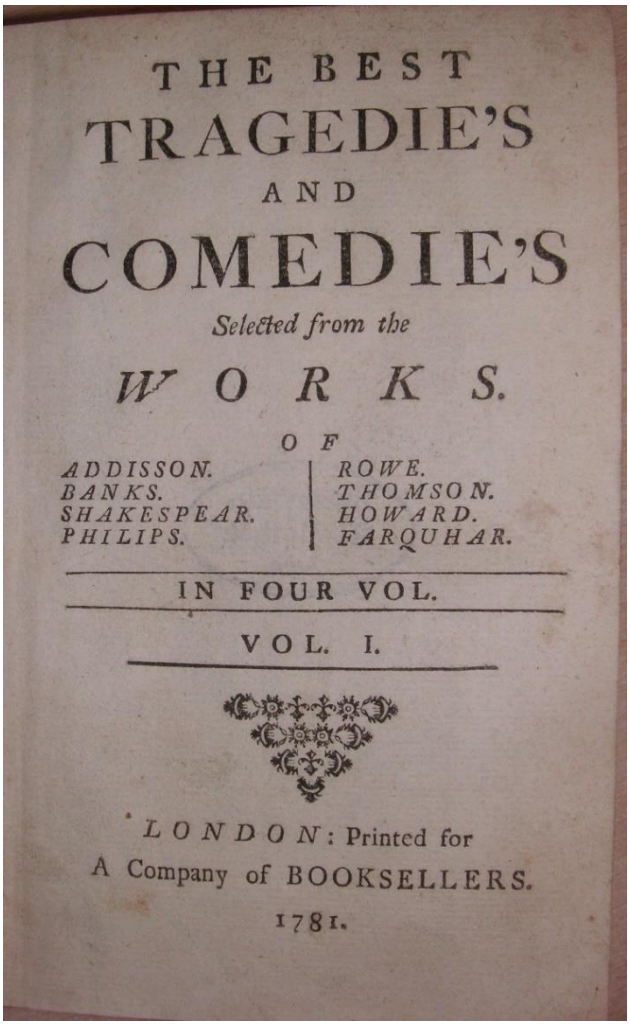

THE BEST
TRAGEDIE'S
AND
COMEDIE'S
Selected from the
WORKS.
OF
ADDISSON. | *ROWE.*
BANKS. | *THOMSON.*
SHAKESPEAR. | *HOWARD.*
PHILIPS. | *FARQUHAR.*
IN FOUR VOL.
VOL. I.
LONDON: Printed for
A Company of BOOKSELLERS.
1781.

Figure 6

[64] For further discussion of eighteenth-century apostrophe forms see Elizabeth S. Sklar, 'The Possessive Apostrophe: The Development and Decline of a Crooked Mark', *College English*, 38.2 (1976), 175-83.

Table 2: Contents of Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, 8 MS 24858

Vol. 1 (1781)	Shadwell, *Timon of Athens*
	Banks, *The Unhappy Favourite*
	---, *Vertue Betray'd*
	Crowne, *Sir Courtly Nice*
Vol. 2 (1781)	Cibber, *The Provok'd Husband*
	Addison, *The Drummer*
	---, *Cato*
	Farquhar, *Sir Harry Wildair*
Vol. 3 (1781)	---, *The Twin-Rivals*
	Philips, *The Distrest Mother*
	Rowe, *The Ambitious Step-Mother*
	---, *The Fair Penitent*
Vol. 4 (1761)	Addison, *Cato*
	Farquhar, *Sir Harry Wildair*
	---, *The Twin-Rivals*
	Rowe, *The Ambitious Step-Mother*

Since the contents of volume four replicate some of the plays in the second and third of these volumes, as well as carrying an earlier date on its title page, this Thüringer example is clearly made up from two separate collections issued in 1761 and 1781. The copy belonging to the Carl von Ossietzky Universitätsbibliothek, also in Germany, has all of its volumes dated 1765, and the contents of volumes one to three are identical with those same volumes in the Thüringer copy.[65] Volume four contains Fenton's *Mariamne*, Granville's *The She-Gallants*, Howard's *The Committee*, Lillo's *The London Merchant* and Thomson's *Sophonisba*. We might assume, therefore, that all four volumes of this Carl von Ossietzky copy (1765), and volumes one to three of the Thüringer collection (1781), represent a preferred schema of contents by the anonymous publisher of this collection, and that he issued it as a complete set in this order in 1765 and 1781 at least. The third copy, belonging to the University of Chicago Library and with all title pages carrying the date 1762, is in another arrangement entirely:

Table 3: Contents of University of Chicago Library, PR 1245.B46 1762

Vol. 1 (1762)	Cibber, *The Provok'd Husband*
	Farquhar, *Sir Harry Wildair*
	Thomson, *Sophonisba*
	Lillo, *The London Merchant*

[65] Carl von Ossietzky Universitätsbibliothek, SPR XIV 3 38.

Vol. 2 (1762)	Rowe, *The Fair Penitent*
	Crowne, *Sir Courtly Nice*
	Addison, *The Drummer*
	---, *Cato*
Vol. 3 (1762)	Howard, *The Committee*
	Banks, *Vertue Betray'd*
	Shadwell, *Timon of Athens*
	Banks, *The Unhappy Favourite*
Vol. 4 (1762)	Philips, *The Distrest Mother*
	Farquhar, *The Twin-Rivals*
	Granville, *The She-Gallants*
	Fenton, *Mariamne*
	Rowe, *The Ambitious Step-Mother*

It appears then that the publisher of this collection began working on it in 1761 (as evidenced by volume four of the Thüringer copy), offering customers the opportunity to arrange their plays as they chose, and this pattern was continued in 1762 with the Chicago copy. Nevertheless, this was obviously a relatively academic exercise when the range of plays available was so small. In 1765, with the Carl von Ossietzky copy, he thus seems to have switched to offering all the plays together in a set order, since the same pattern of works occurs in multiple volumes carrying the 1765 and 1781 title pages. Finally, if we consider the range of dates of these volumes, but the lack of variation in other aspects of the volume titles, we are left with the likelihood that they were all printed from the same skeleton forme. Although the 1781 volume one that I have seen has 'In Four Vol.' added below the author's names (see figure 6, above), this appears to be the only substantive addition to the 1761 layout. Indeed, a break in the vertical rule dividing authors' names in both the 1761 and 1781 exemplars reveals that these are almost certainly from the same setting of type (figures 7 (1761) and 8 (1781)).[66] The correlation between the convex and concave 'A's of Farquhar, and the tailed 'M' of Thomson are also distinctive. The publisher of *Tragedie's and Comedie's* thus seems to have had his title-page frame standing for a full twenty years, and it is most likely that he simply changed the year and printed a copy to order whenever a customer wanted to buy the collection. This indicates that, although those readers who purchased this collection cannot have been too

[66] *The Best Tragedie's and Comedie's*, IV (1761), title page; I (1781), title page. Both images from Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, 8 MS 24858.

Figure 7

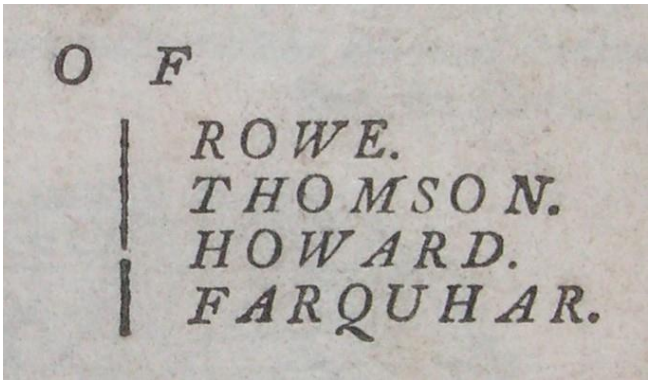
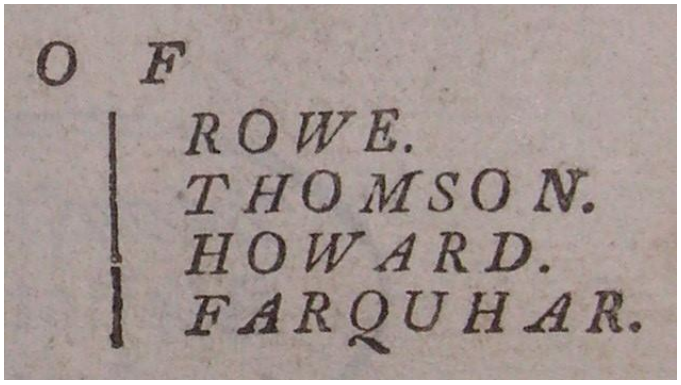


Figure 8



concerned by its limited range of contents (since they bought it at all, whatever other options were or were not available), its publisher must have thought that they *would* be interested in how up-to-date the collection might seem to be, and that his customers wanted a current selection of English plays. Further research in European libraries to uncover other copies of this work (if any in fact exist) would be an extremely valuable undertaking. By identifying more copies with different dates, and with the same or different ordering of contents, we might consolidate our interpretation of its publisher's strategy, and gain a better picture of how many remaindered copies of *The British Stage* he had access to.

A Select Collection of the Best Modern English Plays (1776)

The final publisher to reissue Johnson's plays was Gottlob Emanuel Richter of Altenburg, Germany. During his long career Richter published and imported numerous literary works in English, and advertisements detailing the many examples of these appear in several of his publications, notably Goldsmith's *Essays* (1774), Sterne's *Sermons of Mr. Yorick* (1777) and Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1796).[67] Taken together, all of Richter's publications demonstrate the growing market for and provision of original-language English literary texts in Germany in the latter part of the eighteenth century. They also complement Richter's 1776 reissue of Johnson's plays, *A Select Collection of the Best Modern English Plays*, the title and presentation of which are taken from Scheurleer (figure 9).[68] This is preserved in just one private collection, and consists of volumes two and ten only.[69] My knowledge of this collection is drawn from personal correspondence with its owner, Brian Hillyard. Where *Tragedie's and Comedie's* seems to have been made up from remaindered copies of *The British Stage*, the range of plays in

[67] Oliver Goldsmith, *Essays* (Altenburgh: Printed for Gottlob Emanuel Richter, 1774); Laurence Sterne, *The Sermons of Mr. Yorick*, 7 vols (Altenburgh: Printed for Gottl. Eman. Richter, 1777); John Milton, *Paradise Lost A Poem, In Twelve Books* (Altenburgh: printed and sold by Richter, 1796).
[68] *A Select Collection of the Best Modern English Plays* (1776), II, title page. Image courtesy of Brian Hillyard.
[69] Private collection, Scot. 1: BL KI/24-25.

Richter's *Select Collection* encompasses works that were not part of *The British Stage*, which indicates Richter's access to a wider range of materials. Despite this, Richter was also selling *The British Stage* alongside his own collection, and his advertisement in the *Sermons of Mr Yorick* (1777) lists both of these works as available from him.[70]

In the one surviving example of Richter's collection as it stands, volume two contains Smith's *Phaedra and Hippolitus*, Wycherley's *The Plain-Dealer*, Crowne's *Sir Courtly Nice* and Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (all n.d.). Volume ten contains Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer* (1720), Philips' *The Distrest Mother* ([n.d.]), Rowe's *The Ambitious Step-Mother* ([n.d.]) and the same author's *Tamerlane* ([n.d.]). Of these plays, *The Plain Dealer*, *Love's Last Shift*, *The Recruiting Officer* and *Tamerlane* were all absent from *The British Stage*. Although the survival of Richter's collection in just one incomplete copy might suggest that his title pages were printed to order, this seems unlikely since Richter took the trouble to advertise his collection: 'A select Collection of the best modern English Plays, selected from the best authors till to [*sic*] the year 1750. 10 Vol. 8. London 1776.'[71] What seems most probable is that Richter began his interest in Johnson's plays having acquired and sold a selection of copies of Scheurleer's *Select Collection* and *The British Stage*. Then, perhaps finding that he had an excess number of plays but was running low on Scheurleer's volume titles, he might have printed a very limited number of imitative title pages to make up this shortfall in Scheurleer's stock. The assumption that Richter sold a number of copies of Scheurleer's *Select Collection* before printing his own title pages also helps to explain the large number of copies of the *Select Collection* in Germany, where Richter was based, when Scheurleer himself was trading at The Hague.

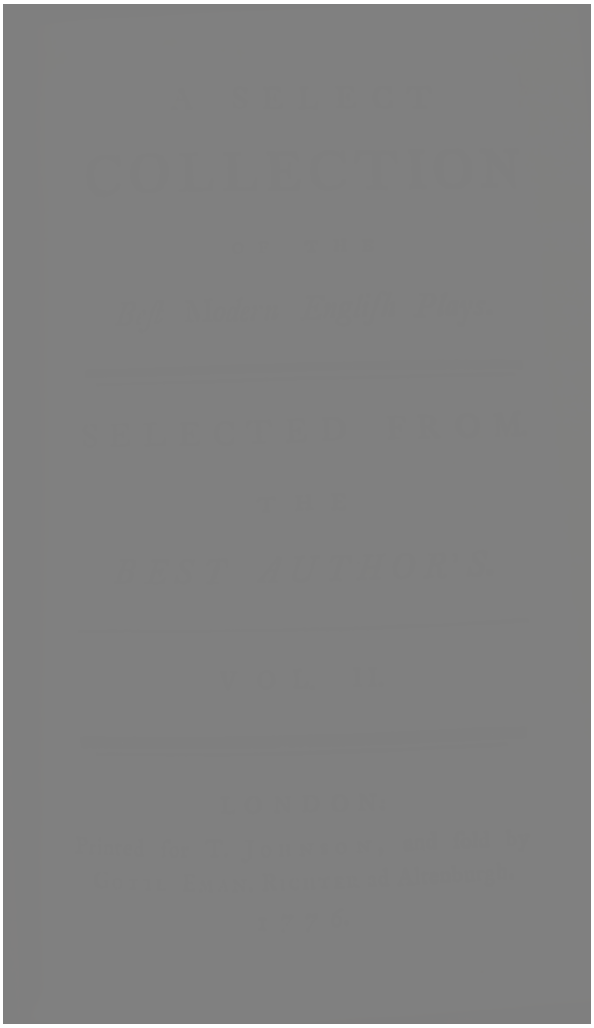


Figure 9

[70] Sterne, *Sermons of Mr. Yorick* (Richter, 1777), VII, pp. 69-70.
[71] Sterne, *Sermons of Mr. Yorick* (Richter, 1777), VII, p. 70.

Although there is little more that can be added to this story, one other publication by Richter does require mentioning. His *A Collection of New Plays by Several Hands* was issued in four volumes between 1774-78 and was an entirely original production, with a very different title-page design to Johnson and Scheurleer's earlier collections (figure 10).[72] Whilst the date of the first volume of this work (1774) precedes that of Richter's *Select Collection* (1776) it seems probable that Richter was inspired to create *New Plays* by his experience with Johnson's texts, especially if he had already been trading in Johnson's plays (as they were repackaged by Brindley and Scheurleer) before reissuing them under his own volume titles. *New Plays* is a compact compendium (in octavo, like Johnson's works) of seventeen relatively recent plays in a fixed schema, and deserves significant credit as the first English-language publication to combine theatrical main-pieces and afterpieces within the same volumes. Charles Elliot's *A Collection of the most esteemed Farces and Entertainments* did not appear until 1782, and John Bell only reissued this as a supplement to his *Bell's British Theatre* in 1784.[73] Thus, in *New Plays*, Richter finally published an entirely new collection of English drama on the continent that provided his customers with a more genuinely contemporary insight onto the English cultural scene that Johnson's *Collection* could still provide (even if, like *Tragedie's and Comedie's*, *New Plays* did not mention Britain or England on its title pages). Additionally, where Johnson's first-series *Collection* and the 1752 *The British Stage* had combined their pre-selected nature with conspicuous lists of contents, Richter's avoidance of authors or plays on volume titles – despite his editorial control – seems to offer his readers an encounter with English theatre in general rather than specific great men or texts. Whatever their existing familiarity with Shakespeare or Dryden, Richter must also have expected the purchasers of *New Plays* to be interested in English drama as contemporary culture, whoever might

Figure 10

[72] *A Collection of New Plays* (1774-78), I, title page. Image from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.
[73] *A Collection of the most esteemed Farces and Entertainments performed on the British Stage*, 4 vols (Edinburgh: Printed for C. Elliot, 1782-83); *Supplement to Bell's British Theatre, Consisting of the most esteemed Farces and Entertainments Now performing on the British Stage*, 4 vols (London [Edinburgh]: Printed for John Bell, 1784); *Bell's British Theatre* (1776-78).

have written it. Although Richter did not offer that same range of plays as Johnson had pioneered, his careful choice of texts, and the spread of extant copies of *New Plays* (with several in Poland and Estonia) suggests a wide field of reception.[74] All of this implies that Johnson was not the only re-printer of English texts operating in Europe whose works might play an important and innovative part in the history of English dramatic publishing, and the extensive output of Richter at least warrants further investigation.

The Afterlife of Johnson's *Collection*

This chapter allows us to extrapolate the probable order of sale of Johnson's plays after his death. The remaining stock of Jane and Alexander Johnson was likely purchased by Hendrik Scheurleer the Elder, also of The Hague, around 1745, and subsequently reissued by his heir Hendrik Scheurleer the Younger as his *Select Collection* in 1750. Scheurleer came to some arrangement with Robert Dodsley of London to acquire copies of *The Roman Father* (1750) to update this collection. He also supplemented it with his own 1752 edition of *Love for Love*, printed primarily as part of his *Works* of Congreve (1752), which itself included plays printed by Johnson. Scheurleer came to a second agreement with James Brindley of London to reissue a portion of Johnson's stock as *The British Stage* in 1752. A considerable number of copies of *The British Stage* are now preserved on the continent, and were sold by Scheurleer alongside his own *Select Collection*. Some remaindered copies of the *The British Stage* then passed to another anonymous European publisher who broke up and reissued these as *The Best Tragedie's and Comedie's*, available between 1761-81. The German Gottlob Richter made an independent purchase of all the remaining plays in Scheurleer's stock, and advertised the sale of both *The British Stage* (1752) and his own *Select Collection* (1776). The titles for this latter *Select Collection* (designed along the same lines as Scheurleer's 1750 *Select Collection*) were probably printed as an expedient to make up a shortfall in Scheurleer's 1750 title pages, and it seems likely that Richter was already selling Johnson's plays under Scheurleer's title pages before repackaging them as his own product.

Johnson's plays must have been seen as a viable concern by all of these publishers in the decades following Johnson's death, who reissued these works in a range of formats more or less similar to Johnson's own first- and second-series collections, with or without a set order of contents. It should also be reiterated that by reissuing Johnson's plays, Scheurleer,

[74] For copies see, for instance, Biblioteka Narodowa, Warsaw, XVIII.1.19204; and Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia, Tallinn, xi 1340.

especially, continued to offer European readers as wide a selection of affordable English drama as any that was available within the British Isles. Taken together, all of this evidences a significant demand for original-language English drama in Europe across the eighteenth century, a demand that has gone entirely unnoticed by most writers on the reception of Shakespeare's plays on the continent. Johnson and his followers' work is of fundamental importance in demonstrating that there *was* a trade in English language plays in Germany and the Netherlands at this time. Nevertheless, going by the presence of Johnson's works in continental libraries, against the lack of plays printed in Britain in such collections, we can see that European readers had only limited access to other dramatic works actually published in Britain through which to engage with English culture and language. This is also exemplified by Gonggryp's homemade version of Shakespeare's 'works', assembled from Johnson's plays in 1798 (see Chapter Five). Although the European readers discussed in this current chapter must have read English literature to some extent as an end in itself, practice with English texts (and language) would also have allowed greater understanding of British values and culture, and improved these readers' capacity to interact with British representatives in politics and trade. Whilst the reception of English literature in English has not formed so obvious a part of European nation-building as the reception of Shakespeare in (primarily) German, its role in mediating international perceptions – and negotiating social and political realities – must surely deserve greater consideration. Johnson's *A New Cyropaedia* (1728/29) – discussed in Chapter Two – was explicitly intended as a language-learning aid with parallel English and French texts. Although Johnson explained to Mackie that this was to help English-speaking 'young Ladies' learn French, he does not mention that it would also, therefore, have been equally useful to French-speaking women (or men) who might wish to learn English.[75]

This chapter extends the catalogue of copies of Johnson's works in Chapter Five by revealing other important formats in which Johnson's plays have survived, and which have been largely absent from previous surveys. It also supplements Chapters Two and Five in recounting the afterlife of the circulation of Johnson's plays. It seems very likely that Richter was inspired by Johnson's plays in his own innovative project (*A Collection of New Plays by Several Hands*). This debt to Johnson's *Collection* by another publisher prefaces my next chapter on the impact of Johnson's plays in Britain. Yet, excepting Richter's *New Plays*, the most important legacy of Johnson's *Best English Plays* in Europe was simply that these plays continued to be read and resold, indicating European interest in Johnson's English plays and

[75] E^2 La.II.91/B/62 (19 October 1728).

the lack of alternative editions for continental readers. Johnson's prime contribution to British publishing, by contrast, was his influence on the presentation of books by other publishers, rather than the resale of his own works. Ford, Murphy, Milhous and Hume, and McMullin all emphasise the influence of Johnson's plays on the take-up of octavo or duodecimo as the principal formats for plays published in Britain. I extend this argument to suggest that several publishers were also heavily influenced by Johnson's use of a title-page monogram. Through their adoption of similar devices, used to register a series or establish a house style, these publishers reveal another important influence by Johnson on the presentation of English books across the eighteenth century.

Chapter Seven: Johnson's Impact on British Publishing

Printers' Devices

We have seen in Chapter Three that Johnson used one of several similar versions of his distinctive TJ monogram on the majority of English plays that he published. He also used his monogram as a frontispiece device for many of his other publications, especially his English ones. Taken together with general correspondences in the layout of his play title pages, and the use of octavo across all his English publications, Johnson's use of a monogram forms an important part of his house style. His development of such a style might be considered as a similar move to that undertaken by Jacob Tonson in his 'vernacular classics', 'a standardized series of small format multi-volume editions' in a 'standardized design', as described by Robert Hamm.[1] Johnson used his monogram most consistently on his second-series plays of *c.* 1720-22, often in conjunction with the 'Company of Booksellers' imprint. So, because many of these plays did not display Johnson's real name, he instead tied his plays together visually by using the monogram across his second-series plays and volume titles. Because of the monogram, Johnson's plays are in almost all instances instantly recognisable as his own, whether or not they are bound together and under his volume titles.

This chapter explores how other publishers seem to have been inspired in their own practices by Johnson's consistent use of a monogram device. Where Milhous and Hume, and others, make strong arguments for Johnson's impact on the transformation of play publication from quarto to octavo, and for his importance to the inception of play series themselves (see Chapter One), I propose a different and entirely new area of impact for his work, i.e. amongst the several British publishers who all seem to have been influenced, in some way, by Johnson's use of a monogram. The chapter begins with an extraordinary story involving the 1714 edition of Shakespeare's *Works*, of which a monogram apparently derived from Johnson's appears in its supplementary ninth volume. I examine the respective roles in this publication of Jacob Tonson, Edmund Curll and John Darby, who are all well-known members of the London book trade. I then move on to discuss the plays issued by George Risk of Dublin. In the first of these sections, each of the players involved seem probably to have been directly influenced by Johnson's work, having seen it themselves, and the same is likely to be true of George Risk as well. The chapter also provides some (more brief) discussion of the work of the mid-century

[1] Hamm, 'Rowe's "Shakespear"', p. 180.

publisher Thomas Lowndes. His monogram also appears to derive from Johnson's, although no other direct link can be established at this stage between his, Johnson's, and the other earlier publishers' work. The chapter concludes by assessing the use of a monogram by Robert and James Dodsley, which monogram is again closely related to Johnson's in both its appearance and use. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Robert Dodsley used a direct and deliberate copy of Johnson's monogram on the title page of his 1750 editions of *The Roman Father*, which were associated with Scheurleer's *Select Collection* (also 1750). He and his brother James continued to use this, and copies of this, on a variety of other works throughout the century.

This chapter adds to our knowledge of the circulation and influence of Johnson's plays, aspects of which I have already discussed in previous chapters: how Johnson's books were entering Great Britain, and who was reading them; and their reissue by later publishers, which evidences the implicit interest of Johnson's works to readers across the eighteenth century, especially in Europe. This current chapter, by exploring the way British publishers seem to have been influenced by Johnson's monogram, suggests the circulation and visibility of his plays within British publishing circles and the respect (evidenced through imitation) Johnson's work seems to have enjoyed from members of those circles. This work supplements Grant's and Milhous and Hume's claims for Johnson's significance to British publishing history, and it deploys a wide variety of new evidence (of publications carrying monograms) in support of these claims.

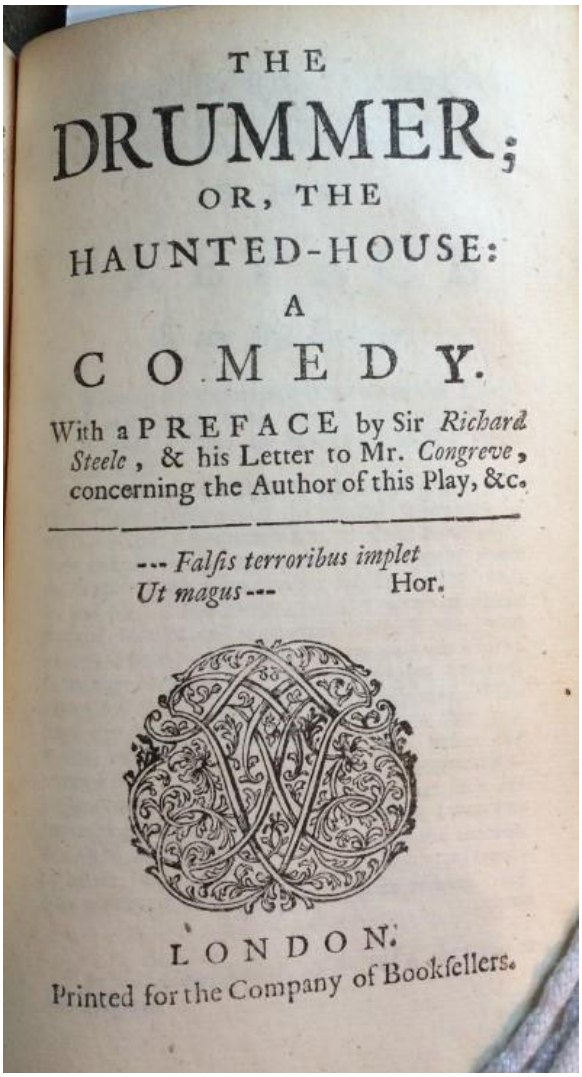
Before going any further, however, it is perhaps necessary to offer some small overview of printers' marks, and of monograms in particular. I reproduce Johnson's most common version of his monogram, as it appears on *The Drummer* (n.d., but second-series), in figure 1.[2] The key text on such devices is, of course, McKerrow's *Printers' & Publishers' Devices* (1913). However, this work terminates its survey in 1640, and contains no obvious precursory examples for Johnson's mark. Although McKerrow's book reveals the long and diverse history of the monogram as a printer's mark in Britain (beginning with Caxton himself, whose device is shown in McKerrow's figure 1), the particularly ornate vine design of Johnson was an eighteenth-century innovation, and has no precedents in McKerrow's list. On the function of such devices, be they monograms or otherwise, Anja Wolkenhauer and Michaela Scheibe emphasise their role as 'a proof of origin, […] a form of publicity, a riddle game, a self-

[2] Addison, *The Drummer* ([Johnson], [n.d.]), A1r. Image from Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 1241.S3.

statement, and the printer's locale'.[3] Wolkenhauer develops this to suggest that 'printers' marks are a form of branding'.[4] This expands on McKerrow's earlier definition of devices as:

> any picture, design, or ornament (not being an initial letter) found on a title-page, final leaf, or in any other conspicuous place in a book, and having an obvious reference to the sign at which the printer or publisher of the book carried on business, or to the name of either of them, or including the arms or crest of either of them […] any emblematic cut commonly used by a printer or publisher, provided that it has no apparent reference to the subject-matter or author of the book in which it appears.[5]

Figure 1


THE
DRUMMER;
OR, THE
HAUNTED-HOUSE:
A
COMEDY.
With a PREFACE by Sir *Richard Steele*, & his Letter to Mr. *Congreve*, concerning the Author of this Play, &c.

--- *Falsis terroribus implet*
Ut magus --- Hor.

LONDON:
Printed for the Company of Bookfellers.

Each of these writers thus recognise the principal purpose of devices as identificatory. The logical extension of this is that a device's usefulness in identifying a printer or publisher without recourse to further information (such as an imprint) increases the more frequently it appears in a variety of books by the same printer or publisher – that is, the more recognisable it becomes. Certainly this seems to have been Johnson's intention with his device. Johnson used false imprints for many of his second-series plays because he was exporting a proportion of these to Britain, and presumably hoping to evade the confiscation of his books through the use of such imprints. Nevertheless, the prevalence of his (false) imprints, 'for the Company' or 'Company of Booksellers', *combined* with his consistent use of the monogram device – and the parallel use of this device on publications that *did* display

[3] Michaela Scheibe and Anja Wolkenhauer, 'Preface', in *CERL Papers XIII: Signa Vides: Researching and Recording Printers' Devices*, ed. by Michaela Scheibe and Anja Wolkenhauer (London: Consortium of European Research Libraries, 2015), pp. 3-5 (3).
[4] Anja Wolkenhauer, 'Printers' Marks in Scholarly Research – Overview and Questions', also in *Signa Vides*, pp. 7-25 (11).
[5] McKerrow, *Printers' & Publishers' Devices*, pp. xii-xiv.

his name, like *All for Love* of 1720 – meant that all of Johnson's plays would be instantly recognisable to those familiar with his work.

The vast majority of work on printers' devices (itself a relatively esoteric field) is focussed on the seventeenth century or earlier, so that 'none of [the sourcebooks] cover the eighteenth century', and 'research material dealing with the eighteenth century is almost entirely missing.'[6] Work on Britain in particular is also relatively sparse, so that McKerrow's *Printers' and Publishers' Devices*, and William Roberts' *Printers' Marks* (1893) stand pretty much alone as extended studies on the subject.[7] Nevertheless, Melinda Simon – who identifies the first of these gaps – does provide some more modern overview of eighteenth-century devices, including a small number of British ones. She outlines the primary device styles, and offers further illumination on the decorative form of Johnson's work. She tells us:

> Talking about "newcomers" among the types of devices, we need to mention the calligraphic monograms that had already appeared at the late end of the seventeenth century but are typically characteristic in the eighteenth century […]. Letters hidden in the foliage also occur[.][8]

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[6] Melinda Simon, 'European Printers' and Publishers' Marks in the Eighteenth Century. The Three C's: Conformity, Continuity and Change', in *Typographorum Emblemata: The Printer's Mark in the Context of Early Modern Culture*, ed. by Anja Wolkenhauer and Bernard F. Scholz (Berlin: De Gruyter Saur, 2018), pp. 347-59 (347). This volume, and *Signa Vides*, cited above – both also of a pan-European scope – are the most significant recent collections on the subject of printers' marks. Simon's own essay provides 'a fresh approach to certain characteristics of the marks of the eighteenth century' and offers 'an overall image of the printers' and publishers' marks of the eighteenth century in Europe' (p. 348). Simon's discussion of such devices is organised primarily by the design of these items, and is only slightly interested in their *purpose* for printers and publishers. The particular forms of devices she identifies in her subheadings are 'Canting Devices', 'Heraldic Devices', 'Shop Signs', 'Divinities and Their Attributes', 'The Image of the Printing House and of the Bookseller's Shop', 'Bales of Books as Symbols', 'Other Symbolic Elements', 'Calligraphic Monograms' – like Johnson's, 'Formal Gardens and Allegories of Arts', and 'Basic Elements of the Classic Period'. Simon concludes her overview with further comments on 'Imitation and Counterfeiting', 'Style and Fashion', 'Techniques', 'Period of Usage', 'Artists and Amateurs', and '"Prefabricated" Devices'. As her own survey makes clear, the use of devices by printers and publishers in the eighteenth century is a subject the surface of which has only been scratched, and until we have a more comprehensive catalogue or database of the actual devices used by individuals (similar in ambition to McKerrow's *Printers' and Publishers' Devices*) any history of an individual device form, such as I undertake here, must necessarily be somewhat tentative.

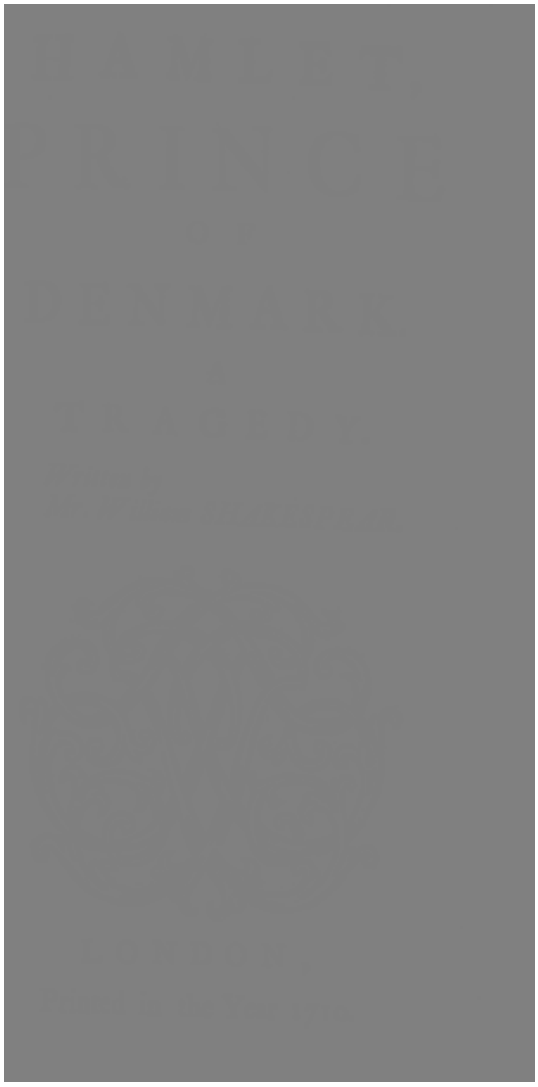
[7] William Roberts, *Printers' Marks: A Chapter in the History of Typography* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1893). This work focuses on the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; the author goes so far as to suggest (pp. 90-91) 'that by the end of the sixteenth century the Printer's Mark in England had declined into a very childish and feeble play upon the names of the printers, and the subject therefore need not be further pursued. The natural result, moreover, of this decline was, in the following century, followed by what practically amounts to extinction; and the few exceptions to which we shall refer, and which are to some extent selected at random, prove the truth of that theory.' Although this is clearly a false argument, in the few examples that follow Roberts does identify Tonson's Shakespeare's Head as worth mentioning (pp. 94-95), and I discuss the relation of this to Johnson's monogram below. Roberts also suggests, without further comment (p. 94), that 'The Mark of the majority of eighteenth century booksellers and printers consisted of a monogram formed either with their initials or names.' Whilst a sweeping statement, certainly a significant number of eighteenth-century printers and publishers did use such a mark, and this again, more directly than Tonson's Shakespeare's Head, seems partially attributable to Johnson's work.

[8] Simon, 'European Printers' and Publishers' Marks', p. 352.

Although it is short, this summary does offer some contextual placing of Johnson's device, which falls in the categories of 'calligraphic' and 'foliage'. Simon offers various European, especially Dutch examples of such devices from 1708 to 1777, although the majority lie in the latter half of this period, and so Johnson's device seems to have been in the vanguard of this particular design trend. Simon's 1708 example – which is her only example preceding Johnson's introduction of his device, in 1709 at the latest – is by Pierre Humbert of Amsterdam.[9] Humbert's monogram may well have provided a precedent for Johnson's, although Johnson also took this in a new direction, as can be seen by comparing Humbert's

Figure 2

Figure 3



[9] Simon, 'European Printers' and Publishers' Marks', p. 352. The earliest work I have seen showing Johnson's own monogram is Rycaut, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman* (Johnson, 1709).

work, and Johnson's earliest monogram form, as it appears on his 1710 *Hamlet* edition (figures 2 and 3).[10]

The most comprehensive database of printers' marks currently available is the 'Printers' Devices' of the Centre de Recursos per a l'Aprenentatge i la Investigació at the Universitat de Barcelona.[11] This database offers records of devices from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, and features several other monograms similar to Johnson's amongst their dataset of several thousand, but none that seem an obvious and direct source. That belonging to Jean Hofhout is most similar to Johnson's (even more so than Humbert's), although I have seen no example of Hofhout's monogram that predates Johnson's use of such a device (figure 4).[12] This appears to suggest that Hofhout, in addition to those British publishers discussed below, might also have been influenced by Johnson's work. Johnson himself, although using the relatively 'open' version of the monogram that appears on *Hamlet* in many of his first-series plays, quickly moved on to the 'tighter' and more elaborate device visible on *The Drummer* (figure 1, above), which appears on most second-series plays. This marks a considerable stylistic development from Humbert and Hofhout's designs.

Figure 4

In light of all this, it seems that Johnson was an important figure in the development of the monogram as a printer's or publisher's device in British publishing at the turn of the eighteenth century. Not one of the several hundred devices listed by McKerrow – or any other, earlier British device that I have seen – provides any real analogy for Johnson's own, although many that came later are extremely similar in appearance. There seems to have been a general move towards such vine-like monogram devices on the continent at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but no such pattern

[10] Guillaume Sherlock, *De l'Immortalité de l'Ame, et de la Vie Eternelle* (A Amsterdam: Chez Pierre Humbert, 1708), title page. Image from *Catawiki* <catawiki.com/l/16038265> [accessed 3 February 2020]. Shakespeare, *Hamlet* ([Johnson], 1710), A1r. Image from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.
[11] 'Printers' Devices', Centre de Recursos per a l'Aprenentatge i la Investigació <http://www.bib.ub.edu/fileadmin/impressors/home_eng.htm> [accessed 21 May 2018].
[12] Baltasar Gracián, *L'Homme de Cour* (A Rotterdam: Chez Jean Hofhout, 1716), title page. Image from Centre de Recursos per a l'Aprenentatge i la Investigació, B-17/6/12, available at <http://cobertes.csuc.cat/cobertes_locals.php?isbn=1111169157157&mida=g> [accessed 25 November 2019].

in Britain. The transport of multiple copies of Johnson's plays and other works into the British Isles in the early decades of this century might therefore have provided an important means by which British publishers had access to this continental development. Thus, if Johnson's *Collection* had not existed and been available in Britain, it is doubtful that the ninth volume of Shakespeare's *Works*, George Risk's plays, or the many publications of Lowndes and the Dodsleys (discussed below) would have contained the precise monograms that they did. Although there are several contemporary catalogues detailing 'ciphers' from which these later publishers might also have commissioned their devices, none of the examples contained in those books I have examined offer so close a precedent for these later publishers' monograms as Johnson's own foliage design. The ciphers advertised by Marlow and Rhodes, amongst others, are relatively similar to the earliest version of Johnson's monogram, but provide no direct equivalents for his later and more elaborate design, which was the one copied by other publishers.[13] The engraved ciphers in roundels on a dark background depicted by Parsons and Sympson are also distinct from Johnson's device.[14]

Tonson, Curll and Darby

Tonson's 1709 *Works* of Shakespeare was published as complete in six octavo volumes, even though it did not contain the author's poems. These poems were published independently by Edmund Curll in 1710 as *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear. Volume the Seventh*.[15] This volume was also in octavo, and similar in appearance to those published by Tonson, presumably since Curll expected its purchasers to add it to their Tonson set, as is evident from several extant copies.[16] Neither Tonson nor Curll used any device on their title pages.

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[13] Jeremiah Marlow, *A Book of Cyphers or Letters Reverst* (London: printed for W: Rogers, 1683); Benjamin Rhodes, *A New Book of Cyphers, Containing in general all Names Interwoven, & revers'd, by Alphabet* ([London]: Sold by Chr: Coningsby, [1696]).

[14] William Parsons, *A New Book of Cyphers; More Compleat and Regular than Any yet Extant* (London: Printed for the Author, and Sold by W. Rogers and H. Rhodes; E. Harris; T. Newborough; and B. Barker, 1704); Samuel Sympson, *A New Book of Cyphers, More Compleat and Regular than any yet Extant* (London: Printed for Samuel Sympson, B. Cole, and Sold by J. Clark, Tho. Taylor and P. Overton, T. Bowles, J. Bowles, and Mr. Reigner, [1726]).

[15] William Shakespeare, *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear. Volume the Seventh* (London: Printed for E. Curll, and E. Sanger, 1710). See also Paul D. Cannan, 'The 1709/11 Editions of Shakespeare's Poems', in *Canonising Shakespeare: Stationers and the Book Trade 1640-1740*, ed. by Emma Depledge and Peter Kirwan (Cambridge: CUP, 2017), pp. 171-86. Cannan provides a detailed discussion of Curll's editions, and the reasons for the poems' exclusion from Tonson's volumes. The traditional interpretation of this gap has been that Tonson did not own the copyrights, although Cannan argues that other factors might also have been in play, including the probability that Tonson was motivated by precedent (since the folios did not include the poems either), and a wish to keep down the cost of his *Works* by making it no longer than was necessary (p. 173).

[16] C 724.c.96.193, and Folger Shakespeare Library, PR 2752 1709a copy 5, both consist of Curll and Tonson's volumes collected together.

Tonson offered a new edition of Shakespeare's *Works* in 1714, and Curll once again provided a supplementary volume of poems.[17] This time both publishers issued the plays in duodecimo, and since Tonson's title pages underwent a distinct change in appearance from his first edition – most obviously in the removal of contents lists and the addition of devices – Curll's were also altered to match. However, where Tonson used his own new and distinctive Shakespeare's Head device on these title pages, Curll's volume instead displayed a monogram that appears to be a direct copy of Johnson's latter and more intricate version of his device (see figures 5 and 6).[18] Although this more intricate device is most common on the second-series and later plays (as depicted on *The Drummer*, in figure 1, above) Johnson was in fact using it from as early as 1712, and the same woodcut is also visible on his *Timon of Athens* (1712).

Figure 5

Figure 6

[17] William Shakespeare, *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear. Volume the Ninth* (London: Printed by J. Darby, for E. Curll, K. Sanger, and J. Pemberton: Sold by J. Tonson, J. Knapton and D. Midwinter, A. Betsworth, W. Taylor, N. Cliff and D. Jackson, T. Varnam and J. Osborn, and J. Browne, 1714). It should be noted that this supplementary volume, and Tonson's own volumes of 1714, each survive with a variety of imprints, some of which acknowledge the volumes of the other publisher, and some of which do not.

[18] Shakespeare, *Works* (Tonson, 1714), I, A4r; Shakespeare, *Works* (Curll *et al.*, 1714), IX, A1r. Both images from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.

Tonson had used the Shakespeare's Head as his shop sign since 1710, but the 1714 Shakespeare *Works* seems to be its first appearance in print.[19] If Grant is right that Tonson's shrinking of the format of the Shakespeare volumes from octavo to duodecimo was a response to Johnson, then it is possible that his use of a device on these works might also have been inspired by Johnson's practice.[20] Furthermore, although I have suggested that the main reason for Johnson's removal of contents lists from his second-series title pages was so that his customers could organise their collections as they chose (see Chapters Three and Five), one wonders if he in turn might have been influenced by the design of Tonson's second Shakespeare edition. The to-and-fro that seems to have gone on between these publishers suggests how crucial it is to include Johnson in histories of British publishing, especially if we are to develop an accurate history of the presentation of drama in print, and the potential consequences of these changes to design on the reception of that drama.

Although it is possible that Curll asked the printer of *Volume the Ninth* (1714) to use this monogram for a particular purpose, it seems more likely that this was its printer, John Darby the Younger's decision. Curll most probably asked simply for some kind of device to be used – in order that the *Volume the Ninth* title page should match Tonson's own – and Darby chose the monogram as a recent addition to his stock. Darby also used the same monogram device on a variety of other publications, and had direct connections with Johnson. That the monogram *does* appear on a work connected with Tonson, and one that seems to be related to Johnson's *Collection* in other aspects of its design (its format), might simply be a revealing twist of chance, highlighting as it does other similarities in the presentation of the Tonson and Johnson volumes.

John Darby the Younger first used the monogram woodblock on the title page of John Gale's *A Thanksgiving Sermon* of 1713, of which he appears to be the publisher as well as the printer.[21] Darby must have encountered the device in Johnson's *Journal Literaire* (which has this device on the title pages of many of its volumes), which was listed by Darby in his own sales catalogue.[22] Johnson also used Darby's shop as a forwarding address for his correspondence with John Keill, telling Keill 'When you are so Kind as to send me any thing,

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[19] On Tonson's shop sign see Bernard, ed., *The Literary Correspondences of the Tonsons*, p. 173 n. 4.
[20] See Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', 'Abstract' and para. 36.
[21] John Gale, *A Thanksgiving Sermon Preach'd November 5. 1713. In Commemoration of The Deliverance of this Nation from the Gunpowder Plot: And of the Late Glorious Revolution in 1688* (London: Printed by John Darby, 1713).
[22] *Books Sold by John Darby in Bartholomew-Close, London* (London: John Darby, [n.d.]), p. 7: 'Journale Literaire, giving an Account of Books publish'd in the several parts of *Europe*; beginning *May* 1713. Printed at the *Hague*.'

let it be given in (sealed & directed for me) to Mr John Darby's in Bartholomew Close; I shall take care henceforth to send you always one of the Journals the same way.'[23] Considering these connections, it seems highly likely that Darby might also have sold (or at least taken delivery of) various copies of the *Best English Plays* for Johnson as well as his *Journal*. Although we cannot now tell *why* exactly Darby began using a monogram derived from Johnson's (and presumably commissioned by Darby), the most likely explanation seems simply that he was taken with the idea of a monogram as an attractive addition to his own publications. The symmetry of Johnson's device (which Simon identifies as a key feature of such devices) means that it only vaguely resembles his 'TJ' initials, and the same can be said of Darby's version, with its vertical axis of symmetry and again only imaginative resemblance to 'JD'.[24] The device was reused by Darby on *A True List of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal* (also 1713), and on the second volume of his *Select Works* of John Dennis (1718), each of which are in octavo, like Johnson's publications.[25]

Darby does not seem to have limited his interest in Johnson's devices to his monogram alone. An edition of Darby's *The Medleys for the Year 1711* uses a title-page device of a basket with cascading flowers that is highly reminiscent of Johnson's device on the title page of his 1710 *The Tempest* (figures 7 and 8).[26] Since this device was relatively uncommon in Johnson's work, Darby's use of a similar device (which is nevertheless also different) seems good evidence that he had seen this edition of *The Tempest* and, by extension, at least some other of Johnson's plays. Whilst it is of course possible that Darby and Johnson acquired their woodcuts independently, and that their use of similar woodcuts does not necessitate the direct influence of Johnson on Darby, it seems unlikely that Darby should have begun to use *two* devices very similar to those on Johnson's plays simply by chance at around the same time, and that are not recorded as having been used by other British printers prior to this. Certainly there is nothing in Darby's father's history, also John Darby – from whom he inherited his business – to suggest

[23] C MS Add.4007.40.521-23 (9 Feburary 1714).
[24] Simon, 'European Printers' and Publishers' Marks', p. 352.
[25] *A True List of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, As also of The Knights and Commissioners of Shires, Citizens and Burgesses, of the Parliament of Great Britain, Summoned to meet at Westminster on the Twelfth of November 1713* (London: Printed for A. Baldwin, 1713); John Dennis, *The Select Works of Mr. John Dennis. In Two Volumes*, 2 vols (London: Printed by John Darby, 1718). Although unnamed in the imprint to the *True List*, its device identifies Darby as the printer of this work. See also the second edition, *A True and Correct List of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, As Also Of the Knights, and Commissioners of Shires, Citizens and Burgesses of the Fourth Parliament of Great Britain* (London: Printed by J. Darby, and sold by J. Roberts, 1715).
[26] *The Medleys For The Year 1711. To which are Prefix'd The Five Whig-Examiners. The Second Edition* (London: Printed by J. D. and are to be Sold by Tho. Corbett, 1714), A1r. Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest* ([Johnson], 1710), A1r. Both images from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.

where else these woodcuts might have been acquired, if the younger Darby did not commission them around this time.[27] This same basket device also appears in Tonson and Buckley's *The Spectator*.[28] The title page of volume one displays cherubim; three a floral spray; four and five the basket with flowers; six and seven a different basket on a pedestal; and eight Tonson's Shakespeare's Head (I have not seen a copy of volume two). Although there is not the space in this thesis to undertake a full investigation of *The Spectator*, the presence of the flower basket device certainly points to Darby as the printer of volumes four and five, at least, although he is not mentioned in Donald Bond's essay on the subject.[29] A thorough reinvestigation of the type and ornaments used in this publication would certainly be a worthwhile undertaking, and could provide definitive evidence for (or against) Darby's involvement in the work. If Darby *was* involved with these volumes, this would help to establish whether he was the only London printer using such a device at this time and, consequently, reinforce the notion that his basket as well as his monogram were derived from Johnson's versions.

We know then that Darby had access to Johnson's books, as is evidenced by Johnson's correspondence with Keill, and Darby's advertisement of the *Journal Literaire*. It seems most likely that – having encountered Johnson's monogram in several of his publications, and probably also the flower basket device – Darby was taken with the idea of such devices as a positive addition to these works and commissioned similar devices to be used on some of his own publications. The story of the 1709 and 1714 Shakespeare editions is both separate *and* connected. Grant and others have established the possible influence of Johnson's use of octavo on the format of plays published in Britain,

Figure 7

Figure 8

[27] See Beth Lynch, 'Darby, John (d. 1704), printer', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/67087> [accessed 3 February 2020].
[28] Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, *The Spectator*, 8 vols (London: Printed for S. Buckley; and J. Tonson, 1712-15). This seems to have been issued in both octavo and duodecimo simultaneously.
[29] Donald F. Bond, 'The Text of the *Spectator*', *Studies in Bibliography*, 5 (1952/53), 109-28.

including those by Jacob Tonson. If Tonson was influenced in his choice of format, it seems quite probable that he was also influenced by Johnson in the consistent use of the Shakespeare's Head device to identify his 'vernacular classics' and other works as his own and, in the case of the 'classics', as part of a series.[30] As already noted, Johnson used his device from 1709, and began using it regularly with the *Best English Plays*, especially from 1711 onwards. Tonson only began to use his Shakespeare's Head device – which would stay with the Tonson firm for many years – from 1714.

It is tempting to imagine that Curll may have requested the monogram woodcut from Darby specifically as a means of pointing out some stylistic debt between Tonson's and Johnson's work, essentially as a means of causing mischief – this would certainly fit with his reputation as a man 'who succeeded in irritating almost beyond endurance so many of his betters.'[31] Baines and Rogers tell us that in 1709 Curll was advertising a variety of books imported from Holland and so he, as well as Darby, would seem to have had contacts in Europe.[32] If this was the case, it is quite possible he might have been aware of Johnson and his work. Nevertheless, without further evidence, it is impossible at this stage to quantify exactly how involved Curll might have been in the choice of woodcut for the 1714 Shakespeare edition. The most important thing is rather that Darby himself was familiar with and influenced by Johnson's work, and used a monogram device – almost certainly an idea taken from Johnson – on several of his publications. This reveals the direct impact of Johnson on the appearance of books published in London, and on an aspect of that appearance (devices) that has not been noticed previously.

George Risk

Like Johnson, George Risk of Dublin worked outside London, England, and the strictures of copyright law. But, again like Johnson, this does not mean that he was uninterested in English developments, and that his work is entirely removed from English publishing history. Indeed, as this thesis has shown, quite the opposite seems to be true. Publishers working at the geographical margins of the trade apparently kept a keen eye on developments in publishing styles, and what new works were printed or performed in London, and to have developed their own catalogues and presentational formats accordingly, presumably in order to maximise the

[30] See Hamm, 'Rowe's "Shakespear"', *passim*, especially pp. 184-89.
[31] Straus, *The Unspeakable Curll*, p. 4.
[32] Baines and Rogers, *Edmund Curll, Bookseller*, pp. 24-25. The authors cite advertisements in the *Post Boy* (23, 25, 28 June 1709) and *Daily Courant* (7-12 June 1709), although these are for collections of second-hand books imported from the continent, rather than any new books in which Johnson was concerned.

Figure 9

saleability of their editions. This was important since Johnson at least – despite printing in the Low Countries – sold a significant number of copies of his works in Britain, and so was an active participant in the British trade.

Probably as a response to Dublin's thriving theatrical life, Risk published a considerable number of plays which, like Johnson's, were neat octavo editions.[33] Although there is some overlap between those plays Risk published and those included in Johnson's *Collection*, this seems to have been a consequence more of chance than design. But Risk did include a monogram on the title pages of many of these works that bears more than a passing resemblance to Johnson's device (figure 9).[34] Although this could again be dismissed as mere coincidence, a variety of reinforcing evidence does show that Risk would have been aware of Johnson's plays. Furthermore, his use of a more obviously derivative Shakespeare's Head device (inspired by that appearing on Tonson's post-1714 publications) on many other of his plays proves that Risk was not averse to dressing his work in borrowed colours. This is not to argue that Risk thought his customers would *mistake* his plays for those of Johnson or Tonson – since his own name is displayed in their imprints – but rather that he thought a monogram, or head of a great dramatist, would be a good way to enhance their appearance and provide some consistency across his publications.[35] As can be seen with *The Tender Husband*, the stylised nature of the vine-device form meant that 'GR' could be picked out just as plausibly as 'TJ' or 'JD' (i.e. for John Darby), and that the device – for Risk at least – was perhaps more purely decorative rather than being an actually

[33] On the Dublin theatres and Irish play publishing see Christopher Morash, 'Theatre and Print, 1550-1800', in *The Oxford History of the Irish Book: Volume III: The Irish Book in English 1550-1800*, ed. by Raymond Gillespie and Andrew Hadfield (Oxford: OUP, 2006), pp. 319-34.
[34] Richard Steele, *The Tender Husband: or, the Accomplish'd Fools. A Comedy* (Dublin: Printed by S. Powell, for George Risk, 1725), A1r. Image from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.
[35] The use of devices for 'assuring the reader that some care has gone into the publishing of [a] book' is also explored by Michael Saenger in *The Commodification of Textual Engagements in the English Renaissance* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 43-44 (quotation from p. 44).

decipherable monogram (although I will continue to use the term 'monogram' for the sake of clarity).[36] That this device appears on a variety of Risk publications, but no other works printed by Powell, indicates that it was Risk rather than Powell's decision to include it on these plays.

A checklist of Risk's publications with his 'monogram' device is as follows:

Table 1: Publications by George Risk using a Monogram Device

Date	Title	Author	Published by Johnson?
1725	*The Drummer*	Joseph Addison	Yes
1725	*The Wonder*	Susanna Centlivre	No
1725	*She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not*	Colley Cibber	No
1725	*The Man of Mode*	George Etherege	Yes
1725	*The Constant Couple*	George Farquhar	Yes
1725	*The Cobler of Preston*	Charles Johnson	No
1725; 1737	*The Christian Hero*[37]	Richard Steele	No
1725; 1743	*The Funeral*	Richard Steele	Yes
1725; 1752	*The Lying Lover*	Richard Steele	No
1725; 1740	*The Tender Husband*	Richard Steele	No
1725	*The Artful Husband*	William Taverner	No
1725	*Abra-Mule*	Joseph Trapp	Yes
1725; 1743	*The Provok'd Wife*	John Vanbrugh	Yes
1725	*The Relapse*	John Vanbrugh	Yes
1725	*The Rehearsal*	George Villiers (Buckingham)	Yes
1726	*The Northern Lass*	Richard Brome	No
1726	*The Island Princess*	Peter Motteux	No
1726	*The Liffy*[38]	George Ogle	No
1726	*Love for Money*	Thomas d'Urfey	No
1746; 1757	*The Conscious Lovers*	Richard Steele	Yes
1750	*Love's Last Shift*	Colley Cibber	Yes
1752	*Love Makes a Man*	Colley Cibber	No

By way of comparison, I also include a checklist of Risk's publications carrying the Shakespeare's Head device, reminiscent of that used by Tonson:

Table 2: Publications by George Risk using a Shakespeare's Head Device

Date	Title	Author	Published by Tonson?
1726	*Ximena*	Colley Cibber	Yes (1735 only)
1726	*Poems Upon Several Occasions*	George Granville	Yes
1726	*Mithridates*	Nathaniel Lee	No
1726	*The Ambitious Step-Mother*	Nicholas Rowe	Yes
1726	*The Royal Convert*	Nicholas Rowe	Yes
1726	*Ulysses*	Nicholas Rowe	Yes
1727	*Lady Jane Gray*	Nicholas Rowe	No
1728	*The Stage-Coach*	George Farquhar	No
1729	*Sophonisba*	Nathaniel Lee	No
1730	*The Unhappy Favourite*	John Banks	No

[36] Pearson, in *Provenance Research*, pp. 79-80, describes the development of monograms in the context of bookplates, and also notes that as the designs became more 'complex', 'identifying the owners of these plates [i.e. interpreting the initials] is often impossible if there is no name and there are no heraldic clues'. He later suggests (p. 92) 'the letters forming the design are often difficult, if not impossible, to unravel.'

[37] This is one of the few works in these checklists that was *not* a play. That Risk nevertheless issued it in conjunction with his monogram is probably due to his intention of marketing it to readers of Steele's other, dramatic works, which also included the monogram.

[38] A poem.

1731	*Love Makes a Man*	Colley Cibber	Yes (in *Plays* 1721)
1734	*The Drummer*	Joseph Addison	Yes
1741; 1757	*The Rehearsal*	George Villiers (Buckingham)	Yes
1746	*The Fair Penitent*	Nicholas Rowe	Yes

These tables offer a variety of revealing surprises. Firstly, to reiterate, there is no especial correlation between which plays were published by Johnson or Tonson, and which included the monogram or Shakespeare's Head devices in Risk's reissue of these works. Indeed, Johnson published *The Ambitious Step-Mother* as well as Tonson, but this was printed by Risk with a Tonson-like device. Johnson also issued *Lady Jane Gray* – whereas Tonson did not – but this again had a Shakespeare's Head device; the same is also true of Lee's *Sophonisba*. *The Drummer* and *The Rehearsal* were printed by Tonson *and* Johnson and, in the first instance, Risk issued these with a monogram, but later reissued the same works with a Shakespeare's Head. Cibber's *Love Makes a Man*, by contrast, appeared in the first instance (1731) with the Shakespeare's Head, but was later reissued by Risk with the monogram (1752). Given as well that there are several publications carrying these devices that were not issued by Johnson *or* Tonson, it is apparent that Risk was not simply copying the ornaments of his copytexts but, rather, applying his own organisational schema to these works. The identification of Risk's copytexts would nevertheless tell us much about his strategies here, and confirm whether certain works carrying the monogram or Shakespeare's Head devices were printed directly from the works of Johnson or Tonson. Correlating Risk's plays with those that were most popular on the Dublin stage at the time might also reveal much about his decisions. One clear conclusion we can draw from these tables is that, going by the dates of these works (the majority with the monogram being of 1725, and those with the Shakespeare's Head from 1726 or later) Risk began by principally using the monogram, but later committed more fully to the Shakespeare's Head. He nevertheless also continued to use the monogram in later years, on reprints such as his second edition of *The Tender Husband* (1740), or even on plays that were new to Risk, such as *Love's Last Shift* of 1750 (which was also printed by Tonson in his *Plays* of 1721).[39]

Risk's use of devices apparently deriving from Johnson's and Tonson's suggests that he knew of and was interested in both of their work – indeed, as major publishers of plays, they would have been two of Risk's biggest competitors, and he would no doubt have wished to

[39] Colley Cibber, *Plays Written by Mr. Cibber. In Two Volumes*, 2 vols (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson; Bernard Lintot; William Mears; and William Chetwood, 1721).

match (or even undercut) the prices of their publications wherever he could.[40] Nevertheless, because Risk used these devices with so little consistency as regard to his presumed copytexts, it seems that he was probably interested in the devices themselves – and their value as ornaments to his plays – rather than how they might be seen as a direct emulation of the Johnson or Tonson styles. Although the imitation of a London publisher's device by someone operating at the fringes of the trade might come as little surprise, Risk's knowledge and reimagining of Johnson's monogram as an equal source gives greater weight to the importance of Johnson's international reputation, especially in Ireland, than has hitherto been acknowledged. This correlates with the wide circulation of Johnson's plays in Ireland catalogued in Chapter Five. As I explain in that chapter, there are also several occasions where Johnson's plays are bound directly with Risk's (although none of these contain editions with Risk's own monogram), so it seems feasible that Risk himself may have been selling some of Johnson's plays.[41] If this were the case, it also seems possible that the consistent presentation *between* Risk's plays, with each of their title pages broadly following the pattern of *The Tender Husband*, above, might carry some additional debt to the uniform presentation of Johnson's *Best English Plays*, i.e. Risk not only used a monogram, but used it on a variety of small octavos with titles pages that were in other respects also similar to each other.

In addition to the circumstantial evidence of Risk's and Johnson's plays being bound together, and of the wider distribution of Johnson's works in Ireland, there is another intriguing, though rather convoluted avenue, by which Risk might have come into contact with Johnson's *Collection*. On one of the occasions that Johnson sent books to the Edinburgh printer George Stewart, the order was received through Agatha Cornelia Wetstein, daughter of Rudolph and sister of Jacob Wetstein, both publishers in Amsterdam.[42] Risk's partner John Smith (*c.* 1700-

[40] The 'Books, Poems, and Plays, Printed for, and Sold by G. Risk, G. Ewing, and W. Smith, Booksellers in Dame's-Street', in Risk's edition of Samuel Madden's *Themistocles, The Lover of his Country. A Tragedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields* (Dublin: Printed by S. Powell, for George Risk, George Ewing, and William Smith, 1729) does not include the prices of plays, but it does list Risk's edition of Richard Steele's *The Christian Hero: An Argument proving that no Principles But those of Religion Are Sufficient To make a Great Man* (Dublin: Printed by S. Powell, for George Risk, 1725) at 6*d* (E7v). *The Christian Hero*, in octavo and with approximately the same number of pages as a play (65) – and also carrying Risk's monogram – is probably a good indication of the price of his plays, which might also have cost 6*d*. George Farquhar's *The Stage-Coach. A Farce. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane* (London: Printed for W. Feales, 1735) includes 'A Catalogue Of the Beautiful Editions of the Plays, With Red Titles, and handsome Frontispieces, in the Order they have been Publish'd, by Tonson and Feales, according to their Proposals, at Six-pence each'; this catalogue lists a large number of plays which were published by Risk as well as Tonson, such as *The Drummer*, indicating some degree of competition between the publishers, as well as the comparability of their prices.

[41] For copies of Johnson's and Risk's plays bound together see Massachusetts Historical Society Library, DA 27; also C S721.d.72.5. In this second, Cambridge University Library copy, the 1727 *Lady Jane Gray* by Risk that Johnson's plays are bound with in fact displays the Shakespeare's Head device.

[42] E^2 La.II.91/B/33 (23 January 1722): 'Be so kind to tell also G. Stewart I long to hear from him about books I sent him in the end of May by his orders by M. [i.e. Mistress] Wetstein.' McDougall, in 'Gavin Hamilton', p.

71), with whom he appears in a large number of imprints, had a previous partner, William Smith (1698-1741), who moved to Amsterdam in 1725 – the same year Risk began using the monogram device – married Agatha Wetstein on 18 October of that year, and was in business with Rudolph and Jacob from 1728.[43] Some of Smith and the Wetsteins' books were also included in parcels that Johnson sent to Charles Mackie, and Smith and the Wetsteins' involvement in Bayle's *Dictionaire* (1730) – whilst Johnson was working on his *Oeuvres* (1727-31) – adds another reason why they and Johnson would have kept an eye on each other's work.[44] As a member of the Amsterdam Guild from 1726, William Smith worked as a continental purchaser for John Smith and his new partner William Bruce (1702-55) – also of Dublin – who issued their own *A Catalogue of Books, Newly Arrived from England, Holland and France*.[45] *A Catalogue of Books: Being the Bound Stock of John Smith, Bookseller* lists a variety of Johnson publications – of which several bore his monogram – and so it seems almost impossible that, as his partner, Risk would not also have been familiar with Johnson's works and monogram.[46] It is probably not entirely incidental that William Smith, John Smith and William Bruce also undertook various joint publications with John Darby, who was similarly interested in Johnson's works and monogram device.[47] Thus, far from being excluded from the mainstream publishing trade, these Irish publishers had a range of contacts in both Britain and

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39, expands the 'M.' of 'M. Wetstein' as 'M*[*ess*]*rs', although in L Add. MS 4284, ff. 178-79 (16 January 1728) Johnson himself gives this as 'Messrs.', and does not abbreviate it further. Although McDougall's interpretation is feasible, Mistress seems more probable in this instance, and the point still holds (that Johnson was in contact with the Wetsteins) in either case.

[43] There is some confusion over the history of William Smith, but my own information is taken from the most comprehensive (and convincing) discussion to date, by Mary Pollard, in *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade 1550-1800* (London: The Bibliographical Society, 2000), p. 539.

[44] For books sent to Mackie see, for instance, Ptolemy, *Orbis Antiqui Tabulae Geographicae* (R. & J. Wetstenios & Guil. Smith, 1730), discussed in E^2 La.II.91/C/45 (22 December 1733).

[45] *A Catalogue of Books, Newly Arrived from England, Holland and France*. *To be sold by Smiths and Bruce, booksellers on the Blind-Key* (Dublin: Printed by S. Powell, 1726). Smith and Bruce later reissued Dionysius Longinus, *De Sublimitate Commentarius* (Amstelaedami: Apud R. & J. Wetsteinios & G. Smith, 1733), as *De Sublimitate Commentarius* (Dublini: Apud J. Smith & G. Bruce, 1733).

[46] *A Catalogue of Books: Being the Bound Stock of John Smith, Bookseller, on the Blind-Quay. Which will begin to be Sold by Auction, By William Ross, At the Right Honourable the Lords Coffee-Room in the Parliament-House On Thursday the 13th April, 1758* (Dublin: 1758) lists Labat, *Nouveau Voyages* (Johnson *et al.*, 1724), p. 40, lot 1463; Bayle, *Oeuvres Diverses* (Johnson *et al.*, 1727-31), p. 46, lot 1688; Sheffield, *Works* ([Johnson], 1726), p. 64, lot 2372. *A Catalogue of Books. Being the Remainder of the Stock of John Smith, Bookseller, on the Blind-Quay, Which were not disposed of at the late Sale of his Books; besides many that had been omitted to be inserted in that Catalogue* ([Dublin]: [?1760]), of which the only surviving text is incomplete, lists Toland, *Adeisidaemon* (Johnson, 1709), p. 16, lot 441; Nicholas Rowe, trans., *Lucan's Pharsalia; Translated into English Verse* (London [The Hague]: Printed for T. Johnson, 1720), p. 28, lot 855, and p. 40, lot 1241; also Sheffield, *Works* ([Johnson], 1726), p. 41, lot 1274.

[47] See Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue; In Two Treatises* (London: Printed by J. Darby, for Will. and John Smith; and sold by W. and J. Innys, J. Osborn and T. Longman, and S. Chandler, 1725); Francis Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections. With Illustrations On the Moral Sense* (London: Printed by J. Darby and T. Browne, for John Smith and William Bruce; and sold by J. Osborn and T. Longman, and S. Chandler, 1728).

continental Europe, and Risk at least seems to have developed his own publication strategies (principally his devices) in light of this experience.

Going by the *ESTC* records, Risk published around 200 publications between 1714-57, of which almost half were plays. From 1726, most of these were joint publications with the said John Smith, and George Ewing (*c*. 1700-64), although their partnership tailed off in the 1740s and 1750s. Neither Smith nor Ewing tended to use devices on their title pages, and the same is true of most of their works shared with Risk.[48] All those works that Risk published independently between 1725-26, however, bear a derivative version either of Johnson's monogram or, from 1726, Tonson's Shakespeare's Head, under which sign Risk also traded.[49] His occasional use of both of these devices in later years was again only on his independent publications. The most likely interpretation of this is that, like Johnson, he hoped that the consistent use of a device would tie his books (and especially his plays) together as a recognisable series emanating from his shop – there is nothing to indicate that Risk intended his plays as an extension of Johnson's *Collection*, or of Tonson's publications either.[50] However, until further research into Risk's copytexts is undertaken, we cannot determine what made him choose to use a Tonson or a Johnson style device (a monogram or Shakespeare's Head) in each instance. Because he avoided such devices entirely on his many collaborative publications, Risk's plays do not achieve the same scope and coherence as Johnson's *Collection* (who published far more plays independently). Risk was clearly aware of Johnson's plays, probably through their general circulation in Ireland and his specific contact with Smith – and perhaps even sold some himself – and responded to the *Collection* and other of Johnson's publications as equally interesting and worthy of consideration in his textual designs as the works of the much better documented Tonson firm.

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[48] As a typical collaboration – without any title-page device – see, for instance, Charles Johnson, *The Country Lasses: or, the Custom of the Manor. A Comedy. As it is Acted at the Theatres* (Dublin: Printed by S. Powell, for George Risk, George Ewing, and William Smith, 1727). The same author's *The Cobler of Preston. As it is Acted at the Theatres, with Applause* (Dublin: Printed by S. Powell, for George Risk, 1725), published by Risk alone, *did* include a monogram (see also table 1, above). Because *The Cobler*, like *The Country Lasses*, was also printed by Powell, this illustrates further that the use (or lack) of devices was due to Risk rather than his printer.
[49] Pollard's *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade*, p. 496, incorrectly suggests that Risk used the monogram from *c*. 1718.
[50] If Risk *had* intended his plays as an extension or supplement to Johnson's *Collection*, it seems almost impossible that there should be no extant copies of his works *with the monogram* that also appear bound alongside Johnson's plays.

Thomas Lowndes

Thomas Lowndes was a bookseller and publisher in Fleet Street from 1756 until his death in 1784, for some of which time he worked with his son and heir, William Lowndes. Thomas ran a circulating library from his shop and was, apparently, 'a strong minded, uneducated man, rough in his manners, but of sterling integrity'.[51] Lowndes published in a variety of genres, with a particular emphasis in drama, but made most consistent use of his monogram device – which also appears indebted to Johnson's publications – across his several independently published novels.[52] The use of a monogram by Johnson, taken up by Darby and Risk (and perhaps also influential in Tonson's adoption of his Shakespeare's Head device), seems to have set a precedent which Lowndes also followed. Even though no direct link between Lowndes and Johnson is now visible – beyond Lowndes' use of a monogram – the appearance of his device suggests significant further impact for Johnson on the work of British publishers across the eighteenth century. Lowndes' publication of *The English Theatre* between 1762-65 – consisting of forty plays already in print and by a variety of publishers, arranged under eight volume titles – also implies an awareness of Johnson's *Collection*, originally of forty plays under ten volume titles.[53]

Lowndes' novels were published principally during the 1770s and, unlike others of his works, were mostly solo ventures.[54] Of these, a significant portion carry a monogram peculiar to Lowndes but apparently derived from Johnson's (figure 10).[55] Every publication that carries this monogram *is* an independent publication by Lowndes.[56] The monogram is also included on a selection of other works by the publisher in different genres. Whilst the general layout of Lowndes' title pages are also similar to Johnson's, many of these works, including *High Life* – the first Lowndes publication to carry the monogram – were in duodecimo, unlike Johnson or Risk's octavo plays. Nevertheless, the use of the monogram on Lowndes' solo publications only, suggests that, like Johnson and Risk (and to a lesser extent Darby), he was also making

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[51] Plomer *et al*., *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers*, p. 159.
[52] An *ESTC* search with 'T. Lowndes' in the publisher field brings up 632 entries, of which collaboratively published plays make up by far the largest proportion.
[53] *The English Theatre. In Eight Volumes. Containing The most valuable Plays Which have been acted on the London Stage*, 8 vols (London: Printed for T. Lownds, 1762-65). On the confused publication history of this work see Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London*, p. 264.
[54] An *ESTC* search for 'Lowndes' and 'novel' brings up 27 hits that include Thomas Lowndes in the publisher field, of which only three are collaborations. Thus, by these parameters, 89% of his novels were solo ventures. The only solo publications under this search without the monogram are *The Wanderer* (1766), *The Auction* (1770), *Siberian Anecdotes* (1783) and *Loyola* (1784). I have not seen a copy of *The Visiting Day* (1768).
[55] Henry Higgs, *High Life: A Novel. Or, The History of Miss Faulkland. In Two Volumes*, 2 vols (London: Printed for T. Lowndes, 1768), I, A1r. Image from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.
[56] The only exceptions to this are *The Sylph* (1783), which lists both Thomas and William in its imprint, and *Observations on Agriculture* (1783) 'Printed for T. Lowndes and Son'.

Figure 10

use of the device to create a recognisable house style. Going by the variety of genres with which the monogram is associated, but also noting the preponderance of novels (61% of the editions with the monogram), it is ambiguous as to whether Lowndes' priority lay with the idea of a house style *across genres*, or with establishing his novels as a series. It seems most likely that this percentage of novels is a consequence primarily of the prevalence of these amongst Lowndes relatively few solo publications. A checklist of Lowndes' publications carrying the same monogram as that appearing on *High Life* is included below:

Table 3: Publications by Thomas Lowndes using a Monogram Device

1768	*High Life*	Henry Higgs	Novel (2 vols)
1769	*The French Lady*	---	Novel (2 vols)
1769 (2 eds)	*The Modern Wife*	---	Novel (2 vols)
1770	*Fatal Friendship*	---	Novel (2 vols)
1770	*The Younger Sister*	Anne Dawe	Novel (2 vols)
1771	*The Brother*	---	Novel (2 vols)
1771	*The Nunnery for Coquettes*	---	Conduct / Belles Lettres
1771	*Miss Melmoth*	Sophia Briscoe	Novel (3 vols)
1772	*The Unfashionable Wife*	---	Novel (2 vols)
1772	*The Fine Lady*	Sophia Briscoe	Novel (2 vols)
1772; 1773	*Lectures on the Materia Medica*	William Cullen	Medicine
1773	*History of Miss Pamela Howard*	---	Novel (2 vols)
1773	*The Sentimental Spy*	---	Novel (2 vols)
1773 (3 eds)	*Alzuma*	Arthur Murphy	Play
1774	*La Belle Philosophe*	---	Novel (2 vols)
1774	*The Modern Fine Gentleman*	---	Novel (2 vols)
1774	*The Trinket*	---	Novel
1774	*The History of Jamaica*	Edward Long	History (3 vols)
1774	*The Sentimental Exhibition*	Edward Long	Conduct / Belles Lettres
1775	*The Dutch-Man*	Thomas Bridges	Afterpiece
1776	*Emma; or, the Child of Sorrow*	---	Novel (2 vols)
1776	*The Husband's Resentment*	---	Novel (2 vols)
1776	*A Letter to the Master, Wardens*	---	Medical Politics

1776	*Mahomet the Imposter*	James Miller	Play
1778	*English Humanity no Paradox*	Edward Long	Sociology / Anthropology
1779 (2 eds); 1783	*The Sylph*	Georgiana Cavendish	Novel (2 vols)
1780	*The Relapse*	---	Novel (2 vols)
1780	*The Theatrical Bouquet*	---	Prologues and Epilogues
1782	*Mount Henneth*	Robert Bage	Novel (2 vols)
1783	*Observations on Agriculture*	---	Agriculture

The consistent presentation of these books by Lowndes might take on additional significance if they were also available as part of his library, establishing, as libraries did, a different form of literary circulation from the simple sale of such works that Johnson had followed. One might even suggest that the uniform presentation of novels in other eighteenth-century circulating or commercial libraries owes some of its inheritance, through Lowndes, to Johnson's standardised presentation of his dramatic series.[57] Much more work needs to be done on the place of these monogrammed works within Lowndes' wider business model and, furthermore, on the potential connections between the currently separate histories of dramatic collections and novels series. Such study could radically alter our perception of the essential independence of the printing history of different generic forms, and invite all manner of new, cross-genre influences to be recognised. Since most publishers issued works in different genres (even if they did have a speciality), then publisher – as much or even more than genre – is an important means of tracing the history of printing and publishing styles.[58]

Robert and James Dodsley

Like Lowndes, Robert Dodsley published works in a variety of genres. These included his famous *Select Collection of Old Plays* of 1744, in twelve duodecimo volumes.[59] Although this collection follows its own presentational strategy, with an elaborate pictorial engraving on its

[57] Although St Clair, in *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, is more interested in the content of novels, and anonymity of their authors, than their printing and bindings, his comments offer a sidelight on their physical presentation as well (p. 175): 'the main driving force towards the anonymisation of fiction was probably the ongoing attempt by the publishers and the circulating libraries to impose greater similarity, regularity, and predictability, on the nature and habit of novel-reading, in other words to turn novels into uniform and mutually sustainable commodities'. It will be noted how many of Lowndes' novels, listed above, were also anonymous, which might tie in to his use of the monogram device as an alternative form of product identification. On the more general standardisation of the presentation of books in the latter portion of the eighteenth century see Raven, *The Business of Books*, p. 223: 'As the volume and diversity of publication increased […] most publishers introduced competitive packaging devices. They included recognisable title-page and typographical styles […] and the pre-retail binding of books in a house design. By the final third of the eighteenth century, many publishers expertly practised what we would now call product branding'.

[58] Hamm's 'Rowe's "Shakespear"', by identifying the consistency of Tonson's house style between his vernacular classics and ancient classics, provides a strong example of the value of this approach, and draws stylistic connections between such different texts as are rarely encountered in other studies. This same pattern is also identified by Grant, in 'Tonson's Jonson', para. 27.

[59] *A Select Collection of Old Plays*, 12 vols (London: Printed for R. Dodsley, 1744).

volume titles, a very large number of Dodsley's later publications carry a frontispiece monogram similar to that first employed by Thomas Johnson. Dodsley only began to use this on other publications from 1753, but this is the same monogram that had first been used on his *The Roman Father* of 1750. This break in Dodsley's use of the monogram is most likely explained if we suppose that it was a special commission for *The Roman Father*, produced under some sort of collaboration with Scheurleer whereby a large number of copies of the play would be sold as part of Scheurleer's 1750 *Select Collection* (see Chapter Six). Thus, unlike the other publishers discussed above, it is absolutely certain that the Dodsleys' use of a monogram, and the reuse and imitation of that monogram by their own successors, has a definite link back to Johnson's *Collection* through Scheurleer's reissue of Johnson's plays, and his collaboration with Dodsley to make *The Roman Father* look like one of those plays by including a monogram on its title page.

When the monogram *did* come to be reused in 1753, we might speculate that this was James' idea; the first imprint shared by Robert and the younger James also appears in 1753.[60] There were four publications issued with the monogram in this year, including Kitty Clive's *The Rehearsal* (figure 11).[61] The monogram continued to appear on a handful of new Dodsley publications every year right up until 1770 (as well as making a final appearance on the anonymous drama *Palladius and Irene* in 1773), and also on many reissues of these works until 1784.[62] It seems most likely that, like the other publishers discussed above, the Dodsleys saw the use of this monogram device as an effective means to tie many of their publications – this time in a bewildering array of genres – together. Of those publications that carry the Dodsley monogram, listed below, a significant proportion were, once again, solo ventures. Of those that were not, most are listed in their imprints as also being sold by Mary Cooper (or on one occasion Thomas Cooper), whose firm had a very longstanding relationship with the Dodsleys, and appeared together in imprints on hundreds of occasions.[63] The bookseller John Hinxman, who took over the Coopers' business (and had previously worked for the Dodsleys), also makes several appearances.[64] There are also a handful of works 'printed for the author' carrying the

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[60] Henry Jones, *Merit. A Poem: Inscribed to the Right Honourable Philip Earl of Chesterfield* (London: Printed for R. and J. Dodsley; and Sold by M. Cooper, 1753).
[61] Kitty Clive, *The Rehearsal: Or, Bays in Petticoats. A Comedy In Two Acts. As it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane* (London: Printed for R. Dodsley, 1753), A1r. Image from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.
[62] *Palladius and Irene, A Drama: In Three Acts* (London: Printed for J. Dodsley, 1773).
[63] James E. Tierney, ed., *The Correspondence of Robert Dodsley 1733-1764* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), pp. 41-43.
[64] Plomer *et al.*, *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers*, p. 127. On Cooper and Hinxman see also Raven, *The Business of Books*, pp. 172, 214, 226.

Figure 11

Dodsley monogram. When other works *are* collaborations amongst multiple publishers, such as Sidney Swinney's *Ninth Satire of Horace* (1767), the presence of the monogram is probably a clear indication that the Dodsleys were chief partners in these works, and organised their printing.[65] It should also be noted that the presence of John Hughs in the imprint to Moore's *Poems, Fables, and Plays* (1756) may well indicate that he was the printer of most if not all of these Dodsley publications that carry the monogram, and might even have been responsible for the original *The Roman Father* (1750) as well.[66] Although the Dodsleys employed the services of several printers throughout their careers, John Hughs is referred to most frequently: Solomon describes him as Robert Dodsley's 'principal printer', and Plomer as 'one of Robert Dodsley's printers', the printer of 'most of Dodsley's publications'.[67]

Table 4: Publications by Robert and James Dodsley using a Monogram Device

Date	Title	Author	Collaborators?
1753	*Gustavus Vasa*	Henry Brooke	
1753	*The Rehearsal*	Kitty Clive	
1753; 1754	*The Earl of Essex*	Henry Jones	
1753	*Merit. A poem*	Henry Jones	M. Cooper
1754	*The Table of Cebes*	Thomas Scott	
1754	*Creüsa, Queen of Athens*	William Whitehead	M. Cooper
1755	*A Sea-Piece*	---	
1755	*The Tomb of Shakespear*	John Gilbert Cooper	
1755; 1760	*Visions in Verse*	Nathaniel Cotton	
1755-57; 1761; 1763; ?1767	*The World*[68]	Adam Fitz-Adam	
1755	*Hymn to Miss Laurence*	John Hall-Stevenson	T. Cooper

[65] Sidney Swinney, *The Ninth Satire of Horace, Book the First, Imitated* (London: Printed for Messrs. Dodsley; Becket and De Hondt; Fletcher; Merril; and Etherington, Sootheran, and Tesseyman, 1767).
[66] Edward Moore, *Poems, Fables, and Plays* (London: Printed by J. Hughs, For R. and J. Dodsley, 1756).
[67] Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley*, p. 280 n. 56; Plomer *et al.*, *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers*, p. 134.
[68] I have not seen a copy of the 1767 Dodsley edition of this work, although it seems likely to carry the monogram. George Faulkner's Dublin reissue of *The World*, as Adam Fitz-Adam, *The World*, 4 vols (Dublin: Printed by George Faulkner, 1755-57), and subsequent reissues by this publisher, each also carry Faulkner's own monogram. This is different to those inspired more directly by Johnson, but might itself warrant further investigation, especially if the monogram was introduced by Faulkner when reprinting London editions that carried this device.

1755	*Select Epigrams of Martial*	William Hay	
1755	*The Present State of North America, &c.*	Ellis Huske	
1756	*Theatrical Records*	---	
1756	*The Arbour*	Thomas Cole	M. Cooper
1756	*Poems*	John Duncombe	M. Cooper
1756	*Reflections*	Adam Ferguson	
1756	*The Target*	Thomas More Molyneux	
1756	*Poems, Fables, and Plays*	Edward Moore	'Printed by J. Hughes'
1757; 1759; 1761; 1764; 1767; 1770; 1773	*Philosophical Enquiry* […] *Origin of Our Ideas*	Edmund Burke	
1757 (5 eds)	*Observations on* […] *Nightshade*	Thomas Gataker	M. Cooper
1757 (2 eds)	*Supplement to Observations on* […] *Nightshade*	Thomas Gataker	M. Cooper
1758 (2 eds)	*Country Gentlemen*	Mark Akenside	M. Cooper
1758	*Notes on* […] *"Observations Anatomical* […]*"*	Mark Akenside	
1758	*Socrates, a Dramatic Poem*	Amyas Bushe	'Printed for the Author'
1758 (2 eds)	*Cleone. A Tragedy*	Robert Dodsley	
1758	*Remarks upon the Natural History of Religion*	Thomas Stona	
1759-90 (multiple vols)	*Annual Register*	---	
1759	*The Beldames. A Poem*	---	M. Cooper
1759	*Demonstrations of Religion and Virtue*	---	'Printed for R. and J. Dodsley; and W. Sandby'
1759	*A Pastoral Elegy*	---	M. Cooper
1759	*Sermon Preached* […] *29th of November 1759*	---	
1759	*Verses Written in London*	---	M. Cooper
1759	*Defence* […] *of the Warden of Winchester*	Christopher Golding	M. Cooper
1760	*Odes on Several Subjects*	Mark Akenside	
1760	*Oratio Anniversario*	Mark Akenside	
1760	*Elegies*	John Delap	
1760	*Two Lyric Epistles*	John Hall-Stevenson	M. Cooper
1760	*Love Elegies*	John Lettice	
1760 (2 eds); 1764; 1765[69]	*The Sermons of Mr. Yorick*	Laurence Sterne	
1761	*Andromache to Pyrrhus. An Heroick Epistle*	---	
1761	*The Coronation: a Poem*	---	'Sold by J. Morgan'
1761	*The Mistakes of Men in Search of Happiness*	---	
1761; 1762; 1770	*Fables for Grown Gentlemen*	John Hall-Stevenson	1761 and 1762 eds 'Sold by J. Hinxman'
1761	*The Calendar of Flora, Swedish and English*	Benjamin Stillingfleet	'Printed for the Author; And sold by R. and J. Dodsley, and S. Baker'
1762	*Letters Between Emilia and Harriet*	Maria Susanna Cooper	
1762	*Hecuba, a Tragedy*	John Delap	
1762	*Two Odes. To Indolence, and to Impudence*	Andrew Erskine	'sold by J. Hinxman'
1762	*An Elegy Written Among the Tombs*	Reginald Heber	'Sold by J. Hinxman'
1762	*A Letter to Mr. S. Fothergill*	T. J.	
1762; 1763	*The Nunnery. An Elegy*	Edward Jerningham	
1762	*A Charge to the Poets*	William Whitehead	'Sold by J. Hinxman'
1762; 1763; 1770	*The School for Lovers*	William Whitehead	1762 and 1763 eds 'Sold by J. Hinxman'
1763	*A Plan for Improving the Trade at Senegal*	---	
1763	*The School for Wives. In a Series of Letters*	---	
1763	*Two Elegies*	William Cleaver	
1763	*The Toy-Shop*	Robert Dodsley	
1763 (2 eds)	*The Magdalens: an Elegy*	Edward Jerningham	
1763	*The Methods of Suppressing Haemorrhages*	Thomas Kirkland	

[69] There are several other Dodsley editions of this book that I have not seen, and that may well display his monogram.

1763	*An Essay on the Government of Children*	James Nelson	'Sold by J. Hinxman'
1763	*The Oracle. A Comedy of One Act*	Germain-François Poullain	
1763	*The Brothers. A Tragedy*	Edward Young	
1764	*Original Poems on Several Occasions*	Mary Darwall	
1764 (2 eds)	*The Nun: an Elegy*	Edward Jerningham	
1764	*The Ruins of Netley Abbey. A Poem*	George Keate	
1765-67	*The History of Miss Indiana Danby*	---	
1765 (2 eds)	*The Summer's Tale. A Musical Comedy*	Richard Cumberland	'Printed for J. Dodsley; W. Johnston; and J. Walter'
1765; 1766 (2 eds); 1767	*The State and Faculties of Man*	John Gregory	
1765	*Kimbolton Park: a Poem*	Benjamin Hutchinson	
1765 (2 eds)	*Elegy Written Among the Ruins of an Abbey*	Edward Jerningham	
1765	*Remarks Upon* […] *Amending the Highways*	R. Whitworth	
1766	*An Elegy on the Death of William and Mary*	---	
1766	*An Ode to the Late Thomas Edwards*	Mark Akenside	
1766	*Yarico to Inkle, an Epistle*	Edward Jerningham	
1766	*A Poem to* […] *the Celebrated Mrs. Cibber*	George Keate	
1767 (4 eds)	*On the* […] *Death of the Marquis of Tavistock*	Christopher Anstey	
1767	*Philodamus. A Tragedy*	Richard Bentley	
1767 (4 eds)	*Thoughts on the* […] *High Price of Provisions*	Soame Jenyns	
1767	*Il Latte. An Elegy*	Edward Jerningham	
1767	*Essay Towards* […] *the Cure* […] *of Fevers*	Thomas Kirkland	
1767	*The Ninth Satire of Horace* […] *Imitated*	Sidney Swinney	'Printed for Messrs. Dodsley; Becket and De Hondt; Fletcher; Merril; and Etherington, Sootheran, and Tesseyman'
1768	*Amelia. A Musical Entertainment*	Richard Cumberland	'Printed for J. Dodsley; and W. Johnston'
1768	*Remarks and Dissertations on Virgil*	Edward Holdsworth	
1769	*The Sentiments of an English Freeholder*	---	
1769 (4 eds)	*Observations on a Late State of the Nation*	Edmund Burke	
1769	*The Works, in Verse and Prose*[70]	William Shenstone	
1770 (4 eds); 1775; 1784	*The Cause of the Present Discontents*	Edmund Burke	
1770	*Poems*	John Dyer	
1770; 1777	*The Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul*	George Lyttelton	
1770	*A Short Account of the Waters of Recoavo*	Antonio Mastini	
1770	*Six Pastorals*	George Smith	
1770	*A Trip to Scotland*	William Whitehead	
1773	*Palladius and Irene, a Drama*	---	

Although this above list seems very extensive, in reality the monogram only appeared on a relatively small percentage of the several thousand books issued by the Dodsleys, which must have mitigated some of its usefulness as part of a house style.[71] Whilst no new books were published with the device after 1773, or reissued after 1784 (which was an unusually late usage, on Burke's *Cause of the Present Discontents*), the monogram continued to appear on

[70] This text appears to be made up of new monogrammed title pages added to an older edition without the monogram. See *ESTC* T92445.
[71] Raven, in *The Business of Books*, p. 188, refers to there being 'at least' 3034 Dodsley imprints in total.

Figure 12

each issue of *The Annual Register* right into the nineteenth century, even after the rights to this journal had passed into the hands of other booksellers. The Dodsleys began the *Annual Register* in 1759 (listing the events of 1758) and it carried their monogram from its first issue (figure 12).[72] Robert Dodsley's biographer, Harry Solomon, calls the *Annual Register* 'arguably the most important periodical in the history of British publishing'.[73] The change in the usage of the monogram in the early 1770s, from being a regular Dodsley mark to the mark of the *Annual Register* only, is perhaps attributable to the Dodsleys' printers, the Hughs. When John Hughs died in 1771, their business was continued by his son, Henry, who might have suggested that the monogram's appearance was scaled down across most Dodsley publications so that it could be the specific mark of the *Annual Register*, as one of the firm's most successful and long-running publications.[74] That this change was the printer's decision also ties in with the monogram's continued usage even once the Dodsleys were no longer responsible for the *Annual Register*. William B. Todd's invaluable 'A Bibliographical Account of *The Annual Register*' tells us: 'Presumably from 1759 to 1767 the original edition and most of the reprints were undertaken by John Hughs of Lincoln's Inn Fields, from 1768 to 1773 by his son Henry, and from 1774 to 1793 by Henry in partnership with Luke Hansard.'[75] The history of several other publications corroborate this move in the device's usage; Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas* was published without the monogram in 1776, whereas all previous Dodsley editions of this work *did* carry the monogram (see above).[76] The same is true of the 1772 edition of John Gregory's

[72] *The Annual Register* […] *1758* (1759), A1r. Image from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.
[73] Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley*, p. 190.
[74] On John Hughs see also Plomer *et al*., *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers*, p. 134.
[75] William B. Todd, 'A Bibliographical Account of *The Annual Register*, 1758-1825', *The Library*, 16 (1961), 104-20 (p. 113).
[76] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful. The Eighth Edition* (London: Printed for J. Dodsley, 1776).

The State and Faculties of Man, and the 1778 reprint of *On the Much Lamented Death of the Marquis of Tavistock* by Christopher Anstey.[77]

When James sold the *Annual Register*, he sold the rights to reissue existing numbers, alongside his remaining stock, to William Otridge (trading 1772-1812), but the rights to continue the series to Charles and Francis Rivington (1754-1831, 1745-1822).[78] Both the Rivingtons' and Otridge's subsequent issues of this work follow the same title-page design as the Dodsleys', including their use of a monogram (figures 13 and 14).[79] My own examination of copies indicates that several versions of the monogram were in use by this time. Although the precise identification of these with different issues and publishers would require a far more in-depth study than is possible in this thesis, this would provide much valuable information on the shared or independent use of devices by the various printers involved in these works, and the ongoing importance of the monogram to the design of the *Annual Register.* The printers of both the Rivington and Otridge series are catalogued by Todd in his 'Bibliographical Account'.[80] When these two, now distinct, series were amalgamated under Baldwin, Craddock and Joy, with the issue printed in 1826, this new series again came with its own very similar

[77] John Gregory, *A Comparative View of the State and Faculties of Man with those of the Animal World. The Fifth Edition* (London: Printed for J. Dodsley, 1772); Christopher Anstey, *On the Much Lamented Death of the Marquis of Tavistock. The Fifth Edition* (London: Printed for J. Dodsley, 1778).

[78] For further details on these transactions see Todd, 'A Bibliographical Account of *The Annual Register*', *passim*.

[79] *The Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, For the Year 1791* (London: Printed for F. and C. Rivington; Sold also by J. Dodsley, 1795), A1r. Image from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. *The Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, For the Year 1792* (London: Printed for the Proprietors of Dodsley's Annual Register, W. Otridge & Son; R. Faulder; J. Cuthell; Ogilvy & Son; R. Lea; J. Nunn; J. Walker; Lackington, Allen, and Co. E. Jeffery; and Vernor & Hood, 1799), A1r. Image from *Google Books* <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Kq8vAAAAYAAJ&redir_esc=y> [accessed 7 February 2020].

[80] Todd, in 'A Bibliographical Account of *The Annual Register*', suggests that the Rivington editions (p. 117) were printed by Luke Hansard (as were many of the Dodsley editions) from 1795-1806, by Hansard & Sons from 1808-13, also by Bye and Law in 1806, and by Law & Gilbert from 1808-15. Other issues were printed by R. & R. Gilbert in 1816, and R. Gilbert from 1819-26. The Otridge printers are catalogued on pp. 118-19, although there are too many to list here. Todd's summary of the printing of the Otridge editions is astonishing (p. 110): 'Altogether from 1799 to 1814 no less than twenty-eight printers were employed, one as far away as Montrose, with seven of them apparently working for Otridge in 1800 and six at least in 1803 and 1805.'

Figure 13

Figure 14

device (figure 15).[81] This device continued in print until the publication format was revised thoroughly with the issue printed in 1864.[82] Furthermore, the *New Annual Register* of George Robinson (1736-1801), which seems a deliberate attempt to cash in on the *Annual Register*'s success, also deployed a layout and device that echoed the Dodsleys' from its first issue (figure 16).[83] I have seen no other Robinson publications on which this emblem appears.

It seems then that where Robert and James Dodsley began by issuing works with a monogram relatively indiscriminately, this gave way to its association with a single important publication, probably at their printer's recommendation. So strong was this association that many of the later publishers concerned in this work (alongside their contemporary, Robinson)

[81] *The Annual Register, Or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, of the Year 1825* (London: Printed for Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy; C. and J. Rivington; J. Cuthell; Longman, Rees, Orme, and Co.; E. Jeffery, and Son; J. Booker; Harding, and Lepard; Sherwood, Gilbert, and Piper; Whitmore, and Fenn; Hamilton, Adams, and Co.; G. B. Whittaker; W. Reynolds; Simpkin, and Marshall; Hurst, Robinson, and Co.; and J. Collingwood, 1826), A1r. Image from *Hathi Trust Digital Library* <hathitrust.org>. Todd, in 'A Bibliographical Account of *The Annual Register*', lists the printers of this new series from 1815, when they had become involved with the Otridge series, but before incorporating the Rivington series, p. 120.

[82] *The Annual Register; A Review of Public Events At Home And Abroad, for the year 1863* (London: Rivingtons; Longman and Co.; Hamilton and Co.; Simpkin and Co.; Houlston and Wright; Smith, Elder, and Co.; E. Bumpus; J. Waller; L. Booth; Bell and Daldy; Willis and Sotheran; Bickers and Son; W. Heath; J. Toovey; J. Wheldon, 1864).

[83] *The New Annual Register, or General Repository of History, Politics, and Literature, For the Year 1780* (London: Printed for G. Robinson, 1781), A1r. Image from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.

Figure 15

Figure 16

commissioned their own versions of the device in order that the look of their publications should mirror Dodsley's original. Fascinatingly, the publication history of Johnson's *Journal Literaire* tells a similar story. Whilst Johnson's device is most visible in his plays and other English works, it also appears on most issues of the *Journal*, from that of July and August 1713 (1.2) until his last issue (12.1) printed in 1723. Johnson seems to have sold the rights to the *Journal* to Pierre Gosse and Jean Neaulme, who continued to issue and reissue the series from 1729, beginning with number 11.2, which Johnson had missed out.[84] This, and other new numbers of the *Journal* published by Gosse and Neaulme, carry a flower basket device which is unrelated to any of Johnson's, and they continued to use this up to their final issue of 1732 (19.2). However, at least one back copy of the *Journal* that Gosse and Neaulme *re*issued has an alternative, monogram device (which is also very similar to Jean Hofhout's, depicted in figure 4). The use of this monogram by Gosse and Neaulme appears a deliberate strategy intended to mimic the appearance of Johnson's original *Journal* editions (figure 17).[85]

[84] *Journal Literaire de L'Année M. DCC. XXI. Tome Onzieme, Seconde Partie* (A La Haye: Chez P. Gosse, & J. Neaulme, 1729). Johnson told Mackie, in a letter of 19 October 1728 (E^2 La.II.91/B/62): 'The Journal is now to be revived, on as good a foot they say as before I sold it o[ff] very well before I left the Hague & so have no more share in it.'

[85] *Journal Literaire de May & Juin, M. DCC. XIV. Tome IV. Premiere Partie. Seconde Edition* (A La Haye: Chez P. Gosse & J. Neaulme, 1732), *1r. Image from *Hathi Trust Digital Library*.

Figure 17

Although their monogram is not a direct imitation of Johnson's, his use of that device clearly affected Gosse and Neaulme's choices in the reissue of the *Journal Literaire*. Unlike the publishers of the *Annual Register*, they appear to have been willing to stamp new volumes of the *Journal* with their own particular mark but, also, to have seen some significance in echoing Johnson's device when reissuing his numbers. That some dispute might have arisen from this gesture is evidenced by Gossse and Neaulme's subsequent reissues from volume 5.1 (also printed in 1732), which revert to the same flower basket emblem as appeared on their new volumes.

The Significance of Johnson's Monogram

Whereas European publishers who were interested in Johnson's work have left evidence for this in the direct reissue of his plays, his influence on British publishers follows a much more elusive trail. However, the use of monograms by publishers discussed in this chapter suggests a considerable debt to Johnson's practice, and particularly to his *Best English Plays*. Darby, Curll, Tonson and Risk all seem to have had direct experience with Johnson's books, and Robert Dodsley to have known of them through his dealings with Scheurleer. Although such access on the part of Lowndes is harder to quantify, this chapter should be taken alongside the evidence of Chapters Two, Five and Six in demonstrating the circulation and influence of Johnson's publications. It extends the arguments of several critics for the wide circulation of Johnson's plays and, also, for their impact on other publishers. Where Grant and Milhous and Hume emphasise his influence on the format of plays published in Britain, and on the idea of play series themselves, I propose that the design of works by other publishers, especially their use of a monogram device on title pages, as a means of identifying their work, also evidences a significant debt to Johnson.

As we have seen, this debt was not limited to plays. Darby seems to have been interested in the device as a general means of improving the appearance of his publications. That his monogram was used on Curll's extension to Tonson's 1714 *Works* of Shakespeare may only be down to chance, but it invites speculation on whether Tonson's own introduction of his Shakespeare's Head device for this publication in 1714 might also have been undertaken as a

response to Johnson's work. This seems particularly likely if Grant is correct that Tonson's reduction in the size of his Shakespeare from octavo to duodecimo took account of Johnson's *Collection*.[86] In Dublin, Risk did associate the monogram primarily with plays, and was influenced by the devices of both Johnson and Tonson in his independent publications. It is difficult to discern whether Lowndes was using the device to identify a particular series of works, or his publications *en masse*, but he was certainly most consistent in its use on his independently-published works, of which a large proportion were novels. The Dodsleys began by using the monogram in conjunction with a wide variety of publications, but eventually abandoned it in all instances except the *Annual Register*, with which this device became so firmly associated that multiple new versions were used by later publishers of this work, and another publisher (Robinson) seeking to create his own version of the work. Although the chapter has been led by Johnson's monogram as a single line of enquiry, study of this one, particularly distinctive aspect of Johnson's *Collection* and house style correlates with those other correspondences between Johnson's *Best English Plays* and later publications – in the format of plays, and the publication of series of plays by multiple authors – that need much fuller investigation across the eighteenth century than has so far been afforded them.

[86] Grant, 'Tonson's Jonson', 'Abstract'.

Conclusion: Thomas Johnson's *A Collection of the Best English Plays*

This thesis has sought to fulfil two aims. The first of these was to provide a fuller account of Thomas Johnson and his *A Collection of the Best English Plays* than has hitherto been available. The second has been to demonstrate that Johnson and his *Collection* occupy a more prominent position in the history of English dramatic publishing than has previously been understood.

The specific directions for this enquiry have sprung from two sources. The first is McMullin's outline of what further work needed to be done on Johnson's *Collection*. He suggests an account of 'precisely which plays Johnson actually published', and 'determining what the precise contents of individual volumes of the *Collection* should be.'[1] Both of these aims are fulfilled by this thesis, and provide a solid foundation for future study of Johnson's work. McMullin's third suggestion concerns the dating of Johnson's plays. Whilst this problem has not been one of my central concerns – since others are more urgent – I have suggested new or revised dates for several publications across this thesis (most significantly for second-series volume titles, of *c.* 1721-22). More accurate dating of all of Johnson's plays is a potential line of investigation for future study of Johnson's work, and only possible now we are more fully aware of what he actually published. A better knowledge of Johnson's correspondence (as is supplied here) also offers us an untapped resource on the chronology and pricing of his works, as well as their distribution (on which I have focussed). McMullin's fourth problem is related to his first, 'the identification of Johnson's hand in suspect or patently piratical or clandestine publications.'[2] Several of the works that I have identified with Johnson have not been previously attributed to him (such as Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks* (1733)), and my analysis of his imprints and devices allows us to identify even more works – especially non-Anglophone ones – with which he was involved; this could tell us much about Johnson's significance as an Enlightenment publisher. McMullin concludes by suggesting that further work might also be undertaken on Johnson's biography, his retail *and* publishing businesses, and his role as an editor.[3] This thesis has identified the international and multi-lingual scope of Johnson's retail and publishing business, has added considerably to his biography through the interpretation of previously unknown correspondence, and has augmented our knowledge of his editorial work

[1] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', pp. 100, 101.
[2] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 101.
[3] McMullin, 'T. Johnson', p. 111.

on his Shakespearean texts (especially *The Tempest*), and on the *Oeuvres* of Bayle. Johnson's formerly unknown correspondence with Pierre Des Maizeaux has been invaluable in unpicking the history of this work, and should also serve as a valuable resource for scholars of Bayle and Enlightenment publishing as well as of Johnson in particular. Johnson's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, with a cancel title page and significant changes to its text, is also crying out for further study. More extensive analysis of Johnson's editorial strategies, alongside the work I have already undertaken, might contribute to a counter-history to current research on the editing of the Tonsons' Shakespeare works editions (by paid editors rather than the publisher-as-editor, like Johnson) which dominates our understanding of eighteenth-century dramatic editing.

My second, and ultimately more important, basis in establishing the structural form of this thesis, has been my own survey of current literature on Johnson. This covers the contributions of Ford, McMullin, Murphy, Dugas, Milhous and Hume, and Grant. Of these works, those of Ford, McMullin, Milhous and Hume and Grant are more extensive, reliable and valuable. Based on their writings, it has been apparent that most work on Johnson can be grouped into four categories: his biography; the material form of the *Best English Plays*; Johnson as an editor; and the circulation and influence of his *Collection*. Ford and McMullin are most informative on his biography, and all contribute in some way to our understanding of the *Collection*. Grant and McMullin provide examples of Johnson's work as an editor, and all authors again provide some insights on the circulation and influence of his plays. Warren McDougall and Esther Mijers also afford important points of reference when discussing Johnson's correspondence and business networks. McDougall provides the most comprehensive survey to date of Johnson's letters, and uses Johnson's business as his key example of how the Edinburgh publisher Gavin Hamilton was influenced by continental publishers. In Mijers' study of the Edinburgh professor Charles Mackie's contact with Enlightenment Europe, Johnson again emerges as an extremely important link between Britain and Europe, both in the practical transportation of books and in the flow of ideas and information. Whilst we must follow Mijers' lead in identifying Johnson's connections with Britain, I have extended her findings with new sources and refocused her enquiry on Johnson's own business, instead of his impact on Scottish learning. Although Johnson's impact on Scottish learning and access to texts is, of course, extremely important, my exploration of the publisher's works and business strategies has provided a critical foundation for understanding this wider relevance to book and intellectual history. A study of the reception of Johnson's texts similar to Towsey's work in *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment* might be a logical extension to this thesis, but could not be undertaken without the provision here of a firm basis

in the realities of Johnson's trade. My synthesis of existing studies of Johnson's plays – with Mijers' work and other, broader studies of Enlightenment knowledge and its circulation, such as Jacob's *The Radical Enlightenment*, and the writings of Israel, Goldgar, and Siskin and Warner – has revealed Johnson's importance in connecting a wide variety of customers and contacts with different intellectual and social backgrounds, and has given us a much more complete picture of Johnson and his world.

Taken sequentially, each chapter of this thesis has extended our knowledge in the four existing fields of research on Johnson. Chapter Two enlarged our understanding of Johnson's biography through a focussed study of his business networks, situating these within a wider Enlightenment context, and provided a full survey of his letters that facilitates further work on this material. Chapter Three then offered a detailed publication history of the *Best English Plays* itself that far exceeds any previous record. Supplemented with analyses of Johnson's *Collection* Dedication, and his intervention in authorial debates surrounding *The Drummer*, it demonstrated the need to consider *Best English Plays* as both a long-term project and as a series of individual publications with their own interests and challenges. Chapter Four built on McMullin's and Grant's work on Johnson as an editor, offering more (and more correct) information on Johnson's source-texts than has appeared in other works, especially for his unique edition of *The Tempest*. Its analysis of his *Oeuvres* of Bayle – using Johnson's correspondence – showed how traditional bibliographical methods can be supplemented with a softer form of editorial and publishing history; Johnson's work on this high-status Enlightenment text also implies a greater degree of editorial concern in his English publications than is otherwise immediately apparent. Chapters Five to Seven were all concerned with the circulation and influence of Johnson's plays. Chapter Five catalogued and analysed extant copies of his works to reveal Johnson's wide distribution network, and how the unique, pick-and-mix form of his *Collection* made it attractive to readers in different countries and from different socio-economic backgrounds. The chapter also demonstrated the difference between the ideal and actual states of many examples of the *Best English Plays*, and why a copy-specific (or bottom-up) survey is essential for understanding the reception and influence of this work, and of English drama more broadly. Chapter Six has shown how important Johnson's plays were to later European publishers and readers, who reissued and purchased these works across the eighteenth century. This revealed the generally unacknowledged demand for original-language English drama in Europe in the eighteenth century, and the failure of most other publishers to meet that demand with their own original publications. Chapter Seven, finally, extended the claims of Milhous and Hume and Grant regarding the impact of Johnson's texts

on the format of plays published in Britain. I was able to show that Johnson's monogram was also influential in the presentation of later British publications, and that publishers working outside London could therefore be important to the development of publishing practices and thus, by extension, to literary reception. Whilst each of these chapters is to some extent independent, there are also many overlapping concerns – principally regarding the form of the *Collection*, and its circulation amongst readers and other members of the publishing trade – that provide an essential core for interpreting the wider significance of Johnson and his works, and their importance to publishing history.

My study of Johnson's correspondence, and of far more copies of his plays than any other critic to date (incorporating many hundreds of examples, rather than just a couple), has facilitated a large number of individual findings that each contribute to our understanding of the significance of Johnson and the *Collection*. Future research in this area will rely on edited versions of Johnson's letters, and a complete checklist of copies of his works, both of which projects I am also currently working on. In the meantime, the many copies of Johnson's plays that are itemised here provide a much better guide to his work than has previously been available. Furthermore, my identification of the full extent of Johnson's epistolary corpus provides considerable new information on his wide range of contacts: Mackie, his students, and other members of the Scottish nobility; Des Maizeaux, Keill, Anthony Collins, and other intellectuals in England; Willem 's Gravesande, Marchand, Levier and other Enlightenment thinkers and publishers; and Darby, the Wetsteins, George Stewart, Antoine Coustelier, and other publishers and booksellers working across Britain and Europe. Johnson's letters also afford us details of how exactly his books entered Britain, and of his role as an international agent within the Republic of Letters. Johnson's trade in English plays was just one facet of a much larger business than those writing about his English books have realised. The study of this business demonstrates that piracy is a matter of perspective, and that we should not assume that, just because Johnson's books were of disputable legality in Britain, this necessarily means that they were unedited or carelessly printed. On the contrary, as an important Dutch publisher, Johnson produced texts of equal quality to the best London editions, and enjoyed a reach and influence that might have been considerably more extensive than that of insular London publishers. His work also reveals the crucial role and influence of publishers in the spread and development of Enlightenment learning, a role that is significantly underplayed in many existing studies of the Enlightenment. Until a year-by-year biography of Johnson is undertaken, in a form similar in ambition to Bernard's work on Tonson, Tierney's on Dodsley, or Baines and Rogers' on Curll, my work stands as an alternative form of biography by tracking

Johnson's position in contemporary communications networks. Any fuller biography than is presented here would require extensive excavation in the Dutch archives to supplement what I have undertaken in the British ones, and a more exhaustive investigation of Johnson's French, Dutch and Latin publications than has been possible within this single thesis.

The analysis of multiple copies of Johnson's plays has allowed me to determine the exact publication history of the *Best English Plays* series. I have determined that Johnson *did* issue supplementary volume titles with ideal contents between his first and second series, and have found transitional title pages (1721) that reveal the date of the second-series title pages, and how these relate to the second-series plays. By identifying developments in Johnson's use of devices and imprints, I have provided a tentative means of distinguishing his second-series and later plays (with later plays being less consistent in their presentation). Aligning this itinerary with Johnson's 1714 Dedication has afforded some perspective on his ambitions for this work. Scrutiny of his 'Advertisement' in *The Drummer* casts doubt on Addison's authorship of this play and has revealed Johnson's informed position within literary and playwriting circles. Taking this knowledge into account, further study of the development of Johnson's *Collection* (what he chose to publish or reprint, or to discontinue or omit) could tell us much about the reputations of these plays at the time he was working.

Detailed textual work has made it possible to ascertain Johnson's source texts for *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *1 Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; his addition of Buckingham's songs to the *Caesar* editions (probably from manuscript) has offered further confirmation of his familiarity with the London theatre world. Johnson's *Merry Wives*, with its removal of an entire scene (the Latin lesson), is the publisher's own unique adaptation of this text, and requires similar investigation to that I have undertaken for *The Tempest* (revealing it to be an amalgamation of Dryden and Davenant's, Shadwell's, and Rowe's 1709 versions). Johnson's interest in plays as they were performed confirms Hume's belief that, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Shakespeare's reputation was based on his presentation in performance. The reissue of Johnson's works by later publishers suggests that for some European readers at least, a similar understanding of Shakespeare – as defined by the popularity of his texts in the theatre, however they were adapted – persisted across the eighteenth century. Johnson's work as an editor as well as a publisher certainly warrants further enquiry, and one can be sure that close reading of almost any of his publications will reveal further surprising editorial interventions. Modern editors of any of those plays that were published by Johnson might gather valuable insights by looking at Johnson's editions. Johnson's close editorial work might also indicate the tip of an iceberg pointing to other publishers outside the London trade

undertaking their own major textual revisions, and offering radically different texts to those given in the 'principal' editions (generally first editions, or edited 'works' editions).

My survey of extant copies of Johnson's plays – as collections of first-series plays, as collections of second-series plays, as other large collections that differ significantly from Johnson's design, and as singletons or nonce collections – tells us an enormous amount about why people were interested in Johnson's works, as well as who these readers were and where they encountered the texts. What is perhaps most significant is the huge take-up of *Best English Plays* on the continent, since previous critics have only identified the British market for Johnson's works. Presumably because they lacked other options of plays to buy, readers in Europe tended to bind Johnson's plays in relatively extensive collections containing only Johnson editions. British readers, by contrast, often made smaller collections and mixed his plays freely with other, insular piracies, and with editions by the legitimate copyright holders; this shows that they saw Johnson's (internationally-produced) texts as an integral part of the British market in books. Some wealthy readers bought Johnson's *Collection* and gave it extremely prestigious bindings. This reveals the high status of his collection amongst elite customers whom we might have expected to be more interested in expensive London-produced works editions. On the other hand, my identification of copies of Johnson's plays in their original trade covers, or in cheaply-bound nonce collections with other pirate editions, shows that he also supplied a less wealthy sector of the market. Johnson's catering to such customers affords an opportunity for the same kind of investigation into geographically peripheral or economically disadvantaged readers of plays as is undertaken by Towsey on readers of Enlightenment texts. Many of Johnson's plays carry the ownership marks of female readers, who are also apparent in Johnson's correspondence with Mackie, and in the audience implied by his Dedication (although the high status of Princess Caroline also differentiates her from most female readers). Although the role of women as readers is largely absent from criticism surrounding the Tonsons' Shakespeare works editions, important studies by Hackel, Smith, Tadmor and Brewer, amongst others, show how women's reading can be recovered from ownership marks and other markings in or on books. A more detailed study of the provenance history of Johnson's corpus than I undertake here could pave the way for a new history of women's access to and reading of drama in print in the eighteenth century. An even fuller investigation of individual copies of Johnson's plays, as would be required by such a study, could also tell us a great deal more about Johnson's print runs and printing order, the proportions of his works sold in Britain or on the continent, and the proportion of texts sold as singletons as against those that were purchased alongside others of his works and collection

title pages. All of this would add significantly to our knowledge of the market for plays in the eighteenth century, and of Johnson's engagement with that market.

Ford suggested that some of Johnson's plays were reissued by later publishers. Although McMullin confirms this suggestion, no systematic enquiry into the reissue of Johnson's works has previously been undertaken. It is clear from my findings that there was a ready market for Johnson's plays in Europe across the eighteenth century, and that these were repackaged by Scheurleer, by Scheurleer in collaboration with the Londoners Robert Dodsley and James Brindley, by the anonymous publisher of *The Best Tragedie's and Comedie's*, and by Gottlob Richter, who also issued his own *A Collection of New Plays by Several Hands*, which is itself of unacknowledged importance to play publishing history (presenting plays and afterpieces together). *Tragedie's and Comedie's* is not recognised by existing bibliographies (such as *ESTC*), and Richter's resale of Johnson's works helps to explain their extraordinary prevalence in Germany, which is not noticed by other critics. The visibility of Johnson's *Collection* on the continent reveals a market for English-language drama that has been entirely ignored by critics of the reception of Shakespeare in Europe, and necessitates a major reappraisal of knowledge of English drama in the Netherlands and in Germany in the first half of the eighteenth century. Richter in particular, who is entirely absent from current histories of English drama in print, also demands far greater attention than I have had space to afford him here.

Grant and Milhous and Hume have provided compelling arguments for the influence of Johnson's *Collection* on the format of plays published in Britain. My study of publications with monograms that were influenced by that of Johnson has extended our knowledge of the circulation in Britain of his plays, not just amongst readers, but amongst other publishers as well. By tracing the potential means by which publishers might have encountered Johnson's work I have shown important points of sale (notably in Ireland) not visible from other sources. The imitation of Johnson's monogram also indicates that his publications must have been seen as a potential source of ideas by other members of the trade. Grant's certainty that Tonson reduced his standard dramatic works format from octavo to duodecimo in response to Johnson invites further comparison of their publications, and it seems that Tonson's introduction of his Shakespeare's Head device might also have been a response to competition from Johnson, and Johnson's own use of a printer's device. Johnson's influence on Darby's work was a direct consequence of his trade links with Darby (who sold Johnson's *Journal Literaire*), and Risk's emulation of both Tonson's and Johnson's devices reveals the comparable regard in which these publishers were held by Risk. The appearance of a monogram similar to Johnson's on

Thomas Lowndes' novels suggests that publisher rather than genre might actually be the most appropriate means of historicising publishing styles, despite the current separation of many histories of publishing into different genres. The monogram used by the Dodsleys was taken directly from Johnson's (following Robert Dodsley's association with Scheurleer in printing *The Roman Father*), and its use on *The Annual Register* represents a fundamental shift in the role of such devices – from being associated with a particular publisher, to identifying a series irrespective of its publisher. Overall, the prevalence of monograms in British publishing across the eighteenth century, against the lack of similar monograms in the preceding decades, suggests that the circulation of Johnson's plays in Britain was most probably responsible for the introduction of this continental practice into British publishing at this time.

Perhaps the most significant work that still needs to be undertaken on Johnson's *Best English Plays* is a more explicit and sustained comparison of this work with the plays and dramatic collections of English publishers across the eighteenth century. Milhous and Hume offer a comparison of plays contained in Johnson's *Collection* alongside the collections of later publishers, and to their minds the debt of these later collections to Johnson's is self-evident. Nevertheless, lacking the relevant research materials, Milhous and Hume omit a large number of plays by Johnson from their assessment of his works. An even more convincing history of dramatic collections across the eighteenth century is possible now that we *do* know the full scope of Johnson's *Collection*. If such a survey took account of the editorial standards and design elements (such as format and frontispiece devices) as well as the contents of these collections, and developed its understanding of reception from the material evidence of extant copies, this could afford us a new, popular history of drama in print, and one which is likely to be rooted in the scope, presentation and editorial strategies of Thomas Johnson's *A Collection of the Best English Plays*.

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