

Galley Proofs

Treatises intended for the world, such as *Freedom of Will*, required extensive work to transition from manuscript to print, a process characterized by what scholars call the “performative” aspects of publication that establish the authenticity and authority of the writer. Edwards's early literary efforts were intended primarily for his listeners, but as he aged, he also sought a larger audience outside the parish bounds. Here is where the organon of Edwards's study was manifest.

The number of printers, like the availability of newspapers and periodical literature, was growing during the first half of the eighteenth century in British North America, in Massachusetts in particular, and in Boston most of all. Increasing transatlantic traffic and commerce propelled communication in political, economic, and cultural spheres. As scholars such as Frank Lambert have noted, the religious revivals too were no small spur to the increase in print outlets due to the thirst for news of the spread of “true religion” and to the even greater thirst for the volleys of vitriol launched by opposers and supporters of the movement against each other. Magazines devoted to revival news, such as the *Christian History*, also sprang up during this time.¹

It was in this climate of expanding print culture that Edwards became a desirable addition to any printer's stable of authors, whether in London, Edinburgh, Utrecht, Madgeburg, New York, or Boston, but especially the latter where the book trade was lively. The main booksellers' shops, clustered north and west of the Town House in Boston were those of Samuel Gerrish, Daniel Henschman, and Joseph Edwards.² Publishers, or those who assumed printing costs, included sellers as well as a range of infrequent or onetime sponsors. Printers in the city who operated during Edwards's lifetime included John Draper; John Rogers and Zechariah Fowle; Thomas Fleet; Samuel Kneeland and Timothy Green, who set up for business in 1718; and Bartholomew Green, John Bushell, and Bezoune Allen.³ While nearly all of these publishers and shops sold or printed something by Edwards, if he had a say in the choice of printer and promoter, he went with Kneeland and Green, who were generally supportive of moderate New Light writers like himself.⁴ In 1749 the partners separated, and Edwards stayed with Kneeland, using him for his major treatises.

However, that is not to say that he was always entirely pleased with Messrs. Kneeland and Green. Though there is an enduring image of Edwards as an ascetic untroubled by material things,

¹ On the proliferation of printers in the colonies and the Boston book trade, see Worthington Chauncy Ford, *The Boston Book Market, 1679–1700* (Boston, 1917), 62–64; Hugh Amory, *Bibliography and the Book Trades: Studies in the Print Culture of Early New England*, ed. David H. Hall (Philadelphia, 2005), 105–45; Hall, “Part 1. The Atlantic Economy in the Eighteenth Century,” in Amory and Hall, eds., *The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*, vol. 1 of *A History of the Book in America*, ed. Hall (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2007), 152–62, esp. 152–55; Mark Valeri, *Heavenly Merchandize: How Religion Shaped Commerce in Puritan America* (Princeton, N.J., 2010), 140–41. For discussions of the importance of religious revivals to the growth of the print industry, see Frank Lambert, *Inventing the “Great Awakening”* (Princeton, N.J., 1999), 113–14; Hall, “Atlantic Economy,” in Amory and Hall, *Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*, 156. On evangelical magazines, see Susan Durden, “A Study of the First Evangelical Magazines, 1740–1748,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 27, no. 3 (July 1976): 255–75; Susan O'Brien, “A Transatlantic Community of Saints: The Great Awakening and the First Evangelical Network, 1735–1755,” *American Historical Review* 91, no. 4 (October 1986): 811–32, esp. 826–28.

² Amory, “The New England Book Trade, 1713–1790,” in Amory and Hall, eds., *Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*, 314–46, esp. 325.

³ *Ibid.*, 320–21. See also Lawrence C. Wroth, *The Colonial Printer* (New York, 1931).

⁴ Citing the four most frequent publishers–printers by author: of 27 works by Edwards that we have surveyed, 16 were published by Samuel Kneeland and Timothy Green or by Kneeland alone, 4 by John Rogers and Zechariah Fowle, and 1 by Thomas Fleet, as compared to 51 works by Charles Chauncy that we have surveyed, of which 14 were published by Kneeland, 11 by Fleet, 8 by Rogers and Fowle, and 6 by John Draper.

his repeated and sustained concerns about the quality of his publications show that he had an aesthetic sense for the physical elements that went into printing and binding. Writing in the summer of 1754 to his close colleague Thomas Foxcroft, minister of First Church, Boston—who, interestingly enough, served as associate pastor to Edwards’s antirevival nemesis, Charles Chauncy—Edwards opined that Kneeland “binds the books poorly. The covers are so apt to warp that they will warp as they lie upon the table.”⁵ For his part, Kneeland had his complaints too, though he voiced them to Edwards’s associate Joseph Bellamy, not Edwards. In a letter from September 1749, for instance, the printer noted that “the Work,” meaning the *Humble Inquiry*, “exceeds very much what was at first proposed; and I have but very few who have subscribed for them.”⁶

Thomas Foxcroft, one of Edwards’s Boston associates, played an important role as Edwards’s on-the-spot intercessor with printers. Foxcroft had been physically disabled by an attack of paralysis in 1736, but he continued his ministerial duties as best he could, acting also as a literary agent of sorts, reviewing manuscript copy for Edwards, inserting changes, and supervising the printing process. For Edwards to have committed his manuscripts to Foxcroft must have been difficult, particularly after the less-than-ideal experience he had when he entrusted the publication of *A Faithful Narrative* to intermediaries, first to the Reverend Benjamin Colman of Boston in abridged form in 1736, then in full to the Reverend Isaac Watts and John Guyse of London. Writing to Watts in December 1736, Colman admitted that Edwards was “not altogether pleased with the liberty we have taken of so general an extract.”⁷ And there were errors in the copy. After the London edition appeared in 1737, Watts apologized for several mistakes—including the “blunder” of identifying Hampshire County as “New Hampshire” on the title page.⁸ The extant correspondence shows Foxcroft and Edwards working together most intensely in the period 1749 to 1754, from *An Humble Inquiry* to *A Careful and Strict Inquiry into Freedom of Will*.⁹ It is in the latter publication that Foxcroft’s role, long overlooked, was particularly instrumental. Edwards committed drafts of the treatise to Foxcroft, asking him to give his opinion. He also sent addenda, trusting Foxcroft to insert the passages where indicated, or where they seemed to fit best.

On Edwards’s behalf, Foxcroft monitored Kneeland’s work to insure the quality of the finished product. As to the size of the book—in this case the treatise on the will—Edwards wrote to Foxcroft in early March 1754, “I should prefer such a page as that of my answer to Mr. [Solomon] Williams,” meaning *Misrepresentations Corrected* of 1752, printed on octavo-sized pages, “rather than such a small page as you mention, less than a psalter. But yet, I should insist on good white paper and the printer’s best types.”¹⁰ Edwards also had his view on a particular

⁵ Edwards to Thomas Foxcroft, Dec. 20, 1754, in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 16, *Letters and Personal Writings*, ed. George S. Claghorn (New Haven, Conn., 1998), 644–55 (quotation, 16: 655). On bookbinding, see Hannah Dustin French, “Early American Bookbinding by Hand,” in *Bookbinding in America*, ed. Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt (Portland, Maine, 1941), 3–127, esp. 8–47.

⁶ Kneeland to Joseph Bellamy, Sept. 4, 1749, letter C85a, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards Online (WJEO)*, vol. 32, <http://edwards.yale.edu/research/browse>.

⁷ Benjamin Colman to Isaac Watts, Dec. 17, 1736, letter C48a, *WJEO*, vol. 32.

⁸ Watts to Colman, May 31, 1738, *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2d ser., 9 (February 1895): 359–62 (quotation, 360).

⁹ For example, Foxcroft supplied the appendix to *Humble Inquiry* (*The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 12, *Ecclesiastical Writings*, ed. Hall [New Haven, Conn., 1994], 326–48). Writing to Foxcroft in June 1752, regarding *Misrepresentations Corrected*, Edwards declared: “I should be glad that you would endeavor that this book may be printed in a pretty good paper and character, and may be printed correctly. . . . And if the bookseller can be agreed with to let me have a number for the copy, it would be pleasing. If not, I must go without.” Edwards to Foxcroft, Jun. 30, 1752, in *Works*, 16: 486–87 (quotation, 16: 486).

¹⁰ Edwards to Foxcroft, Mar. 6, 1754, *Works*, 16: 624–25 (quotation, 16: 625).

style of type, as well as new type: “With respect to the character, I should be glad the book might be printed in the best character Mr. [Samuel] Kneeland has, and that it should be done every way in as handsome a manner as may be. I think the character in which my answer to Mr. [Solomon] Williams is printed is better than that of my book on *Religious Affections*, but Mr. Hawley tells me that Mr. Kneeland has sent for new types; perhaps they will be better than any he now has.”¹¹

Once the initial typesetting was done, the printed sheets, or galleys, had to be checked. This was hardly a simple affair; during those periods when Edwards had to slug, or proofread word-for-word, the advance copy, we can picture the floor and every surface of his study covered with galley sheets and pages from his copy of the manuscript. A unique example of a corrected page proof from Edwards’s study, later incorporated into a sermon booklet, shows a minor emendation to a page in *Discourses on Various Important Subjects*—the deletion of a comma—that was followed in the finished imprint.¹² Writing to Foxcroft in June 1752 about the production of *Misrepresentations Corrected*, Edwards pleaded that “particular care may be taken that the printer don’t skip over a whole line as they sometimes do.”¹³ By December 1754 the long process of producing *Freedom of Will* was almost over; Edwards had proofs of the book in hand and, after reading them, wrote to Foxcroft that he had “sent an account of errata to Mr. [Samuel] Kneeland.”¹⁴

Despite all efforts, mistakes still appeared in the final version. As much as Edwards was concerned about the aesthetics of books, he was even more concerned, as a wordsmith, about the accuracy of language. Nearly all of his treatises contain an errata sheet (usually at the back), drawn up by him. The errata notice in the *Discourses*, for example, warns the reader of the misplacement of two paragraphs that had been sent after the book had gone to press. For official presentation copies of his publications, Edwards took pains to correct the copies himself. So the copy of *A Faithful Narrative* in gilt donated by Isaac Watts to Yale College and the copy of the *Discourses* donated by Edwards himself, now housed in Yale’s Beinecke Library, both have his handwritten corrections, including a rectification of that glaring “blunder” on the title page of *A Faithful Narrative*. Likewise, a copy of *True Grace Distinguished from the Experience of Devils*,

¹¹ Edwards to Foxcroft, May 24, 1753, *ibid.*, 16: 595–596 (quotation, 16: 596). Kneeland had been promising the arrival of a new set of type since 1749, when he ended his partnership with Green. Kneeland to Bellamy, Sept. 4, 1749, letter C85a, in *WJEO*, vol. 32. Gideon Hawley was the schoolteacher at the Stockbridge mission and later missionary to the Mashpee Indians on Cape Cod. Edwards’s wishes regarding size and type were basically heeded: both *Freedom of Will* and *Original Sin* were octavo (though the former was 1.4 cm and the latter .7 cm tall) and used the same font and pitch as *Misrepresentations Corrected* (the exception in *Original Sin* is the preface, containing a sketch of Edwards’s life [probably by Hopkins], which was printed in a larger pitch and prefixed to the volume after Edwards died).

¹² See manuscript sermon on Luke 12:35–36 (1742), containing the galley for page 206 of the *Discourses On Various Important Subjects*, as cited in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 10, *Sermons and Discourses, 1720–1723*, ed. Wilson H. Kimnach (New Haven, Conn., 1992), 117 n. 8. Another set of proofs, this one showing no corrections, is found in “History of Redemption,” bk. 1, in *WJEO*, vol. 31; these are printer’s galleys of Edwards’s and Bellamy’s prefaces to Bellamy’s *True-Religion delineated; or, Experimental Religion . . .* (Boston, 1750). At the bottom of page vi of his own preface (page 2 of the notebook), Edwards wrote “corrected,” and at the bottom of page vii from the author’s preface (page 15 of the notebook), he wrote “This a proof.”

¹³ Edwards to Foxcroft, June 30, 1752, in *Works*, 16: 486.

¹⁴ Edwards to Foxcroft, Dec. 20, 1754, *ibid.*, 16: 655.

possibly given by Edwards to a friend and now in the collections of the New York Historical Society, has the author's corrigenda.¹⁵

¹⁵ See also Edwards's personal working copy of *Discourses on Various Important Subjects* bound with *A Faithful Narrative* (Boston, 1738), with his handwritten corrections of errata. Historical Collection, Stockbridge Library Association, Stockbridge, Mass. For an online exhibit featuring the volume, see <http://edwards.yale.edu/node/924>.