

FRATRES IN MALO: or Tim. Bobbin's Rap at the PYRATES.⁴⁰



Where is the man who sees this motley crew
Would judge them brethren on the nicest view
Yet so it is—; the some look wondrous prim,
They're thieves alike; and all have robb'd poor Tim.
Now since the partial Law no man relieves
Against these Pyrates, tho' the worst of Thieves,
Tim weeping takes his Room; resolv'd to sue,
And in's own Court, be Judge, and Witness too.
First Preston's Stuart heads the pilf'ring Troop:
His Bro of London stands the next it's Group:
Which is the better man, or whether's worse
There's none can tell me—but secure your Purse.
As for the first, could Higginson but tell:
Or Peggy blazon what she knows too well,

Mankind would shun him; converse they'd refrain,
And brand his forehead for a second Cain.
Mark brazend Finch of Wigan how he stands
With Bandyhewit in his pilf'ring bands;
This man damn'd Stuart as a Rogue in Chief,
Then hastens home—and dubs himself a Thief.
See Hitch and Haws, two men of great repute;
By pilf'ring thrive like Caledonian Bute;
Nor do they care from whom, or how it comes;
These rob for trifles, that for mighty sums.
Then Bankrupt Scolfield, Middlewich's squire,
Would thrive like Hitch; grew high as Haws, or higher
But he, like Phaeton, fell heels o'er head,
And lyes it's Cave of Poverty, for dead.

Next dirty Eyres of Warrington appears;
He fears no Hemp—nor trembles for his ears:
In bugger-mugger lives as Wizzard black,
Carring poor Tim, and Meary on his Back,
This makes him grunt—and Tim's stiff bridle tires:
Which suits them all, as well as nibbling Eyres.
Last northern Smith chas'd from the Lowland Glens
For B-r-ry and s-l-ng Geese and Hens
Comes fidging on—scratching his Yuky arm,
In robbing Sootherons swears, there is no harm:
Sets up in Halifax, Pyrates his Books,
Dress'd up by Edinburgh and Glasgow Cooks;
And like your Chimney-sweep doth never blush
But Pyrates on, nor values Hemp a Rush:

And in his Once, twice, thrice; its just a going;
Prefers a Sixpence to a man's undoing:
Yet still this Saint o'th Kirk with Looks demure,
Lets fly his Gold for private Room and W—e.
Now if the Pythagorean System's true,
The time may come that we these Rogues may view:
Some as Chase Horses sweating in bad roads
Whipped hard by Authors, and prick'd on by Goats:
Some as Scotch Pedlars with great heavy Packs
Of beggarly Poets riding on their backs:
Others in cunning pilf'ring Foxes Furrs,
Hunted by Writers in the shape of Curs.
All these eight Saints for Tim may make a float,
Wast him o'er Styx, and cheat old Charon's Boat;
And when on shore bear him on Palaguins
In sweat and toil to balance former sins.

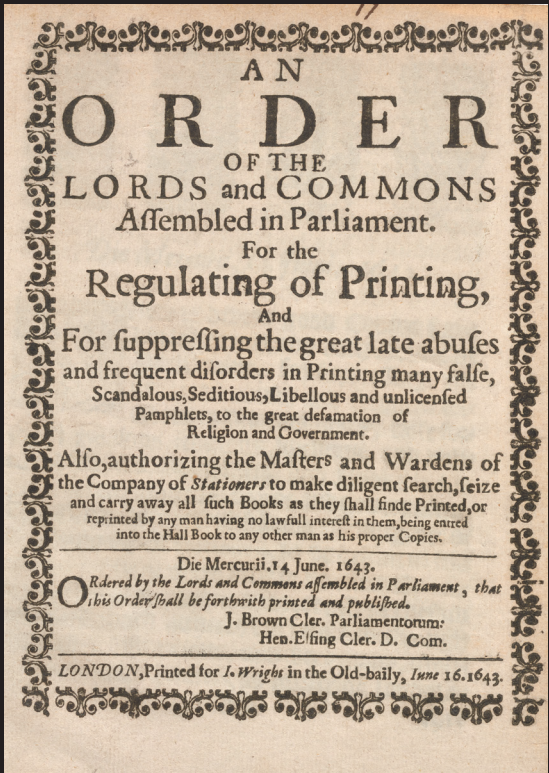
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Pirates of the Press: Case Studies in the Prehistory of Copyright

The Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

18 September—18 December 2015

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Curated by
Adam V. Doskey and
Lori Humphrey Newcomb

LIST OF ITEMS

ALDUS MANUTIUS AND JOHN WOLFE

- [1] Juvenal and Persius. *Satires*. Venice: Aldus Manutius, August 1501. IUA07360
- [2] Juvenal and Persius. *Satires*. [Lyon: Balthasar de Gabiano, ca. 1504] IUA07361
- [3] Niccolò Machiavelli. *Il prencipe*. Palermo [i.e. London]: Appresso gli heredi d'Antoniello degli Antonielli [i.e. John Wolfe], 1584. 853M18 Od1584
- [4] Giambattista della Porta. *De furtivis literarum notis*. [London]: Cum privilegio Neapoli, apud Ioa. Mariam Scotum [ie. John Wolfe], 1563 [i.e. 1591] Baldwin 3310 and Baldwin 3311
- [5] Giambattista della Porta. *De furtivis literarum notis*. Naples: Apud Ioa. Mariam Scotum, 1563. 001.5436 P83d
- [6] Georg Willer. *Collectio in unum corpus omnium librorum hebraeorum, graecorum, latinorum necnon germanicè, italicè, gallicè, & hispanicè scriptorum*. Frankfurt am Main: Ex officina typographica Nicolai Bassaei, 1592. IUA00946

SHAKESPEARE AND THE ‘PAVIER’ QUARTOS

- [7] William Shakespeare. *The excellent history of the merchant of Venice*. [London]: Printed by J. Roberts [i.e. by William Jaggard for Thomas Pavier], 1600, [i.e. 1619] 822.33 P3 1619

What do book pirates steal? Unlike buccaneers who plunder treasure from travelers, pirates of the press seize reprinting rights from other publishers.

In the prehistory of copyright, printers and booksellers sometimes navigated the dangerous waters of intellectual property by selling popular titles under false pretenses. In the British Isles, pirates operated even though London’s Worshipful Company of Stationers tried to closely guard booksellers’ privileges to print, known as ‘copies.’ Raids on the English book trade escalated until 1709, when a royal statute rescued writers and printers by arguing that ‘copyright’ accrued always from a work to its author. The 1709 Copyright Act became a landmark in literary history and international property law, although it never entirely stopped piracy, especially across regional and national boundaries. The problem resurfaces today: as global media companies amass rights formerly held by authors, book pirates trawl digital seas.

Our exhibition sails the trade routes of early modern England and beyond, exploring the colorful lives of certain nefarious booksellers, the various means of identifying piracies, and the lasting impact of piracy on literary authorship and intellectual property law.

This journey begins on the Continent at the beginning of the sixteenth century, when French printers imitated the beautiful Venetian imprints of Aldus Manutius, using counterfeits of his typefaces to produce Europe’s first print piracies. We then see such sharp practices imitated by London publisher John Wolfe, who sells

- [8] *A Yorkshire tragedie. Not so new, as lamentable and true*. [London]: Printed [by William Jaggard] for T[homas] P[avier], 1619. IUA13306

- [9] William Shakespeare. *Mr. William Shakespear's comedies, histories, and tragedies*. London: Printed for H. Herringman, E. Brewster, and R. Bentley, 1685. IUQ00008

PLAGIARIZING A PIRATE

- [10] Henry Manwayring. *A briefe abstract, exposition, and demonstration of all termes, parts, and things belonging to a shippe and the practick of navigation*. [England, 1626] Pre-1650 MS 0211
- [11] Charles Johnson. *A general history of the pyrates, from their first rise and settlement in the island of Providence, to the present time*. London: Printed for, and sold by T. Warner, 1724. 823 D36G 1724a
- [12] Charles Johnson. *General history of the robberies and murders of the most notorious pirates*. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1926. IUA15098

REGULATING PRINT IN ENGLAND

- [13] Church of England. *Injunctions given by the Queenes Majestie, Anno Dom[ini] 1559: The first yeere of the raigne of our Soveraign Lady Queene Elizabeth*. [London: Printed by assignment of Robert Barker, 1600] IUA02844
- [14] England and Wales. Court of Star Chamber. *A Decree of Starre-Chamber concerning printing. Made the eleventh day of July last past*. London: Robert Barker, printer, and by the assigns of John Bill, 1637. 343.420998 G798d

Italian titles under false imprints to buyers in England and on the Continent. Lord Burghley, spymaster and chief advisor to Queen Elizabeth, used Wolfe to spread political propaganda throughout Europe.

By the early seventeenth century, English publishers are pirating books by English authors; at least one of them a pirate himself. Printers Thomas Pavier and William Jaggard deliberately reprinted a series of Shakespearean plays under false imprints, confirming the playwright’s rising value.

Ironically, a few years later Jaggard produces the monumental *First Folio* of Shakespeare, with each of the thirty-six plays acquired legitimately. Many of the plays were transcribed from manuscripts by scrivener Ralph Crane, whom we also find here copying out manuscripts of an early dictionary of nautical terms written by sometime real-life pirate Henry Manwayring. John Milton, too, sailed close to the wind by publishing his own work without authority, and then becoming a censor of others’ works in the turbulent times of the English Civil War.

After reviewing the high points of English book-trade legislation, we end up at the Copyright Act of 1709. Yet piracy is unstemmed; by the late eighteenth century, the caricaturist known as ‘Tim Bobbin’ sketched a “rap at the pyrates” all over Great Britain who had sold eight different knockoff editions of his best-selling book on Lancashire local color. In the end, no single law could hold unscrupulous characters from the high seas of bookselling.

- [15] England and Wales. Parliament. *An order of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament. For the regulating of printing, and for suppressing the great late abuses and frequent disorders in printing many false, scandalous, seditious, libellous and unlicensed pamphlets, to the great defamation of religion and government*. London: Printed for J. Wright, 16 June 1643. 343.420998 En342o 1643

JOHN MILTON AND WILLIAM PRYNNE

- [16] Charles II, King of England. *By the King. A proclamation for calling in, and suppressing of two books written by John Milton; the one intituled, Johannis Miltoni Angli pro populo Anglicano defensio, contra Claudii Anonymi aliàs Salmasii, Defensionem regiam; and the other in answer to a book intituled, The pourtraicture of His Sacred Majesty in his solitude and sufferings. And also a third book intituled, The obstructors of justice, written by John Goodwin*. London: John Bill and Christopher Barker, printers, 1660. IUZ00005
- [17] John Milton. *Ioannis MiltonI Angli pro populo Anglicano defensio, contra Claudii Anonymi, aliàs Salmasii, Defensionem regiam*. London [i.e. Amsterdam]: Typis du Gardianis [i.e. Elzevir], 1651. 821M64 P23 1651⁶ cop.2
- [18] [Warrant to search the study and chamber of William Prynne in Lincoln's Inn, London, 1650 June 25] Pre-1650 MS 0168
- [19] William Prynne. *The humble petition of William Prynne, late exile and close prisoner in the Isle of Jersey*. [England, c.1640-1646] Pre-1650 MS 0190



DESCRIPTION OF “FRATRES IN MALO: OR TIM BOBBIN’S RAP AT THE PYRATES”

In this cartoon and poem, John Collier delineates two “human passions:” the greed of book pirates, shown parading out of a book shop with their ill-gotten bundles of printed pages, and the grief of the legitimate author, in the upper right-hand corner, headed for bed in frustration. That pirated author is Collier himself, whose first great success as a humor writer, *A View of the Lancashire Dialect, or, Tummus and Mary*, after debuting in 1746, was pirated by publishers all over Great Britain. Collier's complaint indicates how openly book pirates functioned even after the Copyright Act of 1709. Here, the names of the culprits are legible on the packages, while miniature figures of the country folk “Tummus” and “Meary” appear on the back of the pirate at center front.

DETECTING AND DOCUMENTING PIRACY

- [20] Katherine Philips. *Poems*. London: Printed by J[ohn] G[rismond] for Rich. Marriott, 1664. 821 P53p
- [21] Katherine Philips. *Poems*. London: Printed by J[ohn] M[acock] for H. Herringman, 1667. 821 P53p 1667
- [22] John Suckling. *Fragmenta aurea*. London: Printed for Humphrey Moseley, 1658. 821 Su1 1658
- [23] *The wits, or, Sport upon sport. In select pieces of drollery, digested into scenes by way of dialogue*. London: Printed for Henry Marsh, 1662. 822.08 W782

COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1709 AND AFTERMATH

- [24] Great Britain. *An act for the encouragement of learning, by vesting the copies of printed books in the authors or purchasers of such copies, during the times therein mentioned*. [London: Printed by the assigns of Thomas Newcomb, and Henry Hills, deceas'd, 1710] Q.655.642 G798a
- [25] Tim Bobbin, pseudonym of John Collier. *Human passions delineated in above 120 figures, droll, satyirical, and humourous*. Manchester: Printed and published by John Heywood, 1773. Q.741 C693h

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