

# Guide to the William Bowyer Papers

OSB MSS 105



by Michael Rush

June 2005

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** OSB MSS 105

**CREATOR:** Bowyer, William, 1699-1777

**TITLE:** William Bowyer papers

**DATES:** 1674-1874

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 1.33 linear feet (2 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** Materials in English and Latin.

**SUMMARY:** Correspondence and other papers relating to William Bowyer's (1699-1777) work as a printer in London. The bulk of the correspondence consists of incoming letters to Bowyer from the scholars Edward Clarke, William Clarke, and Jeremiah Markland, concerning printing, scholarly subjects, languages including Greek and Hebrew, and family matters. Other correspondents include James Stanier Clarke, Catherine Markland, William Strode, Moses Williams, and William Wotten. Also includes two items written by Bowyer and a few letters addressed to Bowyer's apprentice and partner John Nichols. Letters prior to 1737 may have been addressed to the elder William Bowyer. Two letters in latin, signed "Ambrosius Bonvicus," were probably written by Ambrose Bonwicke as a student at St. John's College, Oxford. Other Papers include a manuscript address for a Mr. Stawell to give to the Duchess of York, an engraving of William Bowyer, an 1874 collection inventory by James Crossley, and proof sheets of an unidentified history of Bowyer's printing business.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.bowyer>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.bowyer>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Transferred from Manuscripts and Archives, October 1980.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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### Conditions Governing Use

The William Bowyer Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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### Preferred Citation

William Bowyer Papers. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

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## WILLIAM BOWYER, 1699-1777

William Bowyer (1699-1777) was the son of printer William Bowyer (1663-1737). He was placed by his father as a sizar at St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1716. Without finishing his degree, Bowyer began working for his father in 1722. Bowyer often printed scholarly and literary works. In 1729 he was appointed to print votes of the House of Commons, and in 1761 was appointed printer for the Royal Society. He also wrote and published some of his own works. A notable apprentice of Bowyer's was John Nichols, whom Bowyer later made a full partner.

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## Scope and Contents

The William Bowyer Papers consist of correspondence and other papers related to William Bowyer (1699-1777), a prominent London printer during the eighteenth century. The papers, which span the years 1674-1874, are housed in 2 boxes (including 1 oversize box), and have been organized into two series: *Correspondence*, and *Other Papers*.

[Series I, Correspondence](#), is arranged alphabetically by correspondent in folders 1-32, and 39-42 (oversize). The correspondence consists of incoming letters to William Bowyer, as well as two items written by Bowyer, and a few letters addressed to his partner John Nichols. Letters written prior to 1737 may have been addressed to the elder William Bowyer (1763-1737).

The bulk of the correspondence is from William Clarke, his son Edward Clarke, and Jeremiah Markland. All three were scholars and their letters concern printing, various scholarly subjects, languages, including Greek and Hebrew, and family matters. Edward Clarke's correspondence includes three letters to John Nichols after Bowyer's death in 1777.

Additional correspondents include Edward Clarke's son James Stanier Clarke; Jeremiah Markland's sister Catherine Markland; William Strode, a friend and student of Jeremiah Markland; Welsh scholar Moses Williams; and scholar William Wotten, William Clarke's father-in-law. The correspondence also includes two letters written in Latin to unidentified recipients. Signed "Ambrosius Bonvicus," the letters were probably written by Ambrose Bonwicke (1652-1722) as a student at St. John's College, Oxford.

[Series II, Other Papers](#), is arranged chronologically in folders 33-38. Other papers consist of a manuscript address for a Mr. Stawell to give to the Duchess of York, an engraving of William Bowyer, an 1874 collection inventory by James Crossley, proof sheets of an unidentified history of Bowyer's printing business, a manuscript list of letters "written before Mr. B's father died," and the binding from which these papers were disbound.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Correspondence, 1674-1782

36 Folders

Series I, Correspondence, is arranged alphabetically.

b. 1, f. 1	Bonwicke, Ambrose In Latin	1674
b. 1, f. 2	Bowyer, William	n.d.
b. 1, f. 3-6	Clarke, Edward Also stored in: Oversize, Box 2, folder 39	1755-82
b. 1, f. 7	Clarke, James Stanier	n.d.
b. 1, f. 8-13	Clarke, William	1726-58
b. 1, f. 14-20	Clarke, William Also stored in: Oversize, Box 2, folder 40	1762-71, n.d.
	Markland, Catherine Stored in: Oversize, Box 2, folder 41	1776-79
b. 1, f. 21-29	Markland, Jeremiah Also stored in: Oversize, Box 2, folder 42	1743-76
b. 1, f. 30	Strode, William	1776
b. 1, f. 31	Williams, Moses	1734-36
b. 1, f. 32	Wotten, William	1725

**Series II: Other Papers, 1683-1874***6 Folders*

Series II, Other Papers, is arranged chronologically.

b. 1, f. 33	Manuscript address, "For Mr. Stawell to be spoke to Her R. H. the Dutchess of Y. in the inner Library, May 1683" Includes Latin translation	1683 May
b. 1, f. 34	Engraving of William Bowyer, printed by J. Nichols & Son	1812 Jan 1
b. 1, f. 35	Collection inventory by James Crossley Includes note stating that Crossley purchased the collection "at John Gough Nichols's Sale"	1874 Dec 8
b. 1, f. 36	Proof sheets of an unidentified history of Bowyer's printing business	n.d.
b. 1, f. 37	Manuscript list of "most of the letters written before Mr. B's father died"	n.d.
b. 1, f. 38	Previous binding Binding labelled "Markland and Clarke's Letters to Bowyer"	n.d.

**Oversize, 1753-79**

b. 2 (Oversize), f. Clarke, Edward correspondence (in Series I) 39	1753-79
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. Clarke, William correspondence (in Series I) 40	1726-69
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. Markland, Catherine correspondence (in Series I) 41	1776-1779
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. Markland, Jeremiah correspondence (in Series I) 42	1767
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## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Philology  
Printers -- England -- London  
Printing -- Great Britain -- 17th-18th centuries

### **Occupations**

Printers -- Great Britain

### **Names**

Bonwicke, Ambrose, 1652-1722  
Bowyer, William, 1663-1737  
Bowyer, William, 1699-1777  
Clarke, Edward, 1730-1786  
Clarke, James Stanier, 1765?-1834  
Clarke, William, 1696-1771  
Markland, Catherine  
Markland, Jeremiah, 1693-1776  
Nichols, John, 1745-1826  
Strode, William, 1600 or 1601-1645  
Williams, Moses, 1685-1742  
Wotton, William, 1666-1727