
G. Thomas Tanselle’s opening essay on “The Treatment of Typesetting and Presswork in Bibliographical Description” begins by suggesting approaches for determining typesetting (through damaged types and variable spellings), follows with comments on eight kinds of presswork evidence (headlines, pointholes, first- and second-forme impressions, typographical variations, impressions from materials not meant to print, press figures, variations in furniture width, and plating), and concludes with model descriptions. Andrew Galloway, in “Uncharacterizable Entities: The Poetics of Middle English Scribal Culture and the Definitive Piers Plowman,” compares Russell and Kane’s new edition of the Athlone C text of Piers Plowman with other versions (including one by A.V.C. Schmidt) in the context of other recent research on scribal culture, particularly Ralph Hanna’s Pursuing History. Joseph A. Dane and Alexandra Gillespie, in “Back at Chaucer’s Tomb—Inscriptions in Two Early Copies of Chaucer’s Workes,” argue that the history of how the inscriptions on Chaucer’s tomb have been transcribed in editions “provides a record of how information is transmitted and often manufactured in scholarly traditions.” Daniel W. Mosser, in “Corrective Notes on the Structures and Paper Stocks of Four Manuscripts Containing Extracts from Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales,” uses information about paper making in the fifteenth century (including watermarks in gatherings), combined with construction format details (folio, quarto, or a combination) and other kinds of physical evidence, to reconstruct collations for four paper manuscripts. Peter Rolfe Monds, in “The Diptych by the Rolin Master Detached from Autun, Bibliotheque Municipale, MS. 110 (S. 133),” traces the movement and mutilation of an historically important and valuable French missal executed in mid-fifteenth century-Paris. Adrian Weiss, in “Watermark Evidence and Inference: New Style Dates of Edmund Spenser’s Complaints and Daphnaida,” presents bibliographical
evidence supporting Jean R. Brink’s theory that Spenser and his publishers used the New Style Gregorian calendar for imprints and dedications, and “resolves a long-standing problem involving the 1590 imprint date of *Muiopotmos* and the printing sequence of the four sections of Spenser’s *Complaints.*” Laurie E. Maguire, in “The Printer and Date of Q4 *A Looking Glass for London and England,*” uses evidence from the printed text of the only remaining copy of Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge’s book (which lacks a title page), to identify the printer as William Jaggard and the date of publication as 1605. James E. May, in “A Joint-Purchase Agreement for Books in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts,” describes the social significance of a 1760 agreement between seven men for the purchase of the seven-volume edition of Smollett’s *A Complete History of England.*

David Chandler, in “‘A Sort of Bird’s Eye View of the British Land of Letters’: The *Monthly Magazine* and its Reviewers, 1796-1811,” suggests that the brief reviews of (nearly all) current publications, which were “among the most widely read and circulated critical judgements of the period,” were entrusted to a single reviewer (whom Chandler identifies). Nicholas A. Joukovsky, in “Leigh Hunt’s Contributions to the *Guide,*” identifies signed essays, unnoted by Hunt’s bibliographers, published in “a cheap weekly newspaper that ran from 22 April 1837 to 1 April 1838.” Gillian G.M. Kyles, in “Alteration of Leading within Editions,” explains that publishers changed the spacing between lines in order “to bring out a book in several forms,” and offers several examples, ranging from Pope’s *Dunciad* of 1728 (originally a duodecimo, reimposed as an octavo), to the practice at Warner Press, in Anderson, Indiana (where smaller editions were created by removing the leading, repaging the type, and transferring it to regular formes). Arthur Sherbo, in “The *Cambridge Review,*” notes that *The New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* has neglected to include citations to *The Cambridge Review,* and attempts to resurrect interest in it by identifying uncollected poems by major writers, noteworthy letters to editors, reviews of important books, essays on earlier writers, and various unrecorded critical discussions. David L. Vander Meulen and G. Thomas Tanselle, in “A System of Manuscript Transcription,” recommend the use of (1) words or symbols to describe what is found in a manuscript, (2) either a linear (“inclusive”) text or appended notes (“clear” text), and (3) a forward or backward chronological arrangement; and give detailed examples for describing alterations (cancellations and additions). G. Thomas Tanselle, in
“Bowers’s *Principles at Fifty,*” mentions recent scholarship and suggested revisions, and praises the work’s “enduring vitality.” David L. Vander Meulen, in “Revision in Bibliographical Classics: ‘McKerrow’ and ‘Bowers,’” examines the publishing history of McKerrow’s *Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students* and Bowers’s *Principles of Bibliographical Description,* identifying specific changes in their texts.


After handling early books for more than half a century, two New York antiquarian book dealers present stories surrounding thirty books. The imprints range in date from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, and vary in country of origin. For example, in the section on sixteenth-century books, the authors describe discovering a first edition of *Heron Mechanicus* (1580) containing a woodcut illustration of the Strasbourg Clock constructed in 1354, and giving the book to a great admirer of the Strasbourg Clock in lieu of payment for repairing Rostenberg’s grandfather clock. Another story tells about seeking and finding sixteenth-century European books that were known and unknown as sources used by Shakespeare.

Among the stories about seventeenth-century books is that of a French pamphlet entitled *La Dissipation De La Flotte Espagnole, commande par le Marquis de Sainte Croix* (1634), which, in its description of the minute details of the sunken Spanish Armada’s armaments, personnel, food, and supplies, is judged as an important early example of the work of “a pamphleteer who was using the past to warn and serve the present.” In “Louis XIV’s Playing Cards” we read about how, after passing over “year after year” a volume containing two series of playing cards (beautifully illustrated with French monarchs) used by the child king, the authors finally succumbed to purchasing it from a French bookshop, exhibited it at the New York Antiquarian Book Fair in 1975, and promptly sold it to the Folger Shakespeare Library.

In the section on eighteenth-century books, Rostenberg describes her early encounters with the staff of the J.P. Morgan Library, beginning with the library’s purchase of *Robert the Deuyll: A Metrical*