Abroad, in London, or within the smaller world of the University? Granted, McKitterick decided not to account for 'varying reactions of readers' to Cambridge books, but those hard-to-measure qualities of 'taste' and 'fashion' are as much part of the publishing business as paper supply or problems in capitalization. I suspect such issues will become increasingly central as the story moves closer to the present, and as publishers more overtly acknowledge the intangibles in their own records and correspondence.

The book is beautifully produced — far more exactly and attractively than many of the pre-1700 productions it discusses, as the standards of book production in England rarely paralleled those of the Continent. It is, however, printed on abnormally heavy paper and weighs not much less than a small slab of marble. Protected by a black and gold dust jacket and richly bound in black cloth stamped with maroon and gold, this book radiates material and institutional authority. Some readers may wish to attend carefully to this presentation and work out its implications for the meaning of a Cambridge University and its Press today.

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An Early London Printing House at Work brings together a series of studies in the eighteenth-century English book trade which were issued over a period of more than forty years. The studies are based upon the ledgers of William Bowyer, father and son, whose London printing house flourished from 1699 to 1777. (It continued into the nineteenth century under the direction of John Nichols, the younger Bowyer's partner.) All but one of the essays are by Keith Maslen who describes them in his introduction as 'parerga or outworks leading to the massive edifice of the Maslen-Lancaster edition of the Bowyer ledgers.' Publication of The Bowyer Ledgers: The Printing Accounts of William Bowyer Father and Son Reproduced with a Checklist of Bowyer Printing 1699-1777. A Commentary, Indexes, and Appendixes by The Bibliographical Society and The Bibliographical Society of America occurred in 1991. The present volume serves as a companion to that work.

The volume begins with Herbert Davis's pioneering paper on the Bowyer paper stock ledger, delivered at a joint meeting of The Bibliographical Society and the Oxford Bibliographical Society on 14 April 1951. Davis's purpose was to call attention to this relatively unknown historical source, for the paper stock ledger
had been in the Bodleian Library for some twenty years, and to demonstrate its significance as evidence for bibliographical work. He was responding as well to Fredson Bowers, who in his Principles of Bibliographical Description (1949) had pronounced that the book itself was the only reliable source of evidence for the analytical bibliographer and had relegated printers' and publishers' records to a 'collateral' and by implication subordinate level of evidence.

The issues raised by Davis were taken up by Maslen in 1951 when, with Davis's encouragement, he began to document systematically what was recorded in the paper stock ledger, then the only Bowyer ledger known to survive. Maslen identified the works listed in the ledger, corroborating its evidence with the physical evidence of the books themselves, particularly the ornaments and type faces used. This methodology enabled Maslen to solve one of the problems raised by Davis — that of shared printing of early editions of Robinson Crusoe. 'The Printers of Robinson Crusoe,' which appeared in The Library in 1952, was the first of many articles and notes on the Bowyers here reprinted. They reflect Maslen's efforts to come to terms with the historical evidence of the Bowyer archive, which was greatly expanded by the discovery in 1963 of three other ledgers in the library of the Grolier Club of New York. (Two of the Grolier ledgers contained customer accounts, while the third served as the master's check on the work done by the compositors and pressmen.)

Of the twenty-seven articles included in the volume, twenty-one were published prior to the publication of The Bowyer Ledgers, while four have appeared since then. The remaining two, a supplement to The Bowyer Ornament Stock and an account of the younger Bowyer's partnership with James Emonson, are published for the first time. The one publication of Maslen's on the Bowyers not included in the volume is The Bowyer Ornament Stock (1973). The essays, which are arranged chronologically by the original date of publication, have been brought up to date with annotations and emendations indicated by the use of curly brackets. References to The Bowyer Ledgers and the checklist of imprints which forms the core of that work are included. Finally, the contents of each essay are linked through a comprehensive index.

Brought together, the essays illuminate a wide range of issues regarding authorship, book production, and book distribution in eighteenth-century England. They provide insights into the internal operations of a major printing house, its relationship to other members of the trade in London and elsewhere, and its interaction with society at large. At the same time, they reflect the trends and controversies of bibliography in the second half of the twentieth century and point the way to further research in the Bowyer ledgers for scholars in the history of the book.

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