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Tristram’s Marblings and Marblers

This article looks at some copies of the marbled pages in the first edition of Volume 3 of *Tristram Shandy*. The impetus for the research was a perverse interest in doing a collation of the marbled pages because they were supposed to be different, in opposition to the bibliographical research into pages of the first folio of Shakespeare, which were supposed to be identical. The result has been a critical interpretation of ‘the moral of the next marbled page’ (*TS*, 3.36.268).

‘Marbling’ is a process by means of which a pattern, usually in several colours, is transferred from the surface of thickened water, called size, to the desired object, usually paper. This technique can be used to create a pattern that resembles veined, or agate stone, hence the name, but such patterns were of little interest to most marblers.

During the early parts of the century, certainly before 1780, the most popular pattern, now called Dutch, was made by combing the colours into a feather-like pattern. Another, now called French, was made by swirling the colours. The pattern used on the marbled leaf in *Tristram Shandy*, which is now called Turkish, is usually untouched splatterings of colour. But whether swirled, combed, or left in spots, whatever pattern appeared on the size was transferred to paper. Where the paper touched the surface of the size, the pattern on the size was entirely taken up. There was no possibility of making a second ‘copy’ of the same design.

To make the next sheet of marbled paper the colours had to be thoroughly stirred, then dropped upon the size, swirled or combed into a pattern, and so on. By the nature of this process it was not possible to make two identical pieces of marbled paper. As a form of printing, however, it was a relatively quick method of creating a pattern on paper in several colours, using one step.

The first edition of Volume 3 of *Tristram Shandy* is believed to have consisted of 4000 copies. In each of these copies were two numbered marbled pages (pp. 169 and 170) forming a single leaf. A marbler therefore made 8000 marblings, no two of which are the same. Not only is the sheer number of these marblings astonishing, but the additional effort necessary to create a white margin, and to place a page number on each, then to tip each one into a gathering, means that there is no dismissing this leaf as an idle jest. And whether or not Sterne intended to create a shifting image, editors, faced with the need to create marbled paper produced in the first edition’s colours, discussed most notably an exhibition by Kennet which produced more similar pages. Whether or not concerned in the making of the examples here are that they represent some typical pages.

It will be useful to look at the first edition (see *Shandean*). The paper size was one eighth of a foolscap page (4⅛ in.; only an inner marbled, leaving the edges is about 6.75 x 11.75 in.). Only an inner marbled, leaving the margins are pink, green, and purple, mixed with ox-gall, etc. The pattern is so-called from the mottled appearance, with spots of green, pink, and purple on the pattern and color, on the substrate on which the paper was folded.

Few of the marbled pages in Volumes 1 and 2 (fifth and sixth issues) are on printing paper. A marbler is of the same size as the printing paper, i.e., 3, foolscap ‘Vryheyt’ mould.

Three copies of the first edition have watermarks and changes. The first is a portion of the word ‘TRISTRUM’ showing the word ‘TRISTRUM’ in Volume 3, however,
in the first edition
of The Shandean, the research was a
success because they
published in the first edition
of 'the moral
tution
of the colours
were supposed
to create a shifting image, he did so, since subsequent publishers and
editors, faced with the difficulty of examining the form and method of
marbled paper production, have wandered completely away from the
first edition's colours and patterns. The difference in editions has been
discussed most notably by Peter de Voogd, and illustrated in an
exhibition by Kenneth Monkman. It is, however, worth examining the
more similar pages of the first edition as Sterne was very likely
concerned in the making of the page, and in the placement of it. The
examples here are taken from a collation of about 100 copies, and
represent some typical, and some eccentric, versions.

It will be useful to consider an average copy of the marbled page in
the first edition (see for the pattern the front cover of this edition of The
Shandean). The paper fits into a foolscap octavo volume, so before cutting
it was one eighth of a foolscap page, or about 16.5 x 10.75 cm
(61/2 x 41/2 in.). Only an inner area, approximately equal to the text block, was
marbled, leaving the usual margins of white paper. The marbled area
is about 6.75 x 11.75 cm (27/10 x 47/10 in). The margins are created by
folding the margins away from the surface to be laid on the paper. The
margins were bent the other way before the other side was marbled. A
page number, considerably larger than those usual on the printed pages,
was hand-stamped on each. The colours of a typical first edition page
are pink, green, and yellow, with white added by the addition of water
mixed with ox-gall, which opens a space with which to view the paper.
The pattern is so-called Turkish: in this case then a background of pink
with spots of green, yellow, and white. We shall consider variations in
the pattern and colour below, but first let us turn our attention to the
substrate on which the marbling was done.

Paper

Few of the marbled leaves in my collation have watermarks. Part of
Volumes 1 and 2 (first edition) are on writing paper, but Volumes 3 and
4 are on printing paper. It is often assumed that the paper used by the
marbler is of the same type of printing paper used in the rest of Volume
3, foolscap 'Vryheyt Pro Patria.' Three copies of Volume 3 have been carefully examined for
watermarks and chain lines. None of the marbled leaves in those copies
has a portion of the watermark in the desired quadrant (that part
showing the word 'Vryheyt') to show absolutely that the paper is from
a Vryheyt mould as are those of the rest of the volume. The paper used
in Volume 3, however, has never been fully described in order that such
What is notable with the fragment leaves, is the upper portion of the crown through the middle from the jewels of the circle, and a countermark.

A countermark, marbled leaf, with a comparison could be made with the leaves of Patria illustrated in Figure 6; with minute details.

FIG. 6 A watermark

What is visible, is...
a comparison could be made. The watermark of Volume 3 is shown in Figure 6; with minor variations, it is more similar to the Vryheyt Pro Patria illustrated in Shorter, than to any in Churchill.7

![Watermark Image]

FIG. 6 A watermark in *Tristram Shandy*, volume 3.

What is notable about this watermark, for purposes of the comparison with the fragment of a watermark found in one of the three marbled leaves, is the upper left quadrant, of which only the TE and a small portion of the crown ever appear in a volume. The chain line passes through the middle of the E, and within about a millimetre and a half from the jewels on the crown. The letters rest on the pair of inner wires in the circle, and are, on the average, 9 mm tall.

A countermark is also visible in Volume 3, one which, if found in a marbled leaf, would certainly assure an identical source for the paper. What is visible, is shown in Figure 7; it appears to be FA.

![Countermark Image]

FIG. 7 Countermark in volume 3.
Unfortunately, no paper mill mentioned in either Coleman's or Shorter's histories of paper making used these initials.

The one marbled leaf on which I was able to find a watermark and to make precise measurements has a portion of the upper left quadrant as shown in Figure 8.

![Figure 8 Watermark in a marbled leaf in volume 3.](image)

The chainline passes through the T, and the letters seem to rest on a third wire within the circular band. As a result, the letters are only 6 mm high. This is conclusive proof that the paper was not made in the same set of moulds as used for the paper in the main part of the volume.

An appreciation of the physical significance of the marbled leaf for the author and for the bookseller, and for their agents, the printers, the marbler, and the book sewers, requires as exact a knowledge as possible of how the leaf was originally secured in the centre of the L gathering, that is, between L4 and L5. There is one copy of the book known to me, at the Beineke Library, which is not only still in its original blue-paper wrappers, but also gives every indication that it has not been tampered with or sophisticated; and on this slender, but essential, evidence, I construct my case.

The marbled leaf (pp. 169, 170) is both tipped-in (that is, lightly pasted in), and secured by a sewing thread, in this way: the inner margin of the second marbled side of the leaf has had a small quantity of paste spread along it, and that area has then been pressed against the inner margin of L5r (p. 171). In addition to that, the sewing that one would expect to find at the centre of the gathering has been extended near the foot by an extra loop of thread which passes through the surface of the marbled leaf and links again with the central sewing (showing that sewing was done after the tipping in).

From this, I conclude not merely that this is the way in which all copies of the book were issued (or should have been issued); but I am emboldened to go further and to suggest (admittedly, on negative evidence) that, contrary to general practice, copies were not available in sheets, for I find no reference to their being so sold in the reviews or newspapers. For each copy there was only one price, and both the gluing and stitching were done when the marbled leaf was tipped in.

Even an examination of the diversity of paper that begins to show some

We have examined a few unusual ones. Detractors of the marbler's best work was to use pink, blue, red, and yellow, used extensively in a grass green, a cobalt blue, a considerable trouble is through lack of time today, with better technological in a day or two, some can be kept more than the work our marbler did and could not, because he did it or because he did not; there are numerous because the colours can alter.

Of those pages, one colours is probably the The yellow is not definitely not repurposed although it is very similar pages and the proportion of the the marbler was 8000 pages each that the perfection of these.

To understand pages, in comparison paper. Because of how there might be such
TRISTRAM'S MARBLINGS AND MARBLERS

Even an examination of two marbled leaves causes the observer to notice the diversity of pattern and colour. An examination of scores of copies begins to show some of the basic patterns within patterns.

We have examined a typical page, now we might consider some more unusual ones. Determining which copies are clearly representative of the marbler's best work requires making several assumptions: that his goal was to use pink, green, and yellow, with a water sprinkle, rather than blue, red, and yellow, the standard combination for Dutch marbling used extensively in late 17th-century bindings; that he had a rich pink, a grass green, and a rich yellow in mind, although he had some considerable trouble in maintaining the intensity of his colours, either through lack of talent or lack of funds. Anne Chambers notes that even today, with better chemical control of colours, the colours tend to change in a day or two, so she recommends that paints mixed with ox-gall not be kept more than two or three days, as they change colour. Perhaps our marbler did not do that, either because he was often interrupted, and could not, because of the expense, throw out paint that had turned, or because he did not know or care enough about his craft. In addition, there are numerous variations of colour on the same page, probably because the colour was not laid down at the same time, since small time difference can alter the colour with successive applications.

Of those pages examined, the one with the most balanced of the four colours is probably p. 169 of one of the Newberry Library's examples. The yellow is nearly a golden colour, the pink is dark and rich, but definitely not red, and the green is as fresh as the green ever gets, although it is very far from the greens of good Dutch marbling. Very similar pages are found in other copies. These are a very small proportion of the pages examined. Such a small number indicates that the marbler was not improving consistently with practice, for among 8000 pages each of the colours, quite independently, declines from the perfection of these few pages, and, probably, improves again.

To understand how much the colour wanders, consider the ideal pages, in comparison with their paired pages on the other side of the paper. Because of the need to dry each page before marbling the reverse, there might be sufficient pages marbled to fill a room, or part of a room,
FIG. 10  Ibid., p. 169.
used as a drying area, before the blank sides of those leaves were marbled. Thus, there might be a hundred, or several hundred pages marbled between the first marbled side and the second of a single copy. The copies under consideration have very little relation to their paired pages. One can determine the first and second side marbled in many cases by simply noting the spreading of colour. The sharp creases used to form the margins of the first size do not absorb colour, while the rebent fibres of the paper when folded for the second marbling, cause bleeding of the colour (see Figs. 9 and 10).

The ideal pages are not the most striking to the casual observer; the red ones are. The red is always found with very pale (less defined) colours, so that one cannot conclude that red was intended as the original colour, and was diluted to pink.

A set of copies that have some illusory relation among them, is a group I have called the variegated pages. Both colour and pattern set these pages apart, and they are exceptionally good emblems of a motley work; yet it does not appear that they were either intentional or the marbler’s goal. A variegated page has a very balanced display of colours in quite small droplets. The small circles keep any one colour from drawing our attention, giving the impression of infinite variety. This fine spattering of colour could have been achieved by a brush with short, stiff bristles, if it were intentional, or it may have resulted from the fact that the brush used for the larger droplets was nearly dry. The interesting thing about the variegated pages is that the application of all of the colours was done with a dry brush, or a short, stiff brush. They all have, perhaps by accident, green that has separated into several colours, or several applications of greens, so that there appear to be more than three colours and water on the page. The reverse sides of these pages are never variegated, as it happens, and there are pages that have a very similar set of colours, but not the right balance of spattering, or size of droplet, and therefore lack the effect. If we judge by colour alone, these pages seem to fit into other patterns much better than they fit into a category of their own, and yet they are attractive, both as responses to the need for motley emblems, and as bright, and busy patterns. They raise the question, why were there not more done this way?

A less obvious characteristic of each page is the order of laying down of the colours. Very early in my investigation I noticed that sometimes the water was sprinkled over the final design, and sometimes it was put down before the yellow. In a long, and widely dispersed series of examinations of items one never knows what will be useful, so I began to record the order in which the colours were laid down. With only the very rarest of exceptions, water was put down by green. Then the water was put down before you examine a page, or marbling was done. The water earlier was put down before the page was marbled; a page was quite small proper marbling was done later. If the water was put down closest to hand, the marbler’s chance should give a page yellow with yellowish green.

Two marblers are startling variety, uniformity is that Emrys Evans, or Toronto, suggested sheets for sale supplied each was sold by marbled papers examine several especially those the other hand, a short time that would it be necessary of a large tray, a

The poor quality of to salvage every sufficient paper. Lack of time has of the top or bottom hurry and work. Other pages were used replacements. One appears, so that was not left to be that appear to one copy on which dollop of size, mistake on both

Other copies something unus
those leaves were a rival hundred pages of a single copy. Colour to their paired marbled in many sharp creases used colour, while the marbling, cause unusual observer; the marbler's (less defined) intended as the leaf, is a group pattern set these pages are never fit into a category to the need these pages are never fit into a category of a motley work; especially those with erasures, would not have sold in a shop, but on the other hand, loose papers would probably not have been made in the short time that was likely to have been available to our marbler. Nor would it be necessary for most marblers to deal with the complications of a large tray, a small sheet, and folded edges.

Ordinarily, one presumes, reams of marbled papers would be opened, and the prospective buyer would examine several until he found one he liked. Some of the sheets, especially those with erasures, would not have sold in a shop, but on the other hand, loose papers would probably not have been made in the short time that was likely to have been available to our marbler. Nor would it be necessary for most marblers to deal with the complications of a large tray, a small sheet, and folded edges.

The poor quality of some of the pages suggests that the marbler had to salvage every page he could, either because he was unable to obtain sufficient paper, or because he was not paid well enough to buy more. Lack of time had its effect, too. Several pages seem to have lost the line of the top or bottom margin, probably because the marbler was in a hurry and worked with a piece of paper that was too wet; but these pages were used because there was not time, money, or paper to make replacements. One piece of paper was folded in an uncommon hurry, it appears, so that it is a trapezoid rather than a rectangle, but the leaf was not left to be used for curling papers. There are, for instance, pages that appear to have had their margins tidied by erasing. There is also one copy on which, it appears, the marbler attempted to mop up a large dollop of size, and manages to erase all of the colours. He made this mistake on both sides (in different places), and still used the leaf.

Other copies of interest are those in which the marbler tried something unusual, either because he had not yet developed a pattern very rarest of exceptions, pink was put down as the base colour, followed by green. Then sometimes yellow went before water, and sometimes water before yellow. Once scores of copies were assembled for examination a peculiar phenomenon became apparent: a page with water earlier was usually matched with a similar page on the second side marbled; a page with yellow earlier was similarly matched; only a quite small proportion of the pages matched a yellow earlier with a water earlier. If the marbler had simply reached for whatever pot was closest to hand, the distribution would be much more erratic. Simple chance should give us about one third of each variety: water with water, yellow with yellow, and water with yellow. Were there two marblers?

Two marblers or one, the leaves produced for Tristram Shandy have startling variety, and yet a sort of uniformity about them. Part of their uniformity is that they were made with a lack of attention to detail. As Emrys Evans, conservator of the Fisher Library of the University of Toronto, suggested to me, the marbler did not have to make perfect sheets for sale since he had a contract to produce a great many, and each was sold before it was made. Ordinarily, one presumes, reams of marbled papers would be opened, and the prospective buyer would examine several until he found one he liked. Some of the sheets, especially those with erasures, would not have sold in a shop, but on the other hand, loose papers would probably not have been made in the short time that was likely to have been available to our marbler. Nor would it be necessary for most marblers to deal with the complications of a large tray, a small sheet, and folded edges.

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of application, had forgotten a colour, or simply wanted a change. For instance, in one of the Berg Collection’s copies (copy 2; copy 78 in the collation), the marbler nearly combed the marbling. He drew a stick in a large zigzag pattern across the first three colours. But instead of drawing a comb through the colours at about ninety degrees to the zigzag lines to create a Dutch pattern, he sprinkled the inchoate design with water, and put it on paper. Was this a deliberate act of treachery to ruin Sterne’s intention, or had the marbler been doing another kind of marbling between marbled pages, and simply forgot, returning to his previous work?

What is perfectly plain from this discussion is that the making of the marbled leaves for *Tristram Shandy* was several orders of magnitude more difficult than printing a page of text. The pages vary in dimension, shape, colour, and tidiness from one extreme to the other. There are a great number of pages that have not been singled out for discussion here, and yet that does not mean that they are somehow regular and without interest; the collation has some comments for nearly every entry. What is curious about the process of making these pages is how much and how little the marbler seems to have learned by the time he was done. Although the collation does not contain an extensive collection of examples of marbled leaves from second-edition copies, there are enough to make a few cursory observations on the marbler’s progress.

With data on only eleven copies of the Second Edition it is more difficult to make generalizations about what the second-edition marbled leaf was to look like and how it was made. It bears a strong resemblance to the First Edition in the laying down of colours, in the making of margins, and in the stamping of page numbers, but in the colours, it is extraordinarily different in three ways. First, the base colour is most often a maroon, sometimes varying to the red, and sometimes to the pink, but even the pink is most often tinged with a little brown to show that it is a light maroon rather than a red mixed with white. The second is that the green has shifted to something more like a pea green than any of the greens that are found in the First Edition. And third, the colours seem to be extremely stable when compared to the First Edition. How the marbler overcame his difficulties with the green can only be guessed, but perhaps he did it by buying a green (rather than a yellow and a blue and mixing his own) from a colourman. The green is sufficiently distinctive that one can see a pink page from the Second Edition, and tell instantly that it is not from the First Edition. The yellow also seems to stay nearer the deeper end of its range, at least in the twenty-two pages examined.
The same marbler may have been employed to make succeeding editions of *Tristram Shandy*, for, as we shall see, the marbled leaf, made in this peculiar way, continued for about fifteen years, so long as Dodsley's name appeared on the title page. But before we consider those leaves in later editions, which are in many other ways very dissimilar to the first- and second-edition pages, we must first consider the Irish editions; whether they be piracies, or legitimate reprints. 14

The only Irish reprints with marbled leaves are those by Chamberlaine and Smith. There were other Irish reprints long after the First and Second Editions: Lynch, (1767) and Saunders, (1765). Lynch's edition, dated 1761, but really much later, has no marbled leaf, rather it has two blank pages where it should have been. Had there been marbled pages in the edition they would be facing each other. The 1765 edition by Saunders has a single page of beige patches, alternating with blank (white) ones separated by some blue and some red lines. Chamberlaine and Smith claimed to follow the only complete London edition, and warned the public against piracies. 15 The fact that they had a marbled leaf lends some credence to their claim. Not only were Chamberlaine and Smith able to reproduce the marbled leaf when none of their countrymen could be bothered, but also they did rather a better job of it than the English. From the two copies in the catalogue, it is clear that the colours may have wandered, but the control of the margins was better, the spattering is more uniform, and the ugly marks left by the size are diminished, and in one instance, at least, are simply not there. 16

The Irish marbled leaf is unnumbered, although otherwise very like a first-edition marbled leaf, and sits between pp. 124 and 125. Thus the marbled leaf falls in gathering H, but not in a convenient fold, or between gatherings. The colour and perfection of this leaf is astounding when you consider that the English marbler, who had much more practice, seemed less interested in maintaining the look and tidiness of his leaf for the Second Edition than the Irish did in their reprint. Of course the possibility exists that Chamberlaine and Smith's edition was a piracy, and that the English marbler changed to maroon in order to differentiate the true Second Edition.

After the second London edition, there was a reprint of Volume 3 in 1768. The only copy in the catalogue shows the marbled leaf as a red, blue, and very pale-yellow version of a first- or second-edition page. Unlike all the subsequent editions, it maintains the same page numbering as the first, and is done with a hand stamp. Sterne died in 1768, and collected editions of his works, and complete sets of *Tristram Shandy* began to appear. Most of them ignored the problem of the
marbled leaf. Until about the 1790s, whenever the marbled leaf was not there, it was either silently omitted, or simply indicated with a blank leaf. About 1790 volumes began to appear with the wording:

**OF TRISTRAM SHANDY.**

67

The BOOKBINDER is desired to cover both sides of this leaf with the best marbled paper, taking care to keep the folio lines clear, and to preserve the proper margins.

FIG. 11 The Works of Laurence Sterne, 8 vols.

These exact words, usually including the index finger, appeared in editions from about 1790 to some time well into the Nineteenth Century. The wording is curious, since ‘folio lines’ is not a well-accepted printing term, although the meaning of ‘margins’ is pretty clear if one has seen a genuine marbled leaf. The compositors copied this wording with painstaking accuracy, but most bookbinders did not pay attention, as there are few copies with marbled paper pasted over these words. An edition from 1948 changes the words to explain to the reader: ‘In the early editions a marbled leaf was inserted here.’ Probably the readers had no idea what a marbled leaf was unless they, like the editor, had seen an early edition.

The exception to his neglect of the marbled leaf was the series of editions, both of *Tristram Shandy*, and of *The Works*, put out up to about 1790 by James Dodsley, and by groups of booksellers that included him. These editions have leaves marbled in the appropriate place, marbled
Marbled leaf was not treated with a blank wording:

\[ \text{\textsuperscript{157}} \]

Marbled paper, bare, and to

...over both

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directly on the leaf, with either printed or hand-stamped page numbers. But after that last edition during Sterne's lifetime, the marbled pages were never of the same design. They have such a different character that it is impossible to conceive that the same marbler made them unless he had undergone some radical change; although the same shop may have made them. These later pages are more in keeping with what is now called Turkish marbling: they have three colours laid down as a background, which is then drawn into veins with a stylus. On this background, two or three more colours, and water, are sprinkled to create a complex pattern (see the cover of volume 2 of The Shandean). The colours are more intense than in the early editions. They are never pastel, and usually include a very good black and orangy-yellow. They are usually very professionally executed, with no size marks, and with margins so neat that they look as if they were printed. One wonders if Sterne would have been pleased.

The marbled leaves in Tristram Shandy represent a considerable act of imagination on the part of Sterne, since no one else, either before or since, has ever made marbling a part of a literary work. They also represent a considerable labour for the marbler who made them. His efforts, often faulty, are the only known sources for an examination of the art of marbling performed, in a series, by a single person (or possibly a close-working pair). His highly individual results create truly unique 'copies' of Volume 3 of Sterne's novel. No two readers could have precisely the same experience of reading Volume 3 because of that leaf, and no reader without a leaf could have had a proper experience of the novel. The pages are wordless jokes on the reader, and even more provoking jokes on the critics. What is utterly astounding is that, faced with a coloured illustration, if in a non-representational art form, in a period when coloured illustrations were extremely rare, there was not more comment, nor more uproar about it.

Who Marbled the 'Marbled Page'?

It was my hope that by enough research I would discover who marbled these leaves. Although I did not find a name inscribed on any copy, several curious coincidences have turned up that provide the names of several marblers who might have had a hand in doing the work.

Marbled paper was used by bookbinders, and sold by stationers, both loose and as a binding on blank notebooks. Did bookbinders or stationers do their own marbling? Some may have, as the instructions for marbling collected by Richard J. Wolfe seem to be for bookbinders,
particularly *The Whole Art of Bookbinding*, wherein marbling, suitable both for paper and for book edges, is described. Pepys's bookbinder, for instance, may have done his own marbling for the edges of Pepys's books. Then, again, perhaps he sent the books to a marbler. On the other hand, a stationer who was also a bookbinder would already be doing two jobs, and marbling would be a third, creating more work than a successful man could do well.

It is difficult even to find names of bookbinders who used marbled papers in their bindings, much less marblers themselves. Bagford recorded the earliest name found so far for a marbled paper maker in England: M. Garencières had a prosperous marbling business in Clerkenwell Green that he was able to leave to his daughter at the end of the seventeenth century. One of the bookbinders in Howe, Richard Montagu, seems to have bound books in marbled papers (although Howe does not note this fact) and to have practised a great number of other crafts related to books, papers, and stationery judging from his advertisement in the *Daily Advertiser* for 16 November 1742 (p. 4b):

**BOOKS on Sale this Day, and to be continued.** AT R. MONTAGU's Book-Warehouse, the General-Post-Office, at the End of Great Queen-Street next Drury-Lane, are several large Parcels of Books, lately purchas'd, in all Faculties and Parts of Learning, which will be sold cheaper than usual, for ready Money, the Prices being printed in the Catalogue, which may be had gratis at the Place of Sale only.

Where Gentlemen and Ladies may have Books bound in all the variety of Bindings, either plain, or beautifully marbled, or gilt on the Leaves, in the utmost Perfection; and as Stains frequently happen by Accident, either with Water or Ink, he entirely discharges them without damaging either Print or Paper.

All sorts of neat Medal-Cases are made there to any Size, at a very reasonable Price; and Books in all Languages bought and sold.

The best Writing-Ink sold at One Shilling a Quart, and all sorts of Stationary [sic] Wares, at the lowest Prices.

There is no hint from this advertisement that Montagu made his own marbled paper, merely that he bought it and used it in bindings. Dymott, on the other hand, claimed to have perfected French marbling. This sounds decidedly as though he made the marbled paper himself.

In 1760 a bookbinder who is not in Howe, one Richard Freeborn, was definitely marbling books. His advertisement, written 18 January 1760, read:

**RICHARD FREEBORN, at Round-Court of Old Round, near the nearest and best Marbled on the Green,**

Histories of many kinds are imported into England, Manufacturers are supplied. Yet one of them looks like a description in a Notice

This art is yet far from being made in England; the fluid is mixed with gum, and put on the transparent paper, which is put into the engagement, is carefully laid, and the same is repeated till the ornament is complete. Though there is a great deal of branch of trade in marbling that is imported from France.

This description is less accurate than one that has been, in part, collected from ordinary people, as well as from traders, and much less domestic and with the nobility to
marbling, suitable
for
bookbinder, for
edges of Pepys's
a marbler. On the
proposition, they would already be
working more than
one's advertisement for
marbled pages were
R. MONTAGU, seems
Howe does not note
other crafts related
to marbling in the
advertisement in the

Yet one of the earliest mentions found so far appears to be this
description in a directory of apprenticeships possible for boys:

Of the MARBLE-PAPER MAKER

This art is yet but in its infancy in England; Marble-Paper having
been made in London only a very short time. The different colours
mixed with gum-water, or size, are poured carefully on a glutinous
transparent fluid, and by means of a stick gently moved on the top,
are put into the variegated wavy form desired; a sheet of paper is then
carefully laid on the surface, taken off again, and laid to dry; and this
is repeated till all the sheets are tinctured in the same manner as the
glutinous fluid in which the colours swim. This business is yet but in
few hands; and it is probable they [sic] have not taken apprentices:
Though there is sufficient room for extending and improving this
branch of trade; as most of the Marble Paper used here is still
imported from Holland.22

This description of the work of a marbler, written about 1760, is much
less accurate than much earlier descriptions from the 15th through 17th
centuries, as recorded in McKay. But the importance here is that
ordinary people are considering marbling as a profession. This may have
been, in part, connected with the work of the Society of Arts.

The Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce was established in 1754 by William Shipley. Its aims were
not to promote experimentation, as did the Royal Society, but to encourage the people of England to become professional artists, better
traders, and manufacturers and producers of commodities desirable in
domestic and world markets. The members of this society ranged from
the nobility to men of the humblest occupations, such as cobblers.
Among their members, in 1760, was Laurence Sterne. Although Sterne seems not to have participated actively in the Society, he had several friends and important associates among its members: his booksellers, Robert and James Dodsley; one of his patrons, Lord Rockingham; the sculptor of his bust, Joseph Nollekens; his passe partout to society, David Garrick; Samuel Johnson; and many more. It is reasonable to assume that he could have found his marbler among the members of this Society as well, especially as the Society had a special interest in marbling, and was running a competition for a premium in marbling during the year that Sterne was a member.

Despite all the evidence we have seen on English marbling, the best marbled papers were still imported, and The Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, therefore, felt obliged to put marbling on their list of domestic crafts to be encouraged. To this end they offered a premium, viz:

For marbling the greatest Quantity of Paper, equal in Goodness to the best marbled Paper imported from abroad, not less than one Rheam; to be produced on or before the 2d Tuesday in February, 1760 - £10.

– [signed] George Box, Secretary

This premium was not given in 1760; in fact no premium for marbling was awarded until 1763 (for the premium announced in 1762), a fact that has led historians of marbling to assume that the quality of marbling in England was not worthy of mention until after that date. Such historians have missed the point of the Society's endeavours, for the premium clearly states that it was 'quantity' that was their chief concern. Their goal was to find a likely candidate to establish a manufactory in England, both for supplying the domestic stationers and bookbinders, and to begin an export trade.

The premium won in 1763 is rather late for my purpose, which is to look for a marbler for *Tristram Shandy*. It is not impossible that Sterne's marbler, who had experience from marbling the 8000 pages of the first edition, and an unknown number for the second, might then have applied for the premium in 1762. The premium offered in that year was rather different from the one offered in 1759. In 1759, only one ream was required. A premium was offered again in 1760, requiring that one ream be submitted, but that the marbler show that he had marbled 100 reams. The emphasis here is even more clearly on the quantity of paper. The premium was to be £50. For marbling 100 times as much paper, the Society felt that the candidates were required to show that they had produced a quantity of marbled paper, or that the marbler had remained unchallenged for a place (for which he had to produce 200 reams) when the premium was first offered. In the second, the requirements were that a smaller quantity of paper, corresponding with the requirements when the premium was first offered, be produced correctly in the list: 25 reams. Adams, in 1947, commented that he was a first and a second prize for Hervey.

Because the first prize was not given until January 29, 1763, the Society would have been happy if they had received a first and a second prize, but those who entered were unsuccessful. The names of the candidates who failed are to be found in the Society's records. Members were appointed to a committee to meet on January 29, to decide who was to attend any of the candidates at the Society in membership in the number of bookbinders and other persons appointed to attend any of the candidates.

The details of another place, where the results were to be found, are described by the Society. They believed that a competition with a significant number of entrants, John H. Cole, who commented that...
Although Sterne had several booksellers, his booksellers, Samuel and Rockingham; the former being more apartout to society, the latter more industrious. It is reasonable to suppose that among the members of the Society there was a special interest in marbling, the best encouragement for the Encouragement which they therefore, felt obliged to give. To this encouragement in Goodness to the quantity of paper, the Society offered only five times as much money. Prospective candidates were not drawn by such an offer; no one applied for this premium, or that of the following year, when the text of the premium remained unchanged, except that an award was also offered for second place (for which only half the quantity of paper was required). In 1762, when the premium was offered for the final time, the amounts asked for were much less, viz. 40 reams for the first premium, and 20 reams for the second, the money remaining the same for these two, and a provision that a smaller quantity might be submitted but would receive a correspondingly lesser amount of money. This relaxation of the requirements worked. Two candidates submitted papers. The winners of the first premium were Messrs. Portbury & Smith, but the second premium was not given. The names of these marblers have appeared correctly in the histories of the Society, but, owing to an error by Charles Adams, in 1947, most histories of marbling have incorrectly attributed a first and a second premium to Henry Houseman and Samuel Hervey. Because the first edition of Volume 3 of Tristram Shandy was published January 29, 1761, the marblers of interest are not those who won later, but those who entered the competition for the Premium for 1760, and lost. The names of the losers were never published in printed form, and are to be found only in the manuscripts of the meetings of the committee that met to judge marbled paper and pieces of drugget. That committee met four or five times, with some difference in the members. Members were appointed to the committee, but other members of the society were also able to attend such meetings, and some did so. Some appointed members never attended any meetings; all members felt free to attend any one meeting or not, including the chairman. This change in membership of the committee may be important, because Sterne's bookseller attended some meetings and not others. The details of the meetings of the marbled paper contest are given in another place, and will not be repeated in full here. The summary of the results were that two people did send entries to the Society to compete for the premium. The committee met once, and recorded that they believed that the premium should be awarded to John Cross. Then, with a significant change in the committee, they met again, six weeks later, and completely reversed their decision, suggesting that the other entrant, John Baskerville, should receive the award. But, at the same time they made note of an entry and an accompanying letter from John Cole, who sent only a quire, rather than a ream of paper. The committee commented that Cole's paper was superior to either legitimate entrant,
but that as he did not have the desired quantity, they would recommend Baskerville as the winner. The committee’s recommendations were put before a general meeting of the Society, where it was decided that no award would be given that year.

The Dodsleys were conspicuously absent from the second session of judging for marbled paper, and for the reading of Cole’s letter in that meeting. One or both of them might have been present at the general meeting at which the results were presented since no attendance lists were kept for general meetings. Sterne was certainly not present, and may never have attended any meetings. So, if any of the marblers who contended for the first of the Society’s premium was the marbler of *Tristram Shandy*, the connection must be shown through Dodsley. We know that Dodsley had a chance to see the work of Cross and Baskerville, but we cannot be sure that he saw the work of Cole. The most likely candidate would be John Baskerville, known to be a friend of Dodsley’s, and a supplier of ‘ornamented Paper’ to Dodsley’s shop in 1757. 34 Both Richard Wolfe and I have suggested that the unusual marbled papers appearing in Baskerville’s own books are samples from that contest. 35 One look at these papers would make it clear that the strange ideas of Baskerville would never be consonant with the conservative efforts of the ‘marbled page.’

What the Society thought were ‘the best foreign’ must have been combed Dutch or French snail papers, because in preparing for the submissions of 1762, one of the Miscellaneous Committees commented that ‘Marbled Paper is made in great Perfection in Hesse…’ 36 Then, when the committee to judge the marbled paper was making its preparations, one of the members purchased marbled papers, of foreign origin, to be used as guides by the marblers – presumably Hessian papers, if they could be obtained. 37 When Messrs. Portbury and Smith were proclaimed the winners of that premium, it was for ‘having produced a proper Sample of Marbled paper equal in goodness, if not Superior to the Dutch [i.e. Hessian].’ 38

Of the other two marblers, Cross and Cole, we know virtually nothing, except that Cole certainly made a portion of his living by marbling. One might also conjecture, that the sample that he submitted to the committee was of combed marbling, considering how pleased the committee was with it. Cross and Cole seem to me to be equally likely candidates for the purpose: since Cross was certainly known to Dodsley, and Cole seems, based on his letter accompanying his papers, to have been equipped to undertake the making of 8000 marbled pages, with the sophisticated border, in the limited time available to meet the publication date of Sterne’s third volume.
would recommend foundations were put decided that no decision on the second session of Cole's letter in that attendance lists not present, and the marblers who as the marbler of through Dodsley. We work of Cross and work of Cole. The known to be a friend of Dodsley's shop in that the unusual are samples from make it clear that the reasonant with the must have been preparing for the committees commented on this. Then, was making its papers, of foreign was for 'having goodness, if not what we learn from these minutes is the name of a shop known to sell marbled paper – the one that may or may not have been the same as that visited by Vaillant to buy the foreign paper used as samples for this competition. The choice of Wright and Giles is certainly not accidental, as Abchurch Lane is about two and half kilometres (about a mile and a half) from the Strand, and there were stationers scattered on nearly every corner of London if the directories are to be believed. The committeeeman who went to Abchurch Lane would have been much closer to Dodsley's shop in Pall Mall, and would have passed along the Strand, Fleet Street, and then very close to St. Paul's Church Yard, all of which addresses were known to be especially favoured by booksellers and stationers.

Perhaps marbled papers, and the marblers who made them, were very scarce in England in the 1760's, which would mean that the three marblers who responded to the advertisement of the premium in 1759
were a large percentage of those who did such work. It is true that the Society did try to spread its net widely since it printed 2000 copies of the list of premiums, and advertised the premiums in four daily newspapers. Some marblers may have felt, as Cole said in his letter, that £10 was not sufficient reward for marbling a ream of paper. Yet one of the men who vied for that £10 came from Birmingham, so that the recognition must have been worth something. The fact remains that we can name five men of the marbling trade in England between 1759 and 1763, and two, or possibly three, stationers who carried marbled papers in England. Such numbers may be small, but one suspects that they are not insignificantly small considering that these names have not been mentioned before, and that since the Society tried very hard to attract marblers to their cause, these may be a large fraction of the marblers of the time who took their craft seriously as a manufacture.

We are, of course, looking for just such a marbler, since *Tristram Shandy* required as much labour as 8000 sheets of marbled paper, or sixteen times the amount of marbling that Cole found it onerous to make for a competition and not for profit.

One marbler who seems contemptuous of the Society’s efforts was Richard Montagu, previously mentioned as a bookbinder. Perhaps he knew Cole, Baskerville, or Cross, which would explain his action. The Society published their second offer of a premium for marbled paper in the series of premiums in 1760 (to be awarded the following year). The list of premiums was so long that they were published in the *Daily Advertiser* over some weeks. Lists appeared 21, 24, and 30 June, 1, 4, 9, and 11 July. The premium for marbled paper appeared 4 July, on page 2. Directly opposite, on page 3, Richard Montagu had this advertisement:

TO Gentlemen and Ladies that are curious in the Binding of their Books. RICHARD MONTAGU, Bookbinder, in Great Wild-Street, has invented and brought to Perfection, what has been so much wanted, a beautiful Marble Paper to fit all Sizes of Books without piecing; it is beautiful and strong, and therefore adds much to the Strength as well as the Beauty of the Book. To be had only at R. Montagu’s.

Since Montagu’s advertisement appears at a time when the imitations and parodies of *Tristram Shandy* were at a peak, this advertisement could have attracted Dodsley’s or Sterne’s attention. Then again, the very presence of Montagu’s advertisement hints that there are yet more marblers who could not be bothered to apply for the Society’s premiums.

DIANA PATTERSON

*Mt. Royal College, Canada*

NOTES

2 Peter de Voe of Accidents marbled paper in London. University Library.
3 In the 18th century, any of the above might appear in press as *Tristram Shandy* was by Dodsley or
5 Kenneth M. D. "Tristram Shandy 1760-1860*, *Tristram Shandy*.
6 Copies, 4, 71...
7 The limitation: shelf mark 1... water mark... but there is (II, 907)... subsequent... *Patria*. See... *Historical and Practical Dictionary of the Greek and Latin Languages*... 81...
8 Tinker 1975...
9 20 December...
10 Anne Char. *Tristram Shandy*...
11 Ruggles Col... 12 P. 170 of *Historical... collation*, 5...
It is true that the firm printed 2000 copies of the volumes in four daily leams, as Mr. Wild-Street said in his letter, at the rate of aREAM of paper. Yet Birmingham, so that the fact remains that in England between 1759 and 1853, who carried marbled paper, or sixteen papers very hard to 1299 of the determined as a manufacture.

Since Tristram Shandy was printed on marbled paper, or sixteen papers, it was not dangerous to make for a 17th-century Society's premiums.

The Society's efforts were also made in Edinburgh. Perhaps he who carried marbled paper in patent for a second time. The first edition was published in the Daily News of 30 June, 1, 4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29 June, 1, 4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29 July, on page 1, and the next volume had this advertisement:

The Binding of their work, that Wild-Street, has sold so many, is a work so much wanted, with the least concern to their paper, without piecing; it has been so wide of the Strength as to exceed the value of Montagu's.

Then the imitations and copies one after another, and so many to be distinguished, the names have not tried very hard to make for a certain amount. Perhaps he who carried marbled paper in 1760, so that the fact remains that in England between 1759 and 1853, who carried marbled paper, or sixteen papers very hard to make for a 1299 of the determined as a manufacture.

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*EC75.St.455 T.1760 (copy 62). A fourth copy in this list might be p. 170 of one of Princeton's copies, viz, Ex3943.7.391.12 (copy 73).

So far, I have located four pages, in three copies: p. 169 of an Alderman Library copy (McGregor Lib. *E 1760.S78; copy 94 of the collation; p. 170 of one of the Shandy Hall copies (KM-11; copy 27 of the collation); and a copy belonging to Norman M. Bradburn (bookplate of R.G. Bosanquet; copy 51 in the collation, both sides).


There are actually three copies of Chamberlaine & Smith's editions in the collation, but one of them, (British Library 1472.aa.38; copy 111), is of very doubtful value although interesting all the same. It is a copy of Chamberlaine and Smith's reprint of Vol. 2, with a marbled leaf inserted between pp. 30-31 (between gathering B and C). It is an anachronism, which is disturbing enough, but one of its pages, the one facing p. 30, is very similar to: 1) the leaf in the sophisticated first edition (copy 51); and 2) to a copy of the English reprint of 1768, e.g., another of the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center's copies (copy 119). Unlike these two copies, however, it has no page numbers; A Bodleian copy (Vet. A5 f. 2902; copy 109) and another Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center copy (PR 3714.t7 176ob; copy 110) do not have them either. At least this is consistent in the Chamberlaine and Smith copies: they have marbled leaves, not pasted-on pieces of marbled paper, and they have no page numbers stamped on them.

The term is not in Moxon's Mechanick Exercises, Savage, or Glaister's dictionaries of printers' terms, nor in Henri Fournier's Traité de la Typographie (Paris: Fournier, 1824, rpt. Westmead, Hants., 1971), but there are suggestions in C. Stower, The Printer's Grammar (1808, rpt. London: Gregg Press, 1965), p. 210, that the folio (page number) is used to align the titles, and therefore it can be understood that the folio lines would be the line of type with the page number on it.


Barry McKay, 'A List of the Members of the Artizans' Society and Commercums of British Marbling', The Printer's Letter, vol. 1 (1982), pp. 27-31, mentions John Wilkes, the 'founder' of the group, and all members' copies have marbled paper.


Joseph Collyer, Youths Guide to R. Griffin, 1856.


In partial support of this, McKay, op. cit., p. 179, mentions that the change was made in order to improve the quality of paper used.
this list might be
11.12 (copy 73).
ies: p. 169 of an
S78; copy 94 of
ies (KM-11; copy
man M. Bradburn
ition, both sides).
Dublin', Transactions
3-368.
Writers 1740-1800

2. Smith's editions
1472 aa. 38; copy
all the same. It
Vol. 2, with a
the leaf in the
opy of the English
om Humanities
these two copies,
A5 f. 2902;
Research Center
ther from either. At least
copies: they have
paper, and they

3. 'A List of the
Encouragement of Arts Manufactures
and Commerce', June 5, 1760. See Cash,
MY and Lr, for Sterne's
connections with Stafford, Rockingham, Elizabeth Montague, John
ilkes, the Walpoles, Garrick, Dashwood, Nollekens and Dodsley,
all members of the Society.

24 Ms. binding reads:
Premiums 1754-1759. Premiums for 1759, item
97, 'The Strand April 25, 1759'. The printed version appeared in
Premiums Offered by the Society Established at London for the Encouragement
of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce (London: by Order of the Society,
1759), p. 27.

25 Phoebe Easton, Marbling: A History and a Bibliography (Los Angeles:
Dawson's Books Shop, 1983), p. 47; Geoffrey Wakeman, English
Marbled Papers (Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: The Plough
Press, 1978) p. 11; Anne Chambers and Bernard Middleton,
The Principal Antique Patterns of Marbled Papers Made and Described by Anne
is an exception.

26 In partial support of this notion, I offer the Committee Minutes, 1758-
60, viz. p. 46, s.v., 'Agriculture', &c. The revising committee's change was to alter the proposed premium from: 'up to a Rheam of
marbled paper £10' to: 'at least a Rheam £20'. Although the increase
in the money to be offered did not become part of the revision, the
quantity of paper to be marbled did.
For the greatest Quantity of Paper commonly called Marbled Paper, equal in Goodness to the best Marbled Paper imported from Abroad, not less than one hundred Rheams manufactured in England, and one Rheam thereof to be produced to the Society, on or before the second Tuesday in February 1761; fifty Pounds.

N.B. It is expected that the Paper be of the size commonly called Fools Cap. If the Paper is equal in Goodness, the Quantity to determine the Premium.

p. 35: Marbled paper to be produced 2nd Tues in Feb 1761.

For the next greatest Quantity not less than fifty Rheams manufactured in England; twenty-five Pounds.

If the Paper is equal in Goodness, the Quantity to determine the Premium.

Specimens of Marbled Paper will be delivered at the Society's Office to an award. Premium.
Office to any Person who intended [sic] to be a Candidate for the Premium.

The specimens of marbled papers were examples from which to work. These samples are discussed later. The comment on the specimens implies that there was no screening of candidates before the submission of their work, so that tyros might be allowed to take away samples of paper and submit their efforts; another indication that the committee was not afraid of having too many submissions.

A Register of the Premiums and Bounties Given by the Society Instituted at London for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, from the Original Institution in the Year MDCCLIV, To the Year MDCCLXXVI Inclusive (London: Printed, by Order of the Society, by James Phillips, in George-Yard, Lombard-Street, 1778). The Royal Society of Arts' copy has a typescript index in the front, with ms additions to 1814, p. 22, s.v. 'Manufactures, Paper': '1763 Marbled Paper Mess. Portbury & Smith £50'; p. 22a [ms note] '1789 Mr. John Davis', who was given an extraordinary bounty in 1789, although no premium was offered.

Adams, p. 421, Easton, p. 47, Wakeman, p. 11. By implication Chambers & Middleton, Principal Papers, pp. [7-8], Practical Guide, p. 10, make the same error since the second premium was never awarded. Adams quotes as his source, William Bailey, The Advancement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce. Contained in the Repository of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (London, 1772), p. 219, a book I have not yet seen. Mr. Samuel Harvey (not Hervey) received a premium of £50-10-0 for a statue carved in marble, Premiums, 1762, p. 53. Houseman applied for the premium for marbled paper, and, as we shall see, he did not receive a premium.

'T.a. Formerly, a kind of stuff, all of wool, or mixed of wool and silk or wool and linen, used for wearing apparel. b. Now, a coarse woollen stuff used for floor-coverings, table-cloths, etc.' OED. It is typical of the Society of Arts that they would combine such dissimilar items for a single committee to judge. Some of the men, whom I have been unable to identify, were probably mercers to judge the drugget. But the booksellers would comment on the drugget and the mercers on the marbled paper, for quality should, in the end, be obvious to all.

Diana Patterson, 'John Baskerville, Marbler', The Library, 6th ser. 12:3 (September 1990), pp. 212-221.


36 Miscellaneous Committees 1760-1778, p. 86, on 'New Arts and Manufactures', June 8th 1762. This note on Hessian paper strikes an odd chord with Hudson and Luckhurst's comment about the Society encouraging 'the manufacture of marbled paper, which had hitherto been largely imported from France, in spite of frequent attempts to produce it here.' [Derek Hudson and Kenneth W. Luckhurst, *The Royal Society of Arts 1754-1954* (London: John Murray, 1954), p. 136]

Marjorie Plant, *The English Book Trade: An Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books*, 3rd ed. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1974), p. 199, discusses the extraordinary cheapness of French paper. But the customs duties were especially high on imported paper, with an additional duty on anything from France, of 56% ad valorem. Marbled paper, falling under the category of painted or stained papers, was higher still. In addition, there were difficulties in getting French goods owing to the number of wars with France during the century. Germany seems, generally speaking, to have been a more likely source of most marbled paper than was France.

37 Minutes of the Committees 1762-1763, Rough Minutes:

July 23rd [sic] 1762
John Spencer Colepeper Esq - in the Chair
Mr Vaillant M' Finney
Mr Hort M' Steele
Mr Vaillant having offered to procure the Committee Specimens of various sorts of Marble Paper, the Committee adjourned the consideration thereof to this day sen'night the 30th Inst: at 6.

Five members present
J. S. Colepeper

July 30th 1762
Mr S. More in the Chair [Samuel More]
Mr Small D' Fordyce
Mr Shirley M' Vaillant
Mr Bailey M' Kilsha [sic]

Mr Vaillant sent in some specimens of Marble Paper, as requested at the last Meeting of the Committee.
Resolved, that the foreign Paper left by M Vaillant, be the Pattern
given to Candidates.

Five members at least Present
S. More

The samples obtained by Vaillant were the specimens mentioned earlier in the printed premium.

38 Minutes of Committees 1762-1763 (ms) entry for ‘Feb’y 10th 1763.’ Note the use of both ‘proper’ and ‘Dutch’ to emphasize what was expected.

39 Wakeman, p. 12, has found a marbler working in London in 1770 named William Weaver, who is a distant possibility, but one not explored here.

40 Minutes of the Committees 1762-1763, Rough Minutes. A close reading of Edward Ford and George H. Hodson, The History of Enfield in the County of Middlesex, Including its Royal and Ancient Manors, the Chase, and the Duchy of Lancaster, with Notices of its Worthies, and its Natural History, etc. Also an Account of the Church and the Charities, and a History of the New River, Printed for Subscribers only, and not Published (Enfield Press: Printed by J.H. Meyers, 1873) failed to produce any particular reason why Houseman’s shop was in Enfield, nor any mention of Houseman.

41 McKay, p. 39.