Sangster, M. (2017) Copyright literature and reading communities in eighteenth-century St Andrews. *Review of English Studies*, 38(287), pp. 945-967. (doi:[10.1093/res/hgx024](https://doi.org/10.1093/res/hgx024))

This is the author's final accepted version.

There may be differences between this version and the published version. You are advised to consult the publisher's version if you wish to cite from it.

<http://eprints.gla.ac.uk/138901/>

Deposited on: 27 March 2017

Copyright Literature and Reading Communities in Eighteenth-Century St Andrews

Abstract

This article examines the extensive and previously underexplored eighteenth-century records of the University Library at St Andrews, demonstrating their considerable potential for enhancing and complicating our existing accounts of book use and reading within eighteenth-century institutions. It uses accessions lists, borrowing registers and surviving books to investigate the far-reaching effects of the 1710 Copyright Act and to trace St Andrews' readers' enthusiastic and vociferous engagements with poetry, novels, criticism and plays. Legal deposit under the 1710 Act has often been seen as being relatively ineffectual, but St Andrews' records provide compelling evidence that it had a transformative material and intellectual impact on the university, in part through its providing considerable quantities of modern literature. While vernacular literary works were neglected in the English universities, in Scotland in general and in St Andrews in particular they came to play pioneering roles in arts curricula and circulated freely from libraries for formal study and leisurely perusal. St Andrews' accessions lists record the significant direct and indirect impacts of legal deposit legislation on the composition of the library. A series of slice samples from the borrowing registers shows a narrow canon of exemplary literary writers giving way to more various and heterogeneous patterns of reading in which the novel became increasingly dominant. Finally, a rich vein of surviving eighteenth-century marginalia demonstrates that St Andrews' students employed literary works as media for contentious, emotional and experimental discourses with each other, with their institution and with the social and affective values of the culture at large.

Main Text

Introduction

Since the turn of the millennium, there has been considerable interest in employing formerly neglected resources to provide new evidential bases for studying eighteenth-century readers and reading. Prominent instances include David Allan's work on Georgian commonplace books, derived from his extensive sampling; H.J. Jackson's two insightful books on marginalia, using examples from a range of prominent libraries; and William St Clair's analysis of book trade economics, which assembles much of its data from underused publishers' archives.¹ Such works have made important contributions to improving our understanding of what was read, by whom and in what ways, allowing us to see how our received canons have diverged from those understood by readers at the time and permitting us to reconstruct the often occluded intellectual and emotional vocabularies that shaped eighteenth-century engagements with texts.

This article builds on the methodologies employed in such works while taking a different but complementary approach to the problem of gathering salient sources. Rather than synthesising a data set from different collections, it focuses on a single coherent body of interconnected evidence: the surviving eighteenth-century accessions records, borrowing registers and books of the University Library at St Andrews. In doing so, it alloys a focus on reading practices with an attentiveness to the importance of institutional curation, examining how books were ordered and disordered by interrelated forces and stakeholders. St Andrews' library is a particularly good case study in this respect as it was curated not only by professors and students, but also by a legislative process: the Copyright Act of 1710, under which it was granted legal deposit privileges that greatly expanded both its holdings and the intellectual horizons of its users. While St Andrews was a somewhat marginal outpost of the Scottish Enlightenment, the works brought in by the Copyright Act opened it to the burgeoning of a wider British print culture. The university was a particular and idiosyncratic environment, but the nature of its educational priorities and the eclecticism fostered by legal deposit mean that the practices inscribed in its records can productively be used to explore more generally the instrumental and affective ways in which eighteenth-century books and writing operated.

The surviving archival evidence at St Andrews is both extremely extensive and extraordinarily rich. The library's catalogues, accession lists, borrowing registers and books could all be examined in more comprehensive manners than this article attempts, but in order to provide a necessary introduction, give a holistic sense of the archive's constitution and demonstrate its potential within a restricted compass, I limit my focus here principally to the accession, borrowing and reception of types of writing that would later be classified as literature: poetry, novels, drama and proto-criticism. During the eighteenth century, such works were not highly valued at the English universities, but St Andrews' records prove that the situation in Scotland was rather different. Accessions registers show that the Copyright Act brought in a great number of literary works and supplementary faculty purchases demonstrate that at least some of these came to be seen as valuable assets. Samples from the borrowing registers establish that literary volumes circulated promiscuously, although as the century progressed, the works that students and professors engaged with diverged increasingly from later canons. Finally, a rich and often bawdy body of surviving marginalia provides compelling evidence that literary works served as vital sites for vivacious and combative sociability. Books in St Andrews were not cold repositories of undisputed truths, but rather locations where knowledge and taste were actively acquired, demonstrated and called into question.

Copyright and Contexts

In his account of eighteenth-century libraries in university towns, Charles Benson dismisses the 1710 Copyright Act in a single concluding sentence: 'The effect of the establishment of legal deposit was small; its impact was not felt until the nineteenth century, when the pace of scholarship picked up in the universities.'² This view has some solid grounding in judgements made during the period. In 1724, William Reading, the Librarian of Sion College, estimated the value of the copyright privilege at 'about five Pounds *per annum*' – not nothing, but certainly not what might have been expected.³ In 1770, Edmund Law, the Bishop of Carlisle, writing principally from the perspective of Cambridge, lamented that 'very few books of value have been obtained, the Booksellers being determined not to lose many copies of the largest Paper, as this Act requires to be delivered, and chusing rather to forfeit all the benefit of it, and trust one another'.⁴ Many of the works that the Act did bring in were depicted as being of dubious value. Reading wrote that the booksellers entered 'such

English Sermons, Histories, Poems and Pamphlets, as they are apprehensive will be quickly be reprinted by others in cheaper Paper and Character: but commonly neglect to enter large and learned Works'.⁵ While copyright copies were in themselves free, they required carriage, usually arrived unbound and mandated that valuable storage space be allocated to them. The English legal deposit libraries generally believed that preserving room was more valuable than shelving works that seemed ephemeral or irrelevant. In 1751, Cambridge's Syndics resolved 'that such books as shall be judged proper for the Library be selected out of those sent down from the Stationers company, and that the Remainder be sold and the money arising from thence be laid out in the purchase of such other books as are most wanted'.⁶ The Bodleian pursued a similar policy, only moving in 1818 to a collection strategy based on 'rejecting nothing'.⁷

Benson's conclusion would thus seem accurately to reflect the value placed on the legal deposit privilege in English libraries, as the Copyright Act ostensibly did very little for 'the Encouragement of Learning' in these institutions.⁸ However, not all the privileged libraries were English. In the initial version of the bill, introduced four years before its eventual passage, legal deposit copies had been allocated to the Royal Library and to Oxford and Cambridge. Sion College was written in during a long consultation period, but it was only on the bill's reintroduction in 1709 that 'to commemorate the Union with Scotland, a copy was added for the use of the Library of the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh'.⁹ Copies for the four Scottish universities – Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews – were even later additions, introduced in an amendment tabled by Scottish peers in the House of Lords. As a result, Scotland did rather well out of the final bill, acquiring more privileged libraries than its far more populous southern neighbour.

The five Scottish libraries and the institutions that controlled them differed considerably from their English counterparts in their principles, holdings, and collecting practices. In 1709, Cambridge University Library already contained 'a total of 16,297 volumes, of which 658 were manuscripts'. This was more than ten times the size of the University Library in St Andrews at the same date, and this was before Cambridge's collections were nearly tripled in size by George I's gift of the vast library of John Moore, the Bishop of Ely.¹⁰ For Cambridge, for the Bodleian, which enjoyed even greater riches, and for the theologians of Sion College, the books from Stationers' Hall represented relatively minor additions. For the libraries at the Scottish universities, they were far more noteworthy. By

1800, about sixty per cent of St Andrews' collection consisted of legal deposit books.¹¹ Such works were also better fits with Scottish educational priorities. During the eighteenth century, the Scottish universities were moving towards curricula that placed greater emphasis on vernacular literature as a means of communicating knowledge and acquiring social graces. They were also crucibles for the new practical and empirical approaches to history, philosophy, political economy and other disciplines that are now grouped together under the umbrella of Scottish Enlightenment. The works entered at Stationers' Hall were far more in tune with these kinds of institutional priorities than with those that underpinned the more traditional programs of study pursued at the English universities.

This is not to say that during the eighteenth century the Scottish universities were universally innovative institutions. St Andrews in particular was in many respects impoverished and conservative. When its professors laid out their arts curriculum for government-appointed university commissioners in 1826, they provided an outline that had not substantially changed for a hundred years:

It is expected that the intrant students shall begin with the Language Classes; that they shall, as early as may be, commence the study of Mathematics, without which they could not be duly prepared for a subsequent part of their Course; and that they shall attend successively the Logic, the Moral Philosophy, and the Natural Philosophy, one each Session [...] Though not required by any positive regulation, it is almost the universal practice here for the students to attend the *private* or *senior* Greek and Latin Classes, during all the years of their Philosophy Course[.]¹²

As this list indicates, even in the early nineteenth century, Latin and Greek literature had the highest profile in terms of the division of instruction. Nevertheless, within this seemingly traditional structure, the kinds of vernacular literary productions that the Copyright Act provided in substantial quantities had come to play important secondary roles, particularly in the logic course. As Neil Rhodes has explored, it was Robert Watson, appointed as St Andrews' Professor of Logic, Rhetoric and Metaphysics in 1756, who 'first explicitly replace[d] Rhetoric with "Criticism" in the university curriculum'.¹³ Robert Crawford has gone so far as to identify Watson's use of vernacular literature as a key element in the 'Scottish Invention of English Literature'.¹⁴

However, while it is undoubtedly true that Scottish institutions pioneered the use of literary works in university classrooms, the purposes to which they were put were very different from those of modern English courses. Much of Watson's syllabus was functional in intention, as Paul G. Bator concludes at the end of his extensive examination of Watson's unpublished lectures and notes:

Watson's was a practical, moral rhetoric, for along with useful lessons in literary criticism, Watson was giving his students lessons about everyday life as those lessons emerged from the understanding and interpretation of the character, habits, and passions of literary subjects. While promoting an innovative or improving movement away from traditional rhetoric toward the enlightened rhetoric of the eighteenth century, Watson must also be seen as preserving traditional political order and social virtue.¹⁵

When vernacular poetry and drama appeared in the classroom at St Andrews, it was as part of a course concerned principally with inculcating notions of taste, focused on acquiring the skills and polish to operate successfully in society. Modern literature served this function well because of its relative ease of comprehension, but knowledge of its intricacies it was not in itself an accomplishment in the way that knowledge of the classical languages was. Nevertheless, the profusion of literary works in St Andrews' borrowing registers and the copious marginalia in surviving copies indicate that this was not a major obstacle in the minds of the students.

Assessing the impact of Watson's innovations provides one compelling incentive for examining St Andrews' library, but there are two further significant factors that make it a particularly striking and useful case study for exploring eighteenth-century reading practices. One is the quality of the surviving records. While Bator has shown that all four Scottish universities exercised their privileges under the Copyright Act to acquire extensive collections, St Andrews' archival materials provide uniquely comprehensive and well-documented accounts of the accessions, borrowings and uses of books.¹⁶ The second factor, perhaps counterintuitively, is the city's decline and isolation during the eighteenth century, in which the final loss of its ecclesiastical primacy combined with the economic shifts occasioned by the increasing importance of American trade to make it peripheral to the business of Scotland and of Britain as a whole.¹⁷ This decline reduced St Andrews' ability to

entice students and secure talented candidates for professorships, a problem aggravated by the poor financial positions of the university's constituent colleges, St Salvator's, St Leonard's and St Mary's. This occasioned the consolidation of the first two into a single United College in 1747. Travellers' accounts from the period commonly registered the city's deterioration. After visiting in 1732, John Loveday of Caversham observed that 'St Andrews is only a shadow of What It has been'.¹⁸ Forty years later, Thomas Pennant reported that it was 'greatly reduced in number of inhabitants' and possessed only a single manufactory, 'that of golf-balls'.¹⁹ Well into the nineteenth century, tourists saw St Andrews as a community sinking into senescence. Beriah Botfield, who visited in 1829, described it as being 'like the ghost of a fine city [...] still and lifeless, smitten as it were with the curse of eternal silence'.²⁰

However, during the same period, visitors who inspected the university library were increasingly impressed. In 1732, Loveday was unenthusiastic, writing that 'Besides y^e private College-Libraries, there is a public University Library, w^{ch} contains no very large number of books, for there is no Fund'.²¹ In his British tour, based on a visit made in 1784, Barthélemy Faujas de Saint-Fond stated that the library contained 'not more than eleven or twelve thousand' books and complained that these were 'almost all modern, with the exception of several bibles and some devotional books'.²² While the widely travelled Faujas was dismissive, his testimony accounts for a near-tenfold increase since 1687, when the library's first surviving catalogue indicates that it contained 1,251 books.²³ His account also makes clear the ubiquity of modern works brought in by the Copyright Act. In 1793, Henry Skrine described the library as 'a spacious and even elegant room, containing a large and valuable collection'.²⁴ In 1829, Botfield found 'in two spacious and well-lighted apartments, the vast and valuable library', a bright spot of modernity and luxury amidst the city's decay.²⁵

The general decline of St Andrews meant that the transformations wrought by the legal deposit privilege were both more obvious and more significant than those that took place in Edinburgh and Glasgow. While the prosperous university library at Edinburgh made considerable use of legal deposit books, it deaccessioned many less desirable works, its professors believing, like their English counterparts, that the Act provided 'a great deal of trash'.²⁶ However, in St Andrews, the paucity of alternative options for accessing knowledge meant that legal deposit copies were retained and frequently employed. The college libraries did not have extensive book funds and by the eighteenth century their holdings had become spotty and outdated. The earliest evidence found by K.A. Manley of a

dedicated circulating or subscription library in St Andrews dates from 1820, although Mark Towsey has contended plausibly that it is ‘hardly conceivable’ that booksellers in the town would not have loaned books previously.²⁷ St Andrews had one longstanding book business – Patrick Bower’s, which operated from premises on the corner of Market Street and Kirk Wynd from 1746.²⁸ The book trade historian Charles Timplerley noted that at his death at the age of ninety-two in 1814, Bower was ‘one of the oldest and most respectable booksellers in Europe’, although he also got Bower’s first name wrong, undercutting to some extent his point about his subject’s reputation.²⁹ Apart from Bower, the *Scottish Book Trade Index* lists only two other eighteenth-century St Andrews booksellers prior to James Morison’s being made printer to the university in 1797, each associated with a single date (although one of these, Alexander M’Culloch, certainly operated for longer, as George H. Bushnell records that he was Bower’s precursor as ‘Arch-beadle and binder to the University’ from 1713).³⁰ The options for buying books in St Andrews were thus distinctly limited, and high costs would have placed extensive purchases beyond the means of most students in any case. Nearby private library collections also appear to have been sparse; Towsey’s extensive list contains very few that relate to St Andrews and the surrounding area, particularly when compared with the other Scottish university cities.³¹ Some records are almost certain to have been lost, or never made – it is likely, for example, that the university’s professors had private collections, although the borrowing registers record their making extensive use of the university’s holdings. Nevertheless, it seems fair to contend that St Andrews had a comparatively impoverished book culture.

The lack of competition meant that the university library was an unusually active one. Peter Freshwater has noted that such institutions commonly acted as repositories: ‘Collections were to be acquired, catalogued, gloated over and admired. Libraries were largely, in fact, museums of the book.’³² St Andrews’ library was certainly used for display, acting, as Matthew Simpson puts it in his illuminating doctoral thesis, as ‘a sort of mission statement for the university, committing it to an established metropolitan tradition of polite secular learning’.³³ However, it was also a hard-working collection. With a few exceptions, undergraduates were barred from the University Library in Cambridge and discouraged from using the Bodleian.³⁴ By contrast, in the Scottish universities – with the exception of Marischal College in Aberdeen – undergraduate students were regularly admitted to the libraries, and St Andrews had particularly generous provisions.³⁵ Its 1734 regulations required the Keeper to make the library available ‘all the teaching days of every week, from

the hours of ten to twelve in the forenoon, and on Munday, Wednesday, and Friday, besides his forenoon's attendance, from the hours of two to four in the afternoon'.³⁶ This time was gradually reduced; in 1826, the commissioners were informed that the opening hours were 'Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, from nine to eleven.'³⁷ While even at their longest these hours were not extensive, this was because the library was not designed principally as a reading space.³⁸ Instead, students possessed generous borrowing rights, being permitted to take books away for up to six weeks in 1734 and up to three weeks by 1826.³⁹ At points, they were required to pay fees for library use and to leave a returnable deposit of twenty shillings against which damages could be charged.⁴⁰ They were also denied access to a few books that were deemed too expensive or immoral. However, they had in most respects considerable freedom. Their professors enjoyed almost unimpeded access, being able to take out unlimited numbers of books for unlimited periods. Entries in the registers also indicate that professors' families and a number of well-to-do townspeople were able to borrow. While the library was not as inclusive as its title of 'publick library' might connote for modern auditors, it was, by eighteenth-century standards, a relatively accessible collection.

St Andrews University Library was thus peculiarly open to transformation by the Copyright Act due to its location, small size, patterns of use and the relatively limited funds available for buying books of the professors' choices. Of the 1,547 accessions recorded in the scrupulous records for the period between February 1723 and August 1759, only 353 were purchases using university funds. Twenty-seven volumes arrived as gifts or donations, but the remaining 1,167 books were copies received from Stationers' Hall.⁴¹ The Act principally brought in vernacular books, diluting the prominence of Latin in the collection. It also brought in works that would not generally have been purchased by a learned library, including satires, novels and books by women.⁴² Unlike Oxford or Cambridge, where such works were often sold or left to gather dust, in St Andrews they were bound, shelved, catalogued and allowed to circulate. These processes were all extensively documented and the records survive in an unusually complete state. In Cambridge University Library, borrowing registers survive only for the period between 1846 and 1847, so usage patterns must be sought in scattered references and inferred from factors such as the conditions of books.⁴³ In St Andrews, three surviving borrowing registers cover the period from 1737 to 1759 for both professors and students, and then two long runs cover a span from 1768 to 1925 for students (twenty-seven volumes) and from 1773 to 1925 for professors (fifteen volumes), with a few blips and exceptions.⁴⁴ The university also holds fairly complete

accession records, an extensive sequence of catalogues, and a considerable number of the books that came in under the copyright privilege, many of which contain marginal comments from the generations of students that employed them. While a full exploration of these riches is beyond the scope of a journal article, focusing on kinds of literary writing that were neglected south of the border will serve to demonstrate how the collections can be used both to provide new insights and as an empirical testing ground for older assumptions.

Legislative Accessioning and Informed Curation

During the eighteenth century, books entered St Andrews' collection by three main methods: donations, purchases and copyright accessions. As the figures cited in the previous paragraph imply, the University Library was not hugely successful in attracting donors, although during the seventeenth century its seed collection had been donated and the separate libraries of the colleges had received some impressive legacies.⁴⁵ The eighteenth-century accessions registers occasionally note donations of one or two books and include a few more substantial gifts. In 1767, the university's Chancellor, Thomas Hay, Earl of Kintoul, gave £100 for buying books and during the 1760s and 1770s the literary philanthropist Thomas Hollis sent the university a number of works promoting 'Liberty, the Principles of the [Glorious] Revolution, and the Protestant Succession in the House of Hanover'.⁴⁶ Hollis also bequeathed the University Library £100 on his death. Nevertheless, donations were ultimately a fairly minor element in the library's growth.

Book purchases were a far more significant factor. These were administered by curators appointed each year by the Senatus Academicus, the university's governing body. The professors took it in turns to act as curators and generally bought to some extent within the remits of their chairs.⁴⁷ Consequently, the works most commonly acquired were classical, theological, historical and natural-philosophical. Curatorial purchases were supplemented by regular updates for periodical series and by university-mandated purchases to grow certain sections of the collection. The library took several major proto-scientific journals, including the *Philosophical Transactions*, the *Histoire de L'Académie Royale des Sciences* and the *Acta Eruditorum*. It also took the *Monthly Review*, established by Ralph Griffith in 1749 with the intention of noticing all new publications.⁴⁸ The *Monthly* was evidently keenly read in St Andrews, as in 1767 the Senatus had to specify how it should circulate: 'With respect to the

Monthly Reviews it was agreed that whenever they come to hand they be sent to the oldest member of University, and by him to the next in seniority, and so on, and that none keep them above three nights under the penalty of one shilling sterling.’⁴⁹ The synoptic overview of modern print culture that the *Monthly* provided was evidently influential, as a number of the legal deposit books that it commended became frequently borrowed favourites.

The wide-ranging interest that Reviews modelled was demonstrated through faculty acquisitions of books by major poets and dramatists from the 1750s onwards. The first recorded purchases of such works were made in 1757, when the curators were John Young (Professor of Ethics and Pneumatics), Walter Wilson (Professor of Greek) and Robert Watson (the previously mentioned Professor of Logic, Rhetoric and Metaphysics). Watson had only recently returned to St Andrews after impressing audiences in Edinburgh with his public lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, a series he had taken over from Adam Smith at the invitation of Lord Kames.⁵⁰ In 1757, Watson was also instrumental in securing an honorary doctorate of divinity for Hugh Blair, who would become the first occupant of Edinburgh’s Regius Chair of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in 1762. As these affiliations with Edinburgh’s ‘moderate literati’ indicate, Watson took the pedagogical potential of vernacular literature seriously, and this was reflected in the purchases made after his appointment.⁵¹ He and his fellow curators bought classical works by Herodotus, Petrarch, Hesiod, Theocritus and Demosthenes, but also an eight-volumes *Works* of Shakespeare, for which they paid sixteen shillings and six pence, and ‘Newton’s Milton’ – presumably Thomas Newton’s edition of *Paradise Lost* – for which they paid ten shillings.⁵² In 1760, the same curators supplemented their earlier purchase with ‘Milton’s paradise regain’d & occasional poems by Newton’ at the cost of eight shillings and six pence.⁵³

1762 saw the purchase by the University’s order of new sets of the *Spectator*, the *Guardian* and the *Tatler*, as well as Alexander Pope’s *Miscellaneous Works* and Jonathan Swift’s *Works*.⁵⁴ Their company on the list indicates that these were probably bought to provide respite for existing editions or to replace missing copies.⁵⁵ In 1765, the curators added the works of William Shenstone and William Mason and Joseph Warton’s *Essay on Pope*. In 1767, Matthew Prior’s poems were purchased along with the works of Joseph Addison, William Congreve, and Ben Jonson; Edmund Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*; a second copy of *Paradise Lost* with Richard Bentley’s notes; and Robert Dodsley’s *Collection of Poems*. In 1772, curators purchased a considerable quantity of poetry, including Pope’s *Iliad*,

Odyssey and collected poems; John Dryden's poems and fables; Richard Glover's *Leonidas*; Samuel Butler's *Hudibras*; and collections by Prior, Addison, Edmund Waller, William Collins and Edward Young.⁵⁶

However, few of these purchases represented the first time that the author in question had been shelved in the library. Prior's *Poems* in folio had arrived from Stationers' Hall in or around 1723, a quarto copy of Glover's *Leonidas* in 1737 and Mason's *Odes* in 1756.⁵⁷ Addison's *Cato* was received in 1713, his *Works* in quarto in 1723 and a duodecimo copy of his *Anacreon* in 1737.⁵⁸ Before the two curator-bought copies of *Paradise Lost* came John Marchant's edition in sixteen numbers, with notes compiled from other authorities.⁵⁹ Most of Pope's productions arrived soon after their publication, including his *Windsor Forest* and *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*, his *Iliad*, *Odyssey* and *Miscellanies*, his letters, his collected works, his works in prose, and the four-book *Dunciad*.⁶⁰ While Butler's *Hudibras* was before the copyright privilege's time, register entries exist for 'The Life of Don Quixot in 4 parts [...] translated into Hudibrastick verse. By Ed. Ward', 'Vulgus Britannicus; Or, the British Hudibras' and 'The Irish Hudibras by Mr Moffet'.⁶¹

This profusion of prior accessions begs a question: did the professors curate the library, or did the institutional influence of the copyright accessions curate the professors' tastes? Ultimately, the answer must lie somewhere between those two extremes, with the relationship being – like the larger relationship between Enlightenment print and history in Richard B. Sher's estimation – 'complex and dialectical'.⁶² Most of St Andrews' mid-century professors went to Scottish universities, so they would have had access to legal deposit books during their own educations. These may well have contributed to their re-evaluations of what constituted valuable humanistic studies, leading them in turn to reshape their own library accordingly. While purchases of poetry and dramatic works remained less common than those of theological, historical and classical books, they persisted from the 1750s onwards.

As the legal deposit privilege did not extend to foreign works, the *Senatus Academicus* occasionally intervened to compensate for this lack. A minute dated 13th November 1762 states that 'As the publick Library wants a great many of the principal French writers, it was agreed that £20 sterling be laid out in purchasing the best editions'.⁶³ The works bought included books by Pierre Corneille, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux,

Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle and Voltaire.⁶⁴ In 1763, the university bought John Hoole's translation of Torquato Tasso's *La Gerusalemme Liberata*, in 1764 Tobias Smollett's translation of Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and in 1767 Charles Jervas's *Quixote* translation, Pierre de Marivaux's *La Vie de Marianne* and works by Tasso, Ludovico Ariosto and Giovanni Boccaccio.⁶⁵

While foreign novels in the original or in translation seem to have been acceptable purchases, English novels were very rarely bought, despite the fact that legal deposit copies were eagerly borrowed by students and professors alike. However, this may have been because the Act was relatively effective at sending fiction the library's way. Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* arrived between 1719 and 1723 and the *History of the Pyrates* attributed to him in St Andrews' records and his *Moll Flanders* both followed, entering the library in 1727.⁶⁶ Many other recognisable names occupy the lists, including Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* and *Amelia*, both parts of Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, and Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random* and *Peregrine Pickle*.⁶⁷ Other less recognisable novels also arrived – directly following *Peregrine Pickle* on the list of books for early 1751 are Charlotte Lennox's *Life of Harriot Stuart*, John Hill's *The History of a Woman of Quality: Or, The Adventures of Lady Frail*, Francis Coventry's *History of Pompey the Little* and Robert Paltock's *The Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins*. Not every novel was dispatched north – later in the century, *Tristram Shandy* was a notable absence, and the Minerva Press does not seem to have sent up its popular gothic productions.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, a great quantity did arrive, and both now-forgotten novels and enduring classics found enthusiastic readers.

Borrowers

Knowing what came into the library is one thing, but knowing what was taken out is in many respects more useful. Borrowing does not necessarily equate to reading, but it gives a better indication than a book's simple presence. While the handwriting and dating in St Andrews' eighteenth-century receipt books occasionally leave something to be desired, practices like the provision of a short title on borrowing and return and the recording of pressmarks that can be checked against catalogues mean that identifying the works taken out is relatively straightforward. The surviving registers contain a very large number of entries, so this article draws on samples taken from three years.⁶⁹ Originally, these were intended to

be 1750, 1775 and 1800. Unfortunately, the standard of record-keeping deteriorated as the century wore on and by 1800 exact borrowing dates were only sporadically noted. However, there was a temporary improvement after August 1798, when a committee formed to inspect the library found ‘329 books entirely wanting and unaccounted for’, ninety-six further works ‘rendered incomplete’ and many of the books ‘much torn, the plates cut out, the margins, blank leaves and title-pages scribbled over’.⁷⁰ Actions taken as a result of the committee’s report meant it was possible, with a few assumptions, to harvest a data set of books borrowed between October 1798 and September 1799.⁷¹

When comparing the three samples, the most striking contrast is the large jump in borrowings between 1750 and 1775, the number more than doubling between these dates (Table 1):⁷²

Table 1: Quantities of Borrowings			
<i>Sample</i>	<i>Student Borrowings</i>	<i>Professorial Borrowings</i>	<i>Total</i>
1750	805	66	871
1775	1391	415	1806
Oct 1798 – Sep 1799	1360	405	1765

The numbers of unique borrowers display a similar pattern. The number of non-professors listed as borrowing books more than doubled between 1750 and 1775, then fell off a little at the end of the century (Table 2):

Table 2: Numbers of Borrowers	
<i>Sample</i>	<i>Unique Non-Professorial Borrowers</i>
1750	59
1775	120
October 1798 – September 1799	106

It is important to note that this doubling did not reflect an equivalent rise in student numbers; a cumulative count of arts matriculations in the four years prior to each sample date shows only a modest rise, from seventy-five arts students in 1750 to eighty-eight in 1775 to ninety-

five in 1798/9.⁷³ Not everyone who studied at the university necessarily matriculated formally, and these numbers do not include the divinity students at St Mary's College or individuals from the town who were permitted to borrow, which explains why for the later two ranges the total number of student matriculations is lower than the borrower total in the table. Nevertheless, these numbers show that by 1775 the vast majority of the students and professors were making use of the library. There were a number of institutional changes that might partly account for these shifts. The growing obsolescence of the United College's collections might have driven its members increasingly to use the University Library. Borrowing records do not exist for the college books before they were incorporated into the main library in the 1780s, but only a handful of them were borrowed from their gallery shelves in 1798/9. Students may also have been more inclined to borrow due to the practice of their requiring a line from their professors to do so falling into disuse, although this convention was always only nominally enforced, and this change would not account for the jump in professorial borrowings.

Looking at literary borrowings suggests that the development of increasingly omnivorous reading habits was a major contributing factor to the increase in library use. Fully drawing out the theoretical and methodological implications of the category of 'literary works' in eighteenth-century contexts would fill an article in itself, but for the pragmatic purposes of Table 3, the books included were novels, plays and poetry in English and modern foreign languages, literary periodicals such as the *Spectator*, *Rambler* and *Tatler*, and works of proto-criticism such as Charles Rollin's *Method of Teaching and Studying the Belles Lettres*, Lord Kames' *Elements of Criticism* and Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*.⁷⁴

Table 3: Borrowings of Literary Works				
<i>Sample</i>	<i>Students</i>		<i>Professors</i>	
	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1750	150 (of 805)	18.6	14 (of 66)	21.2
1775	366 (of 1391)	26.3	107 (of 415)	25.7
1798/9	328 (of 1360)	24.1	66 (of 405)	16.3

While the percentage changes are not drastic, they imply an increasing interest in poetry, plays and novels in the third quarter of the century. This, combined with the large increase in overall borrowings between 1750 and 1775, meant that significant quantities of literary works circulated from the library in the periods covered by the later samples. The increase shown is broadly in line with that found by Matthew Simpson in samples following the matriculants in the Arts classes that entered the university in 1748, 1753, 1768, 1773 and 1782.⁷⁵ Reading the two samples against each other, it becomes clear that the students of the United College were keener readers of novels and plays than the divinity students of St Mary's. However, both samples depict similar trends – an increase in literary borrowings as the century progressed, with a slight falling-off towards the end. The high point during Robert Watson's tenure might partly be attributable to the influence of his teaching, although the works borrowed were not necessarily by writers who were employed as models in his classes.

Student literary borrowings in 1750 were notable for the dominance of a few major authors. Both Addison's *Works* and the *Spectator* were frequently borrowed, as were Rollin's *Method of Teaching and Studying the Belles Lettres* and works by Swift. Addison and Swift were both employed as models for 'ease and simplicity' in Scottish educational contexts; in his Edinburgh lectures, Blair described them as 'carry[ing] always those general characters of good Style, which, in the midst of their occasional negligences, every person of good taste must discern and approve'.⁷⁶ Combined with the interest in Rollin, this may indicate that even in 1750 under Henry Rymer, belles lettres played some part in St Andrews' curriculum. Works of fiction borrowed frequently included *Robinson Crusoe*, *Roderick Random*, Sarah Fielding's *Adventures of David Simple* and two less familiar titles, Andrew Michael Ramsay's *Travels of Cyrus* and a collection of Oriental tales in two volumes. Among the poets, Pope was popular, as, to a lesser extent, were James Thomson's works and Edward Young's *Night-Thoughts*. Eliza Haywood's *Female Spectator* was borrowed alongside Addison's original, one of very few female-authored works in the 1750 sample. The only pure dramatist borrowed seems to have been Molière. Little pre-eighteenth-century literature circulated; Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, taken out twice, is a notable exception. There are few genuine surprises here; the majority of the frequent literary borrowings were of authors that modern scholars compiling an anthology of early eighteenth-century writings might well select.

In 1775, Addison, Pope and Swift were borrowed a similar number of times to 1750, but since more than twice as many literary works circulated, this was relatively speaking a decline. Strikingly little poetry was borrowed beyond these three writers; among the students, only two other poets were borrowed more than once. One was Matthew Prior, borrowed twice, and the other was James Macpherson's dubiously extant Celtic bard Ossian, whose *Fingal* and *Temora* racked up a total of eleven borrowings between them. Plays were more popular, but it is difficult to discuss them specifically as many were bound into volumes registered under unforthcoming titles such as 'Plays one vol' or 'Plays Vol 36th'. Among named authors, Molière, William Congreve, Ben Jonson and Shakespeare were taken out frequently. Novel-borrowing had become increasingly common, with one of the year's big hits being Henry Brooke's *Fool of Quality*, a vast and enduringly popular sentimental novel of education and its results. The other two novels most frequently borrowed by students were one inevitably recorded as 'Eloisa', but identifiable from a named reference and its pressmark as Rousseau's *Julie, or the New Heloise*, and *Anecdotes of a Convent*, a three-volume novel published in 1771. While modern criticism is almost entirely silent regarding this novel and its author remains unidentified, at the time, the *Monthly Review* was enthusiastic, observing 'a degree of merit, rarely to be met with in publications of the same class' and describing it as exhibiting 'a beautiful picture of real manners', judgements with which St Andrews' keen *Monthly* readers apparently concurred.⁷⁷ Other novels borrowed four or more times include Edward Bancroft's *History of Charles Wentworth*; *Don Quixote* (in two separate translations); Henry Fielding's *Amelia*; Eliza Haywood's tongue-twisting *History of Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy* and *Invisible Spy*; Charles Johnstone's *History of Arsaces, Prince of Betlis*; William Melmoth's *Fitzosborne's Letters on Several Subjects*; Smollett's *Humphry Clinker*; and the anonymous *Memoirs of Mrs Williams* (by the mysterious author of *Anecdotes of a Convent*). It is striking how much less familiar this list seems than the 1750 borrowings. Perhaps this bespeaks something of a gap in our histories of the novel in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, or perhaps it simply provides evidence of the proliferation of print during these decades, a burgeoning transmitted to St Andrews via the Copyright Act, under which all but the two *Don Quixote* translations entered the library.

By 1798, the landscape had changed again. Addison, Pope and Swift were out among the students. *Gulliver's Travels* and Swift's *Works* were borrowed five times in total, the interest in Addison comprised a single borrowing of a volume of spuriously attributed *Anecdotes* and works by Pope did not circulate at all, with the exception of his *Iliad* and

Odyssey translations, which were enduringly useful as cribs. Among modes of interpretation, Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* reigned supreme, with the library's four copies borrowed collectively eighteen times. Poetry was rarely borrowed: the works of Ossian were taken out three times, as were Butler's *Hudibras* and books by James Thomson. The most-borrowed poet was Milton; *Paradise Lost* was borrowed on four occasions, and *Paradise Regained* and his *Works* once each, an indication that the 1790s revival in interest traced by Joseph Crawford stretched as far north as St Andrews.⁷⁸ The borrowing of drama was also down from 1775, with Shakespeare's plays circulating on seven occasions and volumes from John O'Keeffe's recently published *Dramatic Works* on five. Two of August von Kotzebue's popular comedies were borrowed in translation: *The Stranger* twice and Elizabeth Inchbald's adaptation of *Lovers' Vows* thrice. By this time, though, the field of literary borrowing was dominated by the novel. Fielding remained popular – his novels and volumes of his collected works were taken out on a total of eighteen occasions. The other two most-borrowed writers were both women. One was Ann Radcliffe, whose gothic novels *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Italian* seem to have enraptured St Andrews as they did the rest of the reading nation. The most borrowed novelist of all, though, was Charlotte Smith. Her first book, *Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle*, remained her most popular, but her *Banished Man*, *Young Philosopher* and *Celestina* also circulated, the former two on numerous occasions. Other novels borrowed four or more times include a few familiar names – Brooke's *Fool of Quality*, *Don Quixote*, Oliver Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* and Samuel Richardson's *History of Sir Charles Grandison* – but also relatively obscure publications like the anonymous (and awful) *Adeline de Courcy*, Jean-Jacques Barthélemy's *Travels of Anacharsis*, Madame De Genlis's *Knights of the Swan*, Isaac D'Israeli's anti-Jacobin *Vaurien* and George Walker's *Cynthelia, or a Woman of Ten Thousand*.⁷⁹ These novels were only the tip of the iceberg, with a large number of others borrowed less frequently. St Andrews' records make it clear that fiction, rather than verse, was the genuinely popular literary mode for the university's late eighteenth-century readers. This triumph of the novel is commonly alluded to in the fears of the Romantic poets, but is often occluded by poetry's dominance in later literary-historical narratives of the period between 1789 and 1832. This is a good example of how library records can serve as a useful corrective to expectations shaped by posthumously constructed canons, letting us both recover a hinterland of popular literature and better understand the original oppositional qualities of the works that later came to dominate views of the 1790s.

Taken together, these snapshots indicate that literary borrowings over the last half of the eighteenth century became increasingly miscellaneous, moving away from the kinds of officially sanctioned writings that the professorial curators were purchasing. The sorts of works that modern auditors would consider to be classics of English Literature did not go unread, but they were subject to increasing competition from more ephemeral, topical and fashionable publications. The framers of the Copyright Act might have been disappointed had they known that their legislation to promote learning would fill the library at St Andrews with distracting reams of modern print. However, surviving eighteenth-century marginalia indicate that even the most staid reading could become the site of scandal and that students could demonstrably learn things that they found to be of use from a diverse range of textual provocations.

Reading the Margins

After visiting St Andrews in 1772, Thomas Pennant remarked that ‘from the smallness of the society every student’s character is perfectly known. No little irregularity can be committed, but it is instantly discovered and checked’.⁸⁰ The marginalia in frequently borrowed books that survive both supports and undercuts this statement.⁸¹ Its profligacy bespeaks the ineffectiveness of efforts by the university authorities to keep the collection clean, but the many attacks on named students indicate that in St Andrews’ small and suffocating community tempers could easily be vented into the books. Of the two types of characteristic interventions that H.J. Jackson has observed, the marginalia in St Andrews veer far more towards the ‘subjective but interpersonal’ than the ‘objective and utilitarian’.⁸² One of the first things that a reader opening the first volume of Addison’s *Works* would discover was that ‘William French is a damned bragging, lying bitch. He says he has shot all kinds of Fowls in this Country & he cannot shoot a bit, & when misses he says the gun does not shoot straight. Bragging Sinner’.⁸³ On the following page, an inserted ‘Advertisement’ reads ‘I do hereby give notice to all Ladies, lasses &c who want husbands not to take Willie Drummond for I can give my word of honour that he is an Eunuch’.⁸⁴ Those reading Smollett’s translation of *Don Quixote* would find out that ‘Mr Gulon is a bloody Rascal for he plays with all the whores in St Andrews’.⁸⁵ One student during the 1760s was evidently not a fan of his classmate, the poet Robert Fergusson, as he wrote in a copy of Swift and Pope’s *Miscellanies*, ‘Rob. Ferguson alias The Puppy alias The ape alias an ape’s Fra[off page] alias the ill grown

ill natured brat alias the damned nasty whoring drunken bragging shit. By the authority of old nick in whose hands he now is and forever will be'.⁸⁶

[Insert 'Figure 1 – Swift 3 I.jpg'. Caption: 'Figure 1: The attack on Robert Fergusson (University of St Andrews Library, sPR3724.M4D27).']

Against these lines on the opposite page, another writer, perhaps Fergusson himself, has written the couplet 'The man who wrote these cursed lines on me/he now is damned and evermore shall be'.⁸⁷

These writings seem to indicate a less-than-respectful attitude towards the library's books and this was something that the students were obviously well aware of. As one put it: 'It is a most scandalous thing to write upon the library books which are deposited there for the use & benefits of such persons as please to have recourse to them. I myself am hurried on along by my mind to write this advertisement for the interest of any one to whose hands it may come in forewarning him of the dangers of abusing the Library books'.⁸⁸

[Insert 'Figure 2 – Addison 2 477.jpg'. Caption: 'Figure 2: A caution against annotation (University of St Andrews Library, sPR3300.D21).']

Such deliberate provocations were particularly common during the librarianship of William Vilant, nicknamed 'Punctum', who the students despised and who was the most common subject of their attacks. In Fielding's *Miscellanies*, a student wrote 'Punctum Vilant is an illtongued illnatured Brat and is certainly unclean in Heart'; in Addison, a student aggrieved at the difficulty of getting books addresses him as a 'Viper' and a 'son of a Snake'; and, perhaps most interestingly from a literary standpoint, in Smollett's translation of *Don Quixote* the two are made equivalent: 'Vilant Don Quixote De La Mancha'.⁸⁹

These abusive attacks are funny, but they also reveal something about the ways in which students conceived of books. As Simpson puts it: 'Very few of the marginalia surviving from the eighteenth century are, in the way characteristic of modern student additions, directed to the private business of study [...] Rather, nearly all of them initiate a dialogue of some sort, either with the text, or with other students, or with both.'⁹⁰ They tend to occur concentrated both in certain books and on specific clusters of pages, where, in

Simpson's words, 'the ice having once been broken, new voices readily join the conversation.' In some cases, this conversation has little to do with the book in which it takes place, although it is noticeable that the most violent attacks often occur in writers who were themselves satirists – such Swift and Fielding – and in Addison, an author held up as a great model for polished prose writing and thus presumably someone who was both regularly consulted and an irresistible target. In many cases, the marginal notes are nothing more than names, signatures, repetitions, sketches or pieces of mathematics homework. In a few cases, though, they directly address the texts, and it is here that we can get a better sense of the ways in which students conversed with and learned from literary works.

One thing that quickly becomes apparent is that students loved to correct authors' faulty grammar. Against Swift's 'We have drove Popery out' in his 'Squire Bickerstaff Detected' a student has written 'John should have said driven but elegance and propriety were not to be expected from him'.⁹¹ Smollett is corrected in *Don Quixote* for writing 'again remounting', the commentator pointing out that 'again & the re [at] the beginning of the next word are synonymous terms'.⁹² A student annotator in John Moore's novel *Zeluco* preferred his own 'expose himself to danger' to Moore's slightly archaic 'incur danger'.⁹³ Such corrections could themselves be corrected; against an annotation nonsensically changing 'carelessness' to 'carefulness' in Blair's *Lectures*, a fellow student has written, 'he must be a fool who attempted to correct the author when he was in no error'.⁹⁴ Such changes probably echo the corrections made to the students' own writings and highlight the role that literary works played in providing models for polite and effective practices. By correcting, students both one-upped supposed exemplars and advertised their own successful pursuits of clean and accomplished styles.

Another common kind of annotation was the display of knowledge. In *Zeluco*, a student glosses 'was not afraid to give him that species of satisfaction' with 'dueling'.⁹⁵ In Swift's prose burlesque 'An Account of Wood's Execution', a student not only shows that he knows that the 'A—' in the line 'I'll make his A— make Buttons' stands for 'Arse', but also suggests that the line would be better if the word 'make' was replaced with 'shite'.⁹⁶ Such annotating and gap-filling displays students' acculturation to the milieus represented in books, responding to the tests implied by absences and polite circumlocutions. In a few cases, annotators left further tests for future readers – below a pencilled line of Latin scrawled

into *Zeluco*, its writer has added, ‘If you whoever you are cannot explain and translate the above line I say you are nothing but a blockhead’.⁹⁷

Sometimes, annotators’ notes reveal the systems of value by which they judged what they read. On one page in Blair’s *Lectures*, an approving hand has written, ‘Blair thou makest good remarks. You must have had good taste great judgement & a sublime understanding’.⁹⁸ Underscoring the value of these qualities, a second hand has added opposite, ‘The fellow who wrote that on the other leaf appears to be of bad taste to have had no judgement, nor understanding’.⁹⁹ Similarly, a few pages later, against a student who has responded to Blair’s argument by writing that ‘Beauty and Elegance in Speech are desirable’ a grumpy annotator has written, ‘That fellow is a stupid ass is not beauty & elegance in any thing whatsoever desirable’.¹⁰⁰ Neither gainsayer contradicts the value system of the original annotation; instead, both contend that they themselves are better arbiters of desirable qualities. In both cases it is also clear, as in Samuel Johnson’s 1755 definition of ‘literature’ as ‘Learning, skill in letters’, that these qualities were seen as vesting principally in people rather than in books.¹⁰¹ In the student’s address to Blair, the ‘must have had’ is telling. Blair’s book might manifest his attributes, but their source is lost. The book is seen as a reflection of its author, as it also is in the copy’s final annotation: ‘Upon the whole this is a very interesting Volume, it does the Author very great Credit – almost as good as Campbells’.¹⁰²

There are a few examples of more affective responses. In Moore’s novel, an annotator asserts ‘I cannot help saying that *Zeluco* was a very perfidious ingrateful and malicious villain so he was’ and later another hand adds the rather more concise ‘Die Wretch *Zeluco*’.¹⁰³ These annotators were evidently taking the intended moral lessons from a book that tasked itself with ‘delineating the disgusting features of Villainy’.¹⁰⁴ Peculiarly, Addison’s drama *Cato* is particularly rich in such responses. At the end, a Mr ‘J. Scriptor’ offers this conclusion: ‘A pretty affecting story, faith: poor Marcus I pity thy ~~noble~~ unhappy fall for thou dyedst in a noble cause: poor Devil’.¹⁰⁵ Earlier in the play, one writer attempts to warn a character of his unhappy end: ‘Juba, you are damnably mistaken he loves you not no by George’.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps the strangest comments come from a student signing himself ‘a madman in love’, who adds words around printed character names to create the sentences ‘Unhappy MARCUS to love and not be loved’ and ‘Thrice Happy PORTEUS to love and be loved’ and is incensed by the actions of Sempronius and Syphax: ‘May the two traytors be

unhappy in this world and damned in the next if there be another which' – with possibly heretical words following blotted out.¹⁰⁷ This sort of impassioned engagement was obviously slightly suspicious, however, as the annotator is described beneath in another hand as 'A damned whimsical Son of a Sea horse'.

In some ways, it is tempting to dismiss these insulting, pedantic, instrumental and somewhat naive readers as juvenile – which, of course, many of them were, as the university admitted students in their early teens. However, there is also something powerfully provoking about the eighteenth-century views of literary works that such annotations record. That literature is a pragmatic means of improving oneself, that it can and should be argued with and dismissed when necessary, that it challenges us to think better, that knowledge of its rules is a useful accomplishment, that it is a place of social connection with one's contemporaries, that it has moral consequences, that it provides a real connection with the dead and never-living: while these notions are not unproblematic, there are many attractive things about this pre-disciplinary understanding of literary works. The transition of learning from men to books was not a smooth one, but one that required society to rethink what an individual was, how a book should work and how both should play their parts in a larger social order. St Andrews' library reflected and participated in this process through being a sociable collection: not a closed repository, but an institution opened to the excesses of a burgeoning print culture by the Copyright Act and opened by its authorities to the University's students, professors and, to some extent, to the people of the town. This openness made it a messy, disorganized and occasionally filthy collection. As an institutional attitude, it was not without its casualties – many of the literary works brought in during the eighteenth century appear to have been read to death. One can be relatively confident, however, that their sacrifices were not in vain.

This is not to say that every act of reading in the period was inevitably social, boisterous and judgemental. Some works did manage to quiet the annotators. Often this was due to the inadequate sizes of their margins, as was the case for many duodecimo novels. In some lavishly printed canonical works, though, the commentary was tentative and respectful. In Edward Young's *Night-Thoughts*, the few sparse notes are in pencil, a 'right' and a 'Capital' placed against approved lines.¹⁰⁸ Even a minor grammatical argument is polite; where one student has changed an 'it' to a 'them' in Night V, another asserts that 'them is quite right', adding an additional note to explain that the subject of the sentence is the plural

‘Revolutions’.¹⁰⁹ At the end of the book, three readers offer their summations.¹¹⁰ ‘A Logician’ wrote that he ‘wld advise ev’ry Human Being to read it. The style is highly figurative, and it is very well suited to the subject.’ Another commentator wrote, ‘I have perused this most excellent work and would recommend it to all serious and enquiring persons’ and a third, in very similar language, added that he ‘would advise Every anxious enquiring student to peruse it’. Even here, though, taste and judgement cannot go entirely unchallenged. The last commentator is dismissed in a pencilled addition as ‘a mere babbler’.

Future Directions

In discussing St Andrews’ library records, this article has sought to provide empirical evidence that the Copyright Act was an agent of substantial material and intellectual change in Scotland while contributing to an ongoing reconsideration of the ways in which Georgian readers engaged with literature. It has demonstrated that as the eighteenth century progressed, literary reading in St Andrews diverged increasingly from the canons that posterity might have led us to expect and has shown that student readers interacted with books in instrumental and personal manners that are often underrepresented in modern aesthetic and theoretical accounts. However, there is a great deal more that can be done using St Andrews’ records, which have enormous potential for enquiries ranging in scope from sweeping analyses of reading patterns across centuries to microhistories engaging with the interests of individual professors and students. While the work here is exploratory rather than comprehensive, I hope that this article and its supplementary spreadsheets gesture towards what might be accomplished by creating wide-ranging datasets about the history of reading through digitising, encoding and integrating rich collections like those held at St Andrews, the other Scottish universities and Innerpeffray Library.¹¹¹ The creation of such datasets is an imposing task, but once they exist, they will provide unparalleled opportunities for understanding how and why our ancestors engaged with books, permitting scholars across the world to test existing theories and frame hitherto impossible kinds of enquiry.

-
- ¹ David Allan, *Commonplace Books and Reading in Georgian England* (Cambridge, 2010); H.J. Jackson, *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books* (New Haven, 2001) and *Romantic Readers: The Evidence of Marginalia* (New Haven, 2005); William St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge, 2004).
- ² Charles Benson, 'Libraries in University Towns', in G. Mandelbrote and K.A. Manley (eds), *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland: Volume II: 1640-1850*, (Cambridge, 2006), 121.
- ³ William Reading, 'The Ancient and Present State of the London-Clergy's Library in Sion-College', appended to *Bibliothecæ Cleri Londinensis in Collegio Sionensi Catalogus* (London, 1724), 38.
- ⁴ [Edmund Law], *Observations Occasioned by the Contest about Literary Property* (Cambridge, 1770), 3.
- ⁵ Reading, 38.
- ⁶ Cambridge University Archives, Minutes of Syndicates 1737-1834, 96. Quoted in David McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library: A History: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1986), 274.
- ⁷ W.D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library Oxford*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1890), 303.
- ⁸ The Act's full title was 'An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of such Copies, During the Times therein mentioned.'
- ⁹ R.C. Barrington Partridge, *The History of the Legal Deposit of Books throughout the British Empire* (London, 1938), 34.
- ¹⁰ McKitterick, 152.
- ¹¹ For a breakdown of accessions during the copyright period, see Philip Ardagh, 'St Andrews University Library and the Copyright Acts', *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions*, 3 (1948-55), 180-211.
- ¹² *Evidence, Oral and Documentary, taken and received by the Commissioners appointed by His Majesty [...] for Visiting the Universities of Scotland: Volume III. University of St Andrews*. (London, 1837), 285.
- ¹³ Neil Rhodes, 'From Rhetoric to Criticism', in Robert Crawford (ed.), *The Scottish Invention of English Literature* (Cambridge, 1998), 29.
- ¹⁴ Crawford, 'Introduction' to *Scottish Invention*, 1-21.
- ¹⁵ Paul G. Bator, 'The Unpublished Rhetoric Lectures of Robert Watson, Professor of Logic, Rhetoric, and Metaphysics at the University of St. Andrews, 1756-1778', *Rhetorica*, 12 (1994), 111.
- ¹⁶ Paul G. Bator, 'The Entrance of the Novel into the Scottish Universities', in Crawford (ed.), 89-102.
- ¹⁷ See Ronald Gordon Cant, *The University of St Andrews: A Short History*, 3rd edn (St Andrews, 1992), 91-2 and Norman H. Reid, *Ever to Excel: An Illustrated History of the University of St Andrews* (Dundee, 2011), 101-3.

-
- ¹⁸ John Loveday of Caversham, *Diary of a Tour in 1732 through Parts of England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland*, ed. John Edward Taylor Loveday (London, 1890), 136.
- ¹⁹ Thomas Pennant, *A Tour in Scotland, MCCLXXII Part II* (London, 1776), 196, 197.
- ²⁰ Beriah Botfield, *Journal of a Tour through the Highlands of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1830), 33.
- ²¹ Loveday, 142.
- ²² Barthélemy Faujas de Saint-Fond, *Travels in England, Scotland and the Hebrides*, 2 vols (London, 1799), I, 195.
- ²³ St Andrews, University Library, Muniments, UYLY105/2. All further manuscript references are to materials in St Andrews University Library. An accurate transcription of this catalogue is available online: R.V. Pringle, ‘An Edited Transcript of the ‘1687’ Catalogue in St Andrews University Library covering the years 1687-1704’ (pubd online Dec 2008) <<http://www.rvpmp.talktalk.net/>> accessed 5 Feb 2017.
- ²⁴ Henry Skrine, *Three Successive Tours in the North of England, and Great Part of Scotland* (London, 1795), 102.
- ²⁵ Botfield, 34.
- ²⁶ C.P. Finlayson and S.M. Simpson, ‘The Library of the University of Edinburgh: The Copyright Period 1710-1837’, *Library History*, 3 (1973), 48, 58.
- ²⁷ K.A. Manley, *Books, Borrowers and Shareholders: Scottish Circulating and Subscription Libraries before 1825* (Edinburgh, 2012), 183; Mark R.M. Towsey, *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment: Books and their Readers in Provincial Scotland, 1750-1820* (Leiden & Boston, 2010), 96.
- ²⁸ George H. Bushnell, ‘Patrick Bower’, *The Library*, 4th series, 23 (1942), 23-30.
- ²⁹ Charles Henry Timplerley, *A Dictionary of Printers and Printing* (London, 1839), 853. Timperley lists Patrick Bower as ‘Peter Bower’.
- ³⁰ The individuals and dates in question are M. Grieg (1747) and Alexander M’Culloch (1736). National Library of Scotland, *Scottish Book Trade Index* (pubd online; continuing updates) <<http://www.nls.uk/catalogues/scottish-book-trade-index>> accessed 5 Feb 2017; Bushnell, 23.
- ³¹ Towsey, 307-25.
- ³² Peter Freshwater, ‘Books and Universities’, in Mandelbrote and Manley (eds), 358.
- ³³ Matthew Simpson, ‘St Andrews University Library in the Eighteenth Century: Scottish Education and Print-Culture’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of St Andrews, 1999), 41. Available online: <<http://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/handle/10023/1848>>.

³⁴ McKitterick, 608-14; Freshwater, 358.

³⁵ Iain Beavan, 'Marischal College Library, Aberdeen, in the Nineteenth Century: An Overview', *Library & Information History*, 31 (2015), 260.

³⁶ 1734 Library Regulations, from the *Senatus Academicus* minutes, 20 February 1734, printed in *Library Bulletin of the University of St Andrews: Vol. I – 1901-1903* (St Andrews, 1904), 444.

³⁷ *Evidence*, 21.

³⁸ On being asked, 'Are the Commissioners to understand, that if a young man was desirous to read in the Library, he would not be permitted?' James Hunter answered, 'Not without an order from the University.' David Rintoul's testimony demonstrates that the students were unhappy with this arrangement. *Evidence*, 22, 84-5.

³⁹ *Bulletin Vol. I*, 445; *Evidence*, 21.

⁴⁰ *Bulletin Vol. I*, 445-6; *Evidence*, 13.

⁴¹ Compiled using Books Received, 1710-1758, UYLY107/2, 16-83. The earlier pages repeat record-keeping from 1711 to 1714, covering only copyright accessions and a single gift, and have therefore been omitted.

⁴² St Andrews' curators did purchase Elizabeth Carter's translation of Epictetus in 1760, paying £1.3s (see Books Received, 1739-1788, UYLY107/4, 47). However, this was a notable exception.

⁴³ McKitterick, 22n.

⁴⁴ Professors' and Students' Receipt Books, UYLY205/1-3; Professors' Receipt Books, UYLY206/1-15; Students' Receipt Books, UYLY207/1-27.

⁴⁵ G.H. Bushnell, 'The Early History of the Libraries of St. Andrews University up to 1642', in J.B. Salmond and G.H. Bushnell (eds), *Henderson's Benefaction* (St Andrews, 1942), 25-48

⁴⁶ *Senatus* minutes for 18 April 1767, printed in *Library Bulletin of the University of St Andrews: Vol II – 1904-1906* (St Andrews, 1906), 298-9; Simpson, 209. For the wider contexts of Hollis's philanthropy, see Simpson 209-17 and W.H. Bond, *Thomas Hollis of Lincoln's Inn: A Whig and his Books* (Cambridge, 1990).

⁴⁷ In 1757, the professoriate comprised the principals of the United College and St Mary's College and eleven subject professors. The eight professors of the United College covered Greek; Logic, Rhetoric and Metaphysics; Ethics and Pneumatics; Natural and Experimental Philosophy; Humanity; Civil and Natural History; Mathematics; and Medicine; St Mary's' professorships were in Divinity and Biblical Criticism; Divinity and Ecclesiastical History; and Hebrew and Oriental Languages.

⁴⁸ These publications have numerous entries in Books Received, 1710-1758 (UYLY107/2) and Books Received, 1739-1788 (UYLY107/4).

⁴⁹ Senatus minutes for 27 March 1767, *Bulletin Vol II*, 298.

⁵⁰ Rhodes, 28.

⁵¹ Richard B. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book* (Chicago, 2006), xvi.

⁵² UYLY107/2, 78.

⁵³ UYLY107/4, 47.

⁵⁴ UYLY107/4, 52.

⁵⁵ William Robertson's *History of Scotland*, also on the list, came in under the copyright privilege in 1759 (see UYLY107/2, 82). The purchase of a second copy probably signifies heavy use of the first. Its continuing popularity is attested to by the borrowing registers.

⁵⁶ UYLY107/4, 63, 65-66, 84.

⁵⁷ UYLY107/2, 16, 31, 77.

⁵⁸ UYLY107/2, 15, 16, 30.

⁵⁹ UYLY107/2, 68.

⁶⁰ UYLY107/2, 13, 16, 19, 21, 29, 30, 31, 32, 39, 42, 46.

⁶¹ UYLY107/2, 1, 5, 76.

⁶² Sher, 4.

⁶³ Senatus minutes for 13 November 1762, *Bulletin Vol II*, 265.

⁶⁴ UYLY107/4, 53.

⁶⁵ UYLY107/4, 57, 61, 67, 70, 65.

⁶⁶ UYLY107/2, 17, 19.

⁶⁷ UYLY107/2, 59, 69, 38, 41, 58, 66.

⁶⁸ *Tristram Shandy* was in the libraries at Edinburgh and Aberdeen; see Bator, 'Entrance of the Novel', 95.

⁶⁹ Spreadsheets detailing these samples are available on the RES website: [\[FILL\]](#).

⁷⁰ Senatus minute for 2 August 1798, *Bulletin Vol II*, 511.

⁷¹ The spottiest record-keeping was for Professor Henry David Hill, where there was no listed date in one register after 17 October 1798 and the first date in the next register was 29 July 1801. Hill borrowed 233 books between these dates, so I calculated that on average eighty borrowings would have fallen within the sample period. Similar assumptions were made in a few other cases. There are two professors for whom some 1775

records are probably missing: James Murison, where an absent page is the cause, and John Hunter, where dates indicate that entries may have been recorded in a register that is now lost.

⁷² Each ‘borrowing’ here equates to a single register record. It would have been possible to log each volume of a work individually or to count any part of a work as the whole. However, I decided that it was best to stick closely to the original line entries, allowing eighteenth-century practices to shape the data.

⁷³ Compiled from James Maitland Anderson, *The Matriculation Roll of the University of St Andrews 1747-1897* (Edinburgh and London, 1905), p. lxxxvii.

⁷⁴ All the books included are marked in red on the supplementary spreadsheets.

⁷⁵ Simpson, 292-4.

⁷⁶ Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, 3 vols, 6th edn (London, 1796), II, 158.

⁷⁷ *Monthly Review*, 45 (August 1771), 144.

⁷⁸ Joseph Crawford, *Raising Milton’s Ghost* (London, 2011).

⁷⁹ *Adeline De Courcy* is now attributed to Sophia Burrell (*ODNB*).

⁸⁰ Pennant, 198-9.

⁸¹ Dating marginalia is difficult, but cross-checks involving bibliographical details, borrowing records, matriculation information and scrawled names and dates indicate that most of the material examined here dates from the later eighteenth century.

⁸² Jackson, *Romantic Readers*, 300.

⁸³ Joseph Addison, *The Works of the Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.* (London, 1721), I, 6 (s.PR3300.D21). For references to marginalia, I have given the Library of Congress classmark for the appropriate St Andrews copy; these can be located using the electronic library catalogue. Images of all the marginalia mentioned in this article can be seen in a pair of posts on *Echoes from the Vault*, the St Andrews Special Collections blog: <<https://standrewsrarebooks.wordpress.com/2017/01/27/william-french-is-a-damned-bragging-lying-b-book-use-and-marginal-contentions-in-eighteenth-century-st-andrews-part-one/>> and <<https://standrewsrarebooks.wordpress.com/2017/02/02/william-french-is-a-damned-bragging-lying-bitchb-book-use-and-marginal-contentions-in-eighteenth-century-st-andrews-part-two/>> accessed 5 Feb 2017.

⁸⁴ Addison, I, 8.

⁸⁵ Miguel de Cervantes, *The life and Achievements of Don Quixote de la Mancha*, trans. Tobias Smollett, 2 vols (London, [1775?]), I, 154 (s.PQ6329.A2S5). The title pages for both volumes are missing; this title is in the form used in St Andrews’ catalogue.

-
- 86 [Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope et al.], *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse*, 3 vols (London, 1727), III (s.PR3724.M4D27). There are two runs of page numbers in this volume; these marginalia are on page i of ‘Miscellanies in Verse’.
- 87 [Swift et al.], III, page 94 of ‘Martinus Scriblerus his Treatise of the Art of Sinking in Poetry’.
- 88 Addison, II, 477.
- 89 Henry Fielding, *Miscellanies by Henry Fielding Esq.*, 3 vols (of which two survive in St Andrews) (London, 1743), II, 258 (r.PR3454.M5D43); Addison, II, 21; Cervantes, II, [inside back cover].
- 90 Simpson, 219.
- 91 [Swift et al.], I, 301.
- 92 Cervantes, II, 90.
- 93 John Moore, *Zeluco*, 2 vols (London, 1789), I, 68 (s.PR3605.M5Z4).
- 94 Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, 3 vols (London, 1785), III, 69 (s.PN187.B6D85).
- 95 Moore, I, 205.
- 96 [Swift et al.], *Miscellanies, in Prose and Verse: Volume the Fifth* (London, 1735), 313 (s.PR3724.M4D27).
- 97 Moore, II, 301. The pencilled Latin appears to read ‘Dico poeta, bonum Carmen quen scripsit Homerum’.
- 98 Blair, I, 101.
- 99 Blair, I, 102.
- 100 Blair, I, 107.
- 101 Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 2 vols (London, 1755), II, 1212.
- 102 Blair, III, [end of Index].
- 103 Moore, I, 95, 175.
- 104 Moore, I, 1.
- 105 Addison, I, 380.
- 106 Addison, I, 325.
- 107 Addison, I, 331, 330.
- 108 [Edward Young], *The Complaint: or, Night-Thoughts on Life, Death, & Immortality* (London, 1743-5), Night I, 15, 19 (s.PR3782.N5A1D43).
- 109 [Young], Night V, 12.
- 110 [Young], Night IX, 146.

¹¹¹ The URL for my St Andrews spreadsheets is [\[FILL\]](#). As part of the ‘Innerpeffray Library: Books and Borrowers, 1747-1968’ project based at the University of Stirling, a team of researchers led by Katie Halsey is currently creating a database of the Innerpeffray records.