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Always Check the Endpapers

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Always Check the Endpapers

Abstract

Contextual essay about a previously unknown printed arithmetic table and a type specimen from Joseph Jackson both found in endpapers of manuscripts at Penn.

Keywords

Manuscripts, Ephemera, Book History, Print Specimens

Disciplines

History

Comments

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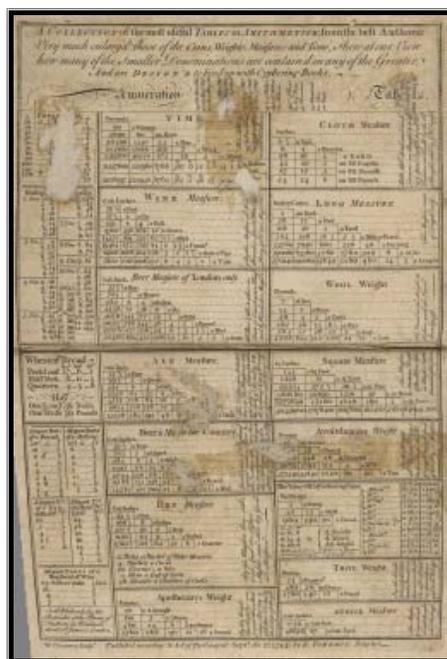
Nothing can more effectually contribute to the Cultivation & Improvement of a Country, the Wisdom, Riches, & Strength, Virtue and Piety, the Welfare & Happiness of a People, than a proper Education of Youth, by forming their Manners, imbuing

09
Thursday
JAN 2014

Always check the endpapers

POSTED BY MITCH FRAAS IN POSTS

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For years scholars (including many from Penn!) have reminded us that print and manuscript cultures are far from exclusive. Printed forms with handwritten additions, handwritten diaries within printed borders, printed books interleaved with as much manuscript as printed text, are just some examples of this inter-mixing. Despite this knowledge though, I'm always delighted to find print nesting within what we tend to describe as manuscript and vice versa. I was browsing through one of our eighteenth-century manuscript commonplace books (UPenn Ms. Codex 782) a few months ago trying to identify the text when I noticed several printed pieces pasted onto the endpapers and rear board of the manuscript. I snapped some pictures and moved on. Later, looking back at the picture and reading the text, I realized we had two remarkable and unique pieces of print.

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Welcome to Unique at Penn, part of the family of University of Pennsylvania Libraries blogs. Every week this space will feature descriptions and contextualization of items from the collections of the University of Pennsylvania Libraries. The site focuses on those materials held by Penn which are in some sense "unique" - drawn from both our special and circulating collections, whether a one-of-a-kind medieval manuscript or a twentieth-century popular novel with generations of student notes penciled inside.

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– UPenn Ms. Codex 782. [Rear pastedown.](#)

The first of these is a handy guide to arithmetic and weights and measures engraved by William Chinnery in 1744 [1]. It was “design’d to be bind up with Cyphering Books” to assist a scribe with difficult calculations and to serve as a reference. Given the dual content of this manuscript book, primarily a copied text of the Philosophical Transactions but with accounting leaves excised at the end, it’s possible that it was sold with the printed Chinnery sheet already pasted in.



– UPenn Ms. Codex 782, f.127r

An unrecorded engraved sheet doesn’t come around every day but I found myself even more fascinated by the second set of printed inclusions pasted in the manuscript. What first appeared as newspaper clippings turned out to be a typefounder’s advertisement or specimen. In the age of digital fonts and typesetting we often take for granted what a big deal a new type design could be in the hand-press era. In other words, type had to be physically created and designed mould by mould.

This particular type specimen comes from the type founder Joseph Jackson (1733-1792)

- January 2013
- December 2012
- October 2012
- September 2012
- August 2012
- July 2012
- June 2012
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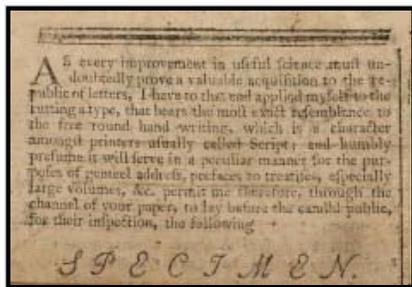
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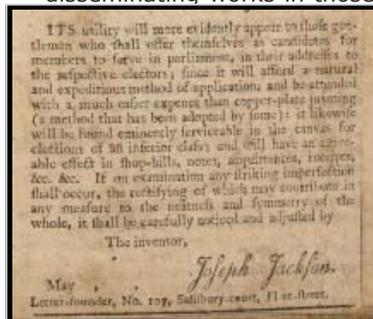
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who was especially known for his development of new typefaces to print Persian and Devanagari scripts, reflecting the growing interest in disseminating works in those

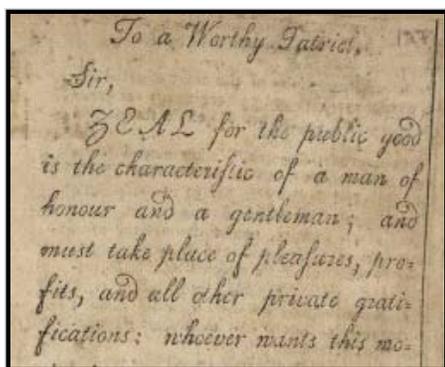
languages from the British territories in South Asia.



The CONSONANTS						
कै	कि	की	कु	कू	को	कौ
खै	खि	खी	खु	खू	खो	खौ
गै	गि	गी	गु	गू	गो	गौ

- Specimen of Devanagari type published by Joseph Jackson in 1785. [ESTC T193655](#). Cambridge University copy (ECCO).

The specimen pasted into the manuscript here at Penn, though not of one of Jackson's South Asian types is not in [James Mosley's list of British type specimens](#) and is otherwise unknown.



The specimen appears to be an advertisement for Jackson's new Scriptorial type which we might identify as cursive. It dates from sometime after 1773 as we know in that year, Jackson advertised that his "Scriptorial Doub. pic." was "Nearly finished" [2].

Likewise a contemporary observer notes in 1778 that "Mr Cottrel and Mr Jackson are both cutting new founts resembling the common round-hand of the English writing-schools" [3].

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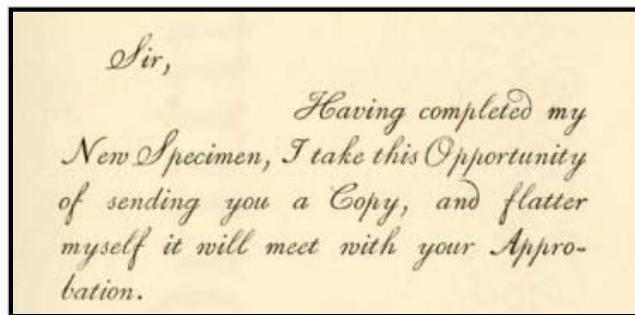


It's unclear to me the exact form this specimen took when it was distributed to the public. It's possible it was printed as a newspaper advertisement given the columnar layout but searching in likely newspapers for similar type specimens yields nothing promising. It may also have been distributed separately as a kind of ephemeral advertisement. Either way, it seems that the compiler of this particular manuscript took a special interest, perhaps as an attempt to copy the script modeled in Jackson's type [4]. This should serve as a reminder, always check those endpapers for great scraps of ephemeral printing!

[1] The colophon reads "W. Chinnery Sculpt. Publish'd according to Act of Parliament, Septe the 2d 1744 by R. Forrest. Price 6d." We also know Chinnery (1708-1791) from the engraving he did for a 1750 writing manual (ESTC T118619).

[2] Edward Rowe Mores, *A Dissertation Upon English Typographical Founders and Founderies* [originally 1778], (Oxford Bibliographical Society: Oxford, 1961), p.78

[3] Mores, p.32. When Jackson died in 1792 his type went to William Caslon who however seems to have advertised a different double pica script in 1798, see *A Specimen of Printing Types by Wm Caslon* (London, 1798), p.127 (ESTC N21767):



[4] For more on English writing manuals and engraved penmanship examples see Simran Thadani, *Penmanship in Print: English Copy-Books and their Makers, 1570-1763* (Ph.D. Diss. University of Pennsylvania Department of English, 2013).

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About Mitch Fraas

Mitch Fraas is the Scholar in Residence at the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts at the University of Pennsylvania Libraries. He is also the interim director of the Penn digital humanities forum. At Penn, Mitch works on a variety of projects cutting across general and special collections, with a special focus on digital humanities. He holds doctoral and master's degrees in history from Duke University and earned his bachelor's degree at Boston College. His doctoral dissertation examined the legal culture of British India in the 17th and 18th centuries, arguing for the existence of a unified early modern British imperial legal culture whether in Philadelphia, Bombay, or London.

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