

## PREFACE

WHEN Edwin Wolf discovered the unique shelfmarks Benjamin Franklin used to identify his books in the late 1950s, he embarked on a bibliographical odyssey that would span the next several decades. I first met Edwin in 1990 at the international conference commemorating the bicentenary of Franklin's death. As a graduate student at the University of Delaware, I listened to his conference presentation in awe. He gave a spirited talk on Franklin's library which stands out in my mind because of one particular phrase he used. Discussing whether Franklin actually read all the thousands of books he owned, Edwin answered it by quoting an English essayist who, when asked by a visitor if he had read all of the books in his library, responded, "I never bought a book I didn't intend to read."

After Edwin's talk, my teacher, J. A. Leo Lemay, introduced the two of us. Though this was the first time we met, I was well aware of Edwin from his work. Reconstructing Franklin's library was just one of many scholarly projects that had captured his attention during his lengthy tenure as Librarian of the Library Company of Philadelphia. He had also done much work locating volumes that survived from the library of William Byrd of Westover. Since Byrd's library was the subject of my doctoral dissertation, I asked Edwin to be on my dissertation committee, and he graciously agreed.

Sadly, he died the following year, just a few weeks before the defense of my dissertation was scheduled. Happily, John Van Horne, who had taken over as Librarian of the Library Company upon Edwin's retirement, agreed to take Edwin's place on my committee. John's involvement with my dissertation marked the start of a long-term working relationship. With John's help and that of his excellent staff at the Library Company—especially James Green and Cornelia S. King—I was able to see my research from dissertation into publication. With the encouragement and support of the Library Company of Philadelphia, *The Library of William Byrd of Westover* appeared in 1997.

Since publishing *The Library of William Byrd*, I continued to be inspired by Edwin's work. On multiple occasions, he suggested that someone undertake the reconstruction of the library of John Montgomerie, colonial governor of New York and New Jersey. I took his suggestion and, in 2000, published *The Library of John Montgomerie*, which I dedicated to Edwin's memory.

Edwin died before completing work on Franklin's library. As the tricentenary of Franklin's birth approached, John contacted me to ask if I would be willing to complete Edwin's work. I jumped at the chance. Since beginning the present work, the Library Company and its superb staff have aided my research at every step. In 2004–2005, the Library Company awarded me the William Reese Company Fellowship to assist my research. I am grateful to the Library Company and to the William Reese Company for this important award. I am also pleased that the Library Company has published this book in collaboration with the other eminent Franklin-founded Philadelphia institution—the American Philosophical Society. Its staff, too—in particular Roy E. Goodman—have been very helpful to me.

Before Edwin discovered Franklin's unique method of marking his books and began cataloguing surviving volumes containing those marks, the only serious work on Franklin's library had been done in the early decades of the twentieth century by George Simpson Eddy, who published a brief, preliminary study of his findings in the *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* in 1925. Eddy continued reconstructing Franklin's library throughout his life. Unaware of Franklin's shelfmark, Eddy used different types of evidence to identify titles from Franklin's library: books that survived among his descendants, references to books in Franklin's correspondence, and the few partial inventories of books from Franklin's library that survived.

*The Library of Benjamin Franklin* brings together the pioneering work done by Eddy and the rigorous bibliographic work done by Wolf. Furthermore, it takes advantage of the hard work of the editors of the *Franklin Papers* at Yale University. Their efforts to edit and annotate Franklin's writings and correspondence have made Franklin's ownership of numerous additional works apparent. Special thanks go to Ellen Cohn, editor-in-chief of the *Franklin Papers*, who examined inscriptions in many surviving volumes from Franklin's library and identified much previously unidentified handwriting. The completion of the *National Union Catalog* and the conversion of much bibliographic information to machine-readable formats have helped to yield much additional information regarding Franklin's books.

After identifying Franklin's unique shelfmark, Wolf searched public and private collections in Philadelphia and, indeed, throughout the nation looking for the mark, which was sometimes covered by a bookplate or new endpapers and sometimes erased, leaving only the faintest hint of Franklin's original shelfmark. Through this laborious process Wolf located more than 1,000 volumes owned by Franklin, containing a total of 2,700 titles. Wolf recorded his findings on large cards that included bibliographical information, physical descriptions, and provenance information. He also annotated

these records with information from the published volumes of the *Franklin Papers*. I have built on what Wolf left by searching through Franklin's published writings (the current Yale edition of the *Franklin Papers* as well as the earlier Bigelow and Smyth editions), the CD-rom of the unpublished papers, the unpublished account books at the American Philosophical Society, and other pertinent contemporary documents to find references to all books once in Franklin's library, not only those Wolf found and others that have come to light since his death, but also those we know he once owned though his copy has not been located. I have included all quotations from Franklin's writings in the "Notes" section of the catalogue entries. I have also provided the appropriate references to the various bibliographical listings such as the National Union Catalog and the English Short Title Catalogue.

This catalogue contains three different kinds of bibliographical entries: 1) those with an asterisk preceding the entry number, indicating the actual surviving copy owned by Franklin; 2) those with a question mark preceding the entry number, indicating a title owned by Franklin where incomplete documentary evidence precludes a more precise identification of the work; and 3) those with neither an asterisk nor a question mark preceding the entry number, indicating a work Franklin is known to have owned where the surviving copy he owned has not been located.

With each entry, the quality of the evidence has determined the fullness of the bibliographic citation. For surviving titles, each entry begins with the author's name, if known or discernible, including additional information identifying the author: birth-dates, death dates, and formal titles. The title of the book follows. In some entries, book titles appear in full, but in others the titles have been abbreviated or truncated. Ellipsis dots appear where a title has been abbreviated, except when the title has been truncated at its end. Names of editors and translators appear in parentheses after the title. Place of publication, publishers, date, and format—folio, quarto, octavo, duodecimo—follow.

For identifiable titles that do not survive, the entries follow a method established with *The Library of William Byrd* and perpetuated in *The Library of John Montgomerie*. If the precise edition of the work cannot be ascertained, then the title has been truncated to a common one that can refer to the different possible editions. If the evidence permits the identification of a specific edition, complete publication information—place, publisher, year, format—is provided. If there are two or more possible editions with the same publishers, those publishers are listed. In the case of two or more different publishers with the same place of publication, the place is listed but not the publishers. If there are two possible places of publication, both are listed. If there are

three or more possible places of publication, only the possible years of publication are listed. In the case of multiple possible editions, I have, with a few exceptions, listed either the number of editions through 1790, the year of Franklin's death, or that there were "many editions through" the year of the latest edition published in or before 1790. Dates provided have, when necessary, been converted to arabic numerals. For unidentified titles, a conjectural title based on the surviving evidence appears.

Most bibliographical citations conclude with one or more subject keywords in italics. Derived from the Library of Congress cataloguing system, though greatly simplified, these keywords allow the catalogue to be indexed by subject as well as by author and title and thus let readers obtain a fuller understanding of the kind of books that appealed to Benjamin Franklin. Works with corporate authors, however, generally do not contain subject keywords, the often elaborate corporate author entries being sufficient to indicate the contents of these works.

Much additional information follows the bibliographic citation. The first set of information may contain two different subsections. The first subsection provides information on the physical state of Franklin's books that have survived, describing the binding of the volumes or, in the case of volumes containing numerous pamphlets and other short works, naming the first work with which they are bound and their location within the volume. Provenance information comes next. This subsection quotes any ownership inscriptions contained in the work and supplies pertinent information regarding provenance gleaned from external sources, such as, most importantly, Franklin's papers.

Reference numbers from standard bibliographic sources follow. The *National Union Catalog: Pre-1956 Imprints* and the English Short Title Catalogue are the primary authorities for this catalogue. Only when a title has not been located in one of these do we cite other major bibliographical references such as OCLC or the *British Library Catalogue*. Where other bibliographical sources have been useful, we cite references numbers from them. These additional sources include such works as Pollard and Redgrave, *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad 1475-1640*; Wing, *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America and of English Books Printed in Other Countries 1641-1700*; and various other standard bibliographies. A complete list of sources follows the catalogue. Some entries also contain additional notes quoting critical comments regarding the book or its author from Franklin's papers. These notes are intended to be representative, not exhaustive.

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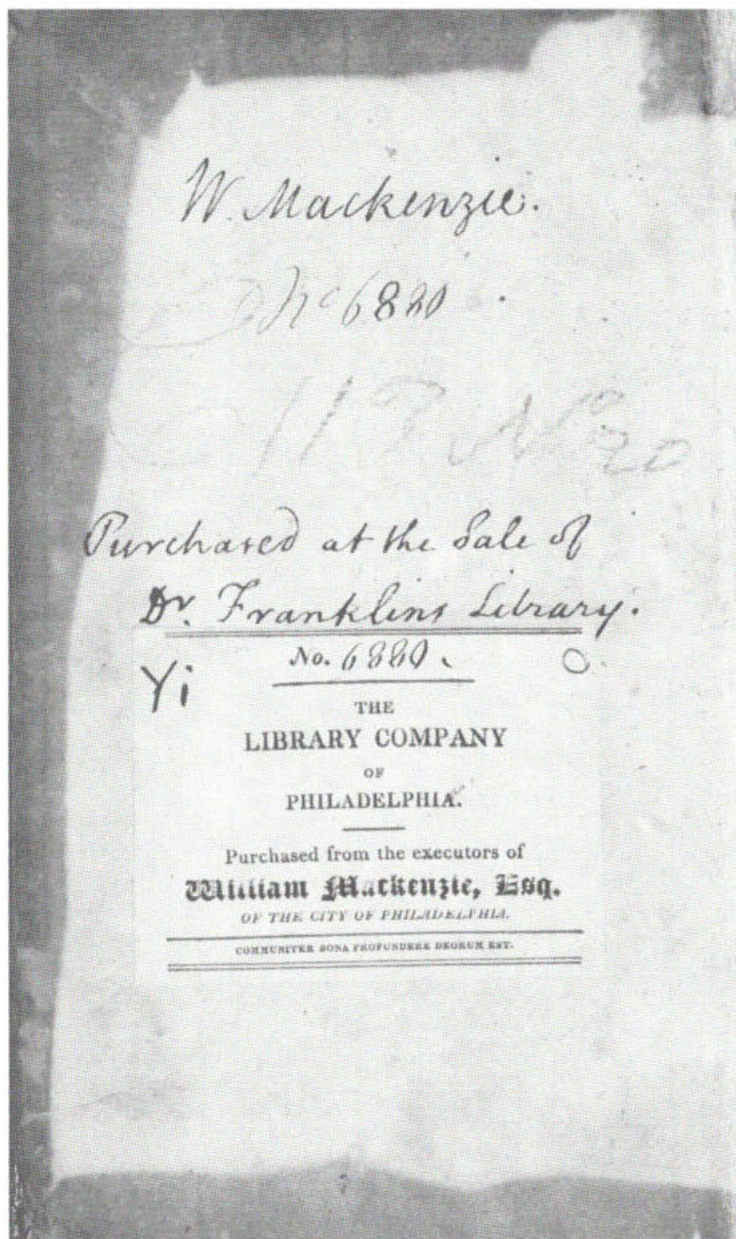


Fig. 1. The penciled mark "C113 N20" on the pastedown of William Smith, *Discourses on Several Public Occasions* (London, 1759) is a typical example of the shelfmark that was written in Franklin's books shortly before he died. The shelfmark was the key to Edwin Wolf's reconstruction of Franklin's library. (The Library Company of Philadelphia.)

Cant. No. Don.			List of Books for B. F. Bache marked in the Catalogue Printer or Pr.	
67	18 5.	A	Acta Academiæ Theodori Palatini.	1
115	16 63	I	Ephemerides du Citoyen, ou Bild des Sciences.	63
98	26	D	Calendrier Philantropique.	1
17	30-31	F	Elements d'Agriculture par Du Hamel.	2
50	10	C	Theatre des Jardinages.	1
78	14	I	On Harmony by G. Kellers.	1
39	10	H	Ecole Roy <sup>e</sup> de Dessin.	1
68	14 45	A	Artem Omnium Imagines.	1
70	16 27	D	Anecdotes des Beaux-Arts.	1
38	17	H	Natural Short hand.	1
80	6	D	Description of all Trades.	1
39	12	H	Every Man his own Broker.	1
44	19	E	The manual Arts.	1
38	3	H	Theatrum Machinarum universale.	1
78	33	I	Origine de l'Imprimerie.	1
50	18	C	Voyage de Figaro en Espagne.	1
45	32	I	Anecdotes Anglaises.	1
39	20	H	L'Esprit d'Henri quatre.	1
31	29	Do	Advertisements from Parnassus.	1
21	39	C	Anecdotes Françoises.	1
68	147	A	Espace de traduction Littéraire.	1
105	16	C	Opusculs de Teutry.	1
107	26		Table de la Fontaine.	1
46	31	I	La Rhétorique ou l'Art de parler.	1
44	34 35	E	The Examiners.	2
29	10	H	Astronomical Tables and Geography.	1
91	1-7	B	Mer de promesses ou - Dict <sup>e</sup> de.	8
80	39	D	Catalogue of Books in English Libraries.	1
20	24 25	E	Johnson's English Dictionary.	2
				100

Fig. 2. "List of Books for B. F. Bache marked in the Catalogue Printer or Pr." In this manuscript, Benjamin Franklin Bache identified his grandfather's books by shelfmark. It was found in 1962 in the papers of the late Franklin Bache, and it was the conclusive confirmation of Edwin Wolf's hypothesis that the shelfmark was a sure indication of Franklin provenance. (The Library Company of Philadelphia.)

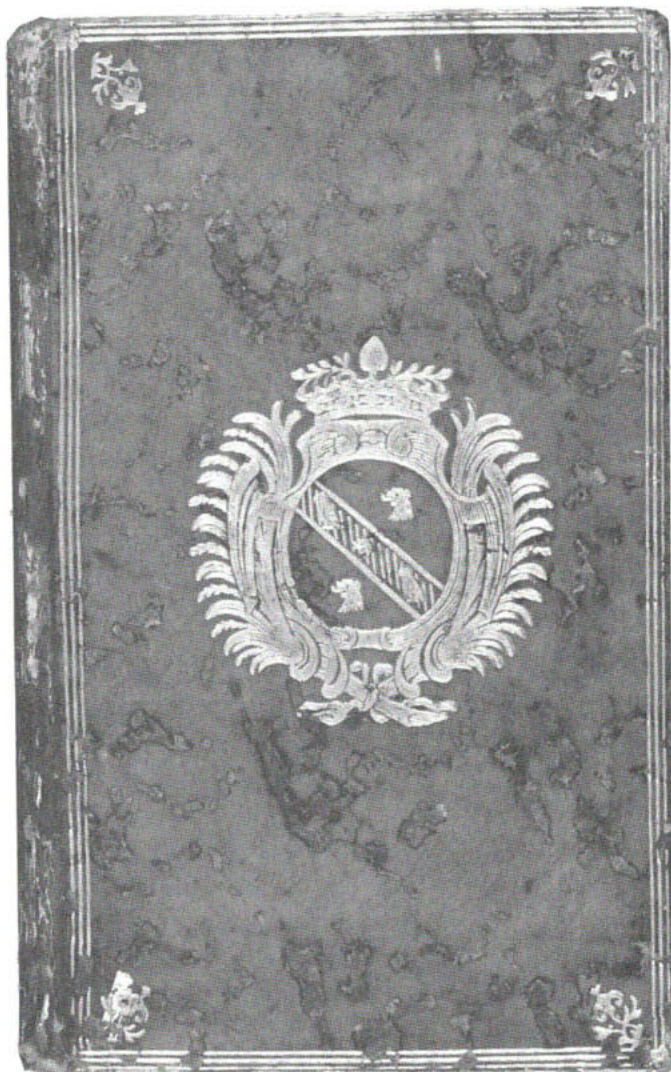


Fig. 3. René Georges Gastellier, *Des Spécifiques en Médecine* (Paris: Chez Didot, 1783). The book was dedicated to Franklin and is one of only two known bindings bearing Franklin's arms. It was presented by the Marquis de Mirabeau as a token of respect for Franklin's knowledge of medicine. (The Library Company of Philadelphia.) The other armorial binding, on *Constitutions des Treize Etats Unis de l'Amerique*, which Franklin had printed in Paris in 1783, is at the American Philosophical Society. Benjamin Franklin was not in fact related to the arms-bearing Franklins, although he occasionally used the Yorkshire family's coat-of-arms on printed forms and wax seals, starting in 1751.

