

Chapter 2: The booktrade in Dublin and London and their book-collectors.

The changes which occurred in political life in Ireland from the late seventeenth century until 1723 can also be mirrored in its trade in books. Just as Irish politics was shaped by its relationship to Britain, Dublin's booktrade both gained and lost by English legislation. Here, the changes which occurred in the Dublin trade will be examined, the effects of the King's Printer's Patent, the implications of the Copyright Act and the growth in the trade which was established from the beginning of the eighteenth century. London's book regulations will also be briefly discussed. Finally, as a means of comparison and introduction to Butler's own collection other collectors of his time will be analysed. The characteristics of their bookbuying will be sketched as well as the contents of their libraries and the destination of their collections following their deaths.

In the years of Theophilus Butler's early childhood, Dublin's trade in books was a relatively small industry. In the 1660s only one printer was actively working in the capital.⁵² The reason for this lies in the monopoly of the King's Printer's Patent. Established in 1604, the patent effectively gave exclusive rights to one man for the printing, binding and selling of books in Ireland. Permission could be given to other binders and booksellers to trade but only under licence from the King's Printer. The 1609 patent issued to John Franckton set the standards of what material could be published by the King's printer for the next century. By this, authority was given to print official publications, grammars, the Bible, Acts of Parliament and all other books which are 'printed and sold by any printers or booksellers in England'.⁵³ From the 1660s the Crook family was to dominate the Dublin printing trade. In 1660 London Stationer, John Crook received the patent. On his death, his widow, Mary, with her brother Benjamin Tooke, continued the monopoly and was succeeded by her son, Andrew in 1685. Andrew is mentioned in the *Dublin Scuffle* and is thanked by Dunton for his 'extraordinary civility'. The result of such a monopoly in Dublin was the importation of English books and the limitation of local printing. As

⁵² Pollard, Mary, 'Control of the Press in Ireland through the King's Printer's Patent 1600 -1800' in *Irish Booklore* Vol 4 No. 2, (Belfast, 1980), p 79

⁵³ Pollard, 'Control of the Press in Ireland through the King's Printer's Patent 1600 -1800', p 80 > *ibid* p 80 *delete*

a means of establishing the trends of the time, Mary Pollard examined the daybook of Samuel Helsham, a Dublin bookseller in 1685. On the basis of Helsham's stock in that year she found that 75% of his stock was English, while only 20% was Irish, the other 5% originating from the continent.⁵⁴ John Dunton's auction of 1698 also gives further indication of the inadequacy of the Dublin trade in this time. He explicitly writes that it is his intention to encourage learning in Ireland and notes that Ireland does not have books at moderate rates.⁵⁵ Challenges, though, were to arise to the monopoly in Dublin in the late seventeenth century. Thomas Bladen, the son of William Bladen who had held the King's patent under Charles I, continued to run his father's printing house in the 1670s and 1680s despite Mary Crook's monopoly of the privilege. He was to continue to challenge her trade for a further thirteen years. Joseph Ray was also openly involved in book production from the 1680s onwards. Ray, a freeman of the Company of Stationers in London, had arrived in Dublin in 1680 to set up a printing house. In response to efforts by the Crooks to curtail his production, he claimed that their monopoly covered only those named texts in the 1609 patent and that one printer was not enough to meet the demand for books in the capital at this time, 'there being of late more Books wanting in this Kingdome than the Complainants have bin able to print'.⁵⁶ In practice at least, the monopoly established by the King's Printer's Patent at the beginning of the century had by its end been brought to an end.

The Dublin book industry expanded enormously in the years 1700 to 1723. This was mainly due to two factors, a growth in the demand for books in the capital and by the easing of English legislation in Ireland. From 1663 to 1701 the capital's population had almost doubled from forty thousand to seventy seven thousand.⁵⁷ With such growth it is unsurprising that some increase in the demand for printed literature was experienced. This demand was increasingly met by the printing of texts locally rather than their importation from England. Indeed, as early as 1700 there were six printers working in Dublin.⁵⁸ Dublin trade, though, was still considered small

⁵⁴ Pollard, Mary, *Dublin's Trade in Books 1550-1800*, (Oxford, 1989). p 54

⁵⁵ Dunton, *Dublin Scuffle*, p 8

⁵⁶ Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, p 71

⁵⁷ Pollard, *Irish Booklore*, p 90

⁵⁸ Pollard, *Irish Booklore*, p 90

bid., p 90

in comparison to London. The Licensing Act was, therefore, considered unnecessary for Ireland and was allowed to lapse in 1695. Instead the press was controlled by the persecution for libel under common law. Similarly, in 1709 the Copyright Act was passed in England but not in Ireland. The act was put in place in order to offer legal protection to literary property in Britain. It declared that the author should possess exclusive copyright for fourteen years and if still alive after that period for another fourteen years. Texts could not be reprinted in the country in which copyright was established without permission. For Ireland the lack of its application meant that any printer could legitimately reprint any publication printed in England. Such a practice only became piracy when 'offered for sale in any other country where copyright to the work could be legally established'.⁵⁹

What were the effects of such legislation and the growth in demand for books on the Dublin book trade? With Irish authors unprotected from piracy in Ireland, it is no surprise that many chose to publish in Britain first. William King, for instance, always published his works in London. London was also a better market for building literary success for an unknown Irish author, its literary reputation far exceeded Dublin's at the time. Apart from sermons and pamphlets, then, Dublin printers had little original material to publish. London reprints provided the majority of the Dublin printer's output. Such texts were guaranteed a wide general sale. Of the texts published at the time ~~it is~~ titles such as *Don Quixote* and Miller's *Gardiner's Dictionary* which proved to be the steadiest sellers.⁶⁰ Dublin booksellers could also sell such texts at a cheaper rate than their English counterparts.⁶¹ They did not have to pay for copyright and the heavier taxes paid by English printers on paper further cut their comparative overheads. Dublin printers also used inferior paper, printed fewer copies and above all used a smaller format than the original. That the Dublin book trade was still comparatively smaller, though, and was still characterised by caution can be seen in the practice of subscription. By this, a number of booksellers would commit to selling a text before it was printed, thereby, limiting the risk incurred

⁵⁹ Phillips, James W., *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin 1670 -1800*, (Dublin 1998). p 107

⁶⁰ Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, p 163

⁶¹ Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, p 132 > *ibid.*, p.132

by all. In Butler's collection many of the texts' imprints contain the names of several booksellers, sometimes up to five or six, in both Dublin and London publications.

The effects of the growth of the Dublin trade on London-Dublin relations were mixed. Some in the London book trade complained of the undercutting of their market. In a letter dated 8 April 1702 King notes his printer, Mr. Clavell's warning that care should be taken:

'yet the printers there (Ireland) will strike off and send over, whether correct or incorrect, such number of copies as may spoile his market here'.⁶²

Complaints were also made that London had lost Dublin as a market due to the absence of the application of English legislation. Yet, this does not appear to be the case. Between 1700 and 1780 £92,000 worth of books were imported from London.⁶³ Those books which were too expensive to be reprinted in Dublin or those which would only guarantee a limited market still provided some scope for English importation. Some co-operation also seems to have existed between the two capitals. There is evidence of subscription by booksellers in both London and Dublin to the one publication. Indeed as early as 1682 Joseph Ray published an edition of Richard Laurence's *The Interest of Ireland* for both London and Dublin booksellers.⁶⁴

London's trade in this time is also characterised by the curtailing of monopoly and the emergence of competition. The period following the Restoration coincides with the beginning of the decline of the Stationers Company and the King's Printer' Patent. The Stationers Company was essentially a London guild of printers, booksellers and bookbinders which originated in the fourteenth century. In 1557 it had been granted a royal charter to control scandalous, heretical or unlicensed books. No one was allowed to print unless he belonged to the company or held a licence by royal patent. Furthermore in 1586 a Star Chamber decree was passed whereby no one was allowed to set up a printer except within London (and therefore a member of the Stationers Company) or the universities of Oxford or Cambridge. The 1637 Licensing Act ordered that all

⁶² Simeon King, Charles(ed), *A Great Archbishop of Dublin*, (London, 1906). p 45

⁶³ Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, p 156

⁶⁴ Phillips, James W., *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin 1670 - 1800*, (Dublin, 1998). p 108

books and pamphlets should be lawfully licensed before being entered into the registry of Stationers Company. In the early seventeenth century it was gradually realised that there were more advantages in securing licences for classes of books rather than the individual texts. At this time the Stationers Company gained almost exclusive rights to the most valuable licenses, almanacs, prayer books and grammar books, thereby, further increasing its power. The Stationers Company's position in London was similar to the King's Printer in Ireland in that it held a virtual monopoly on official publications yet unlike the Dublin patent which was issued only to an individual or a partnership of individuals the company was made up of a group of stationers competing against one another.

In the 1660s the position of the Stationers Company began to change. From 1664 it was no longer responsible for the search and seizure of unlicensed printing. Instead the position of Surveyor of the Imprimacy and Printing Press was created to do so. The stock of almanacs and grammar books which the company had previously relied on for profit also declined in value. The company had not obtained licence to texts of a more innovative nature and as public taste changed the company increasingly lost to the ever increasing competition of printers of serials and popular literature. In 1693 the Press Restriction Act which had put an end to all provincial printing was allowed to lapse, further increasing the competition the company faced. Printers were now setting up in such places as Bristol, Shrewsbury and Exeter as well as the continuing work of the Oxford and Cambridge presses. During this time, the King's Printer's Patent in England had also continued to exist. He had the rights to print the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, statutes and proclamations, injunctions and acts of parliament and also served as printer to the House of Lords. In 1675 Thomas Newcombe and Henry Hills held the patent. They were followed by Thomas Newcombe II in 1691, then Charles Bill and the executor to Thomas Newcombe. In 1710 Thomas Baskett succeeded to the patent. Just as in Dublin the King's Printer in England faced competition. Under William III the universities of Oxford and Cambridge gained the right to print the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, effectively breaking the Printer's monopoly.

‘The presence of book demand and its increasingly sophisticated nature is shown by the number of libraries formed by book collectors after 1700’.⁶⁵ Against the backdrop of these changes in the book trade substantial libraries were being formed by book collectors in Ireland. Of the most well known collectors of the time many appear to have an intellectual background. William Molyneux developed a collection of over 2,000 volumes. As well as a founder of the Dublin Philosophical Society Molyneux was known as a translator of Descartes and as a correspondent with the astronomer Flamsteed. William King was known as a historian, pamphleteer and philosophical writer as well as, at varying times, the Dean of Derry and Archbishop of Dublin. He was ‘one of a group of young professional men, academics and clergy who were all active in study and experimental in various branches of natural science’.⁶⁶ He, too, was a member of the Dublin Philosophical Society and contributed papers on the Loughs of Ireland and on seashells. Unsurprisingly, books on natural science figure strongly in both men’s collections. King’s catalogue even has a category dedicated to it. Other related topics in King’s collection include books on geography, maths and medicine. Archbishop Narcissus Marsh was also a member of the Dublin Philosophical Society and was a prolific writer on moral and scientific matters. Marsh’s library differs somewhat from King and Molyneux in that it was intended for public use. The majority of the collection, though, comes from four private libraries, Marsh’s own, Stillingfleet, Bouhereau and Stearne. Mathematical books were of particular interest to Marsh and his collection includes Newton’s *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*. A small collection of botanical and natural history books are also included in the collection and appear to be aimed at a specialised audience. Medical books on chemistry, surgery and anatomy were collected by Dr. Bouhereau and were annotated by him throughout.⁶⁷

see change

see change

Books imported from the continent appear to be a strong characteristic of the early eighteenth century book collector. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 some French Huguenots used Ireland as an asylum. It was from this group that the Dublin sellers of

⁶⁵ Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, pp 33
⁶⁶ Carpenter, Andrew, *Archbishop King and Dean Swift*, (Unpublished Thesis, Dublin, 1970). p 63
⁶⁷ McCarthy, Muriel, *All Graduates and Gentleman . Marsh's Library*, (Dublin, 1980). pp 171 -178

degree?

foreign books emerged. One of the most important was William Binauld who worked in Dublin in the early eighteenth century. A catalogue of his books sees his specialisation in French and Latin texts.⁶⁸ King used a Huguenot refugee, Le Jau, to obtain texts from the continent. Some of the books he gathered for King were texts printed in Paris, Rotterdam and Amsterdam and include such titles as *Panegyriques Et Autres Sermons* by Valentin Esprit Flechier and *Histoire Chronologique E'Espagne* by Juan de Mariana.⁶⁹ The Duke of Ormonde's library also contains a vast collection of French works including Bodin's *Republique*. In Bouhereau's collection writings of French divines and reformers appear including works by Jurieu and Fenelon.⁷⁰ Fiction also had its place in the book collector's library. The Duke of Ormond collected ~~fourty~~ ^{forty} two volumes of plays while King collected poetry and oratories. In Maximilian Novack's work on the library of Dr. Francis Bernard, sold in 1698, he found he had almost every kind of fiction including imaginary voyages, novellas and learned works. In a catalogue of libraries of a divine, lawyer and physician sold in 1722 he also found Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, *Crawford's Novels*, *Persian Tales* and *Turkish Tales*.⁷¹

Religious and political works were a characteristic of many collections of this time. In Marsh's library alone scores of Bibles appear written in a number of languages such as Dutch, French, Greek, German and Irish. Commentaries on the Bible and prayer-books also appear. Works on religious controversies are also represented ~~too~~ with books by such writers as Erasmus, Luther and Calvin. Though none of the collectors who contributed to Marsh's library would have held Catholic sympathies works appear by Catholic writers such as Thomas More.⁷² Topics covered in political works included the divine right of kings, the Act of Uniformity and the threat of Catholic plots. Books on travel are prominent ~~too~~ with three hundred appearing in total.

⁶⁸ Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, p 157

⁶⁹ Matteson, R.S., 'Francis Le Jau's Letters to William King 1695 - 1704' in *Long Room*, (Dublin, 1978). p 14

⁷⁰ McCarthy, *All Graduates and Gentleman*, p 170

⁷¹ Novak, Maximilian, 'Fiction and Society in the Early Eighteenth Century' in Swedenberg, H.T. (ed.), *England in the Restoration and Early Eighteenth Century. Essays on Culture and Society*, (Berkeley, 1972). p 62

⁷² McCarthy, *All Graduates and Gentleman*, p 166

Authors featured include Francois Bernier and the majority by far are those books written on travel to America.⁷³

It appears that London rather than Dublin provided the bulk of the books contained in these collections. Many Dublin scholars dealt with London booksellers directly or through a London based correspondent. William King used Moses Pitt for this purpose. Francis Le Jau also acted as an intermediary between London and Dublin for the Dublin book buyer. The high level of importation of books from London to Dublin in this period, though, means that the Dublin bookseller must have made some effort to satisfy the customer's need for specialised texts. There is no doubt that the London imprint provided a better standard of production than the Dublin counterpart. Though Dublin books were cheaper, their inferior paper and small format was unlikely to attract a collector wishing to increase the value of his collection. London editions tended to have a larger format and often had a lavish style with elegant binding, likely to increase in value with time. Book auctions, in both capitals, also provided a good means of increasing a collection. Many of Stillingfleet's books were bought at early auctions in England. Forty of the books which appear in his library had previously been owned by Edward Gwynn while much of his books relating to the history of the church and state originally came from Humphrey Dyson's collection.⁷⁴ Book auctions in Dublin were often held in coffee houses, the most popular being Patt's coffee-house or Dick's coffee-house on Skinner's Row. Dunton's *Dublin Scuffle* gives insight into the practice of the auction. His denial that he had placed setters in the auction in order to create high bids gives an indication that such a practice did exist at the time. He issued a catalogue before each auction to advertise his 'valuable pieces in Divinity, History, Philosophy, Law, Physics, Mathematics' etc.⁷⁵ Though much of the catalogue consists of general texts some such as Locke's *Of Humane Understanding* and the works of Shakespeare and Dryden would have provided some interest to the Irish book collector.

⁷³ McCarthy, *All Graduates and Gentleman*, p 200

⁷⁴ McCarthy, *All Graduates and Gentleman*, p 38

⁷⁵ Dunton, *Dublin Scuffle*, p 2

> ibid., p 38

The treatment and destinations of a collector's libraries following their death also display many similarities ^{at} in this time. Like Butler, King in his will stipulates that 'proper rules' be established for the 'management and preservation of the said library and books' and entreats the Bishop of Derry and his successors 'to take (that) care of them'. He also, like Butler, names those who he wishes to use the library

'for the use of the clergy and gentlemen of the said Diocess(Derry)'.⁷⁶

Most, if not all, of King's books later went to Theophilus Bolton, Archbishop of Cashel. Marsh also left instructions on how the library should be used. All librarians had to take an oath not to give away or lend any of the books and rules were established by Marsh for all readers in the library. Butler's was not the only collection to be donated to Trinity College in the course of the eighteenth century. In 1735 Dr. Claudius Gilbert presented his collection of over thirteen thousand volumes. In 1741 John Stearne's collection of printed books and manuscripts was given to the library. Nearer, to the time of the Butler donation was the collection of Edward Lhwyd. He died in 1709 and his valuable collection of manuscripts on early Ireland was bought by John Sebright. His heir, Thomas Sebright, donated the collection to the library in 1786.⁷⁷ When, though, was Theophilus Butler's own collection given to Trinity College? It is to this question which we now turn.

⁷⁶ Simeon King, Charles (ed), *A Great Archbishop of Dublin. William King D.D. 1650 -1729*, p 45

⁷⁷ Wheeler, Walter Gordon, *Libraries in Ireland Before 1855*, (Dublin, 1957). pp 72 -73