

and interdependencies among printers, publishers, and booksellers and their consumers is accomplished.

Several of the papers take an industry-level view. Canadian scholar Stephen W. Brown (coeditor of volume two of the *Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland*) contributes a detailed case study of how the Edinburgh papers variously reported and exploited an incest/murder trial in 1765. Through a careful and dogged study of the relationships and politics of the printers and publishers, Brown delivers a nicely nuanced portrait of the press of Edinburgh in the mid-eighteenth century. Michael Powell (librarian) and Terry Wyke (social historian) of Manchester use an unpublished manuscript history of the Manchester press (by Frederick Leary, b. 1841) to examine the plight of the *North of England Magazine*, which ran for 18 months in 1842–1843, as a typical representative of Manchester periodicals in the nineteenth century. Lisa Peters and Kath Skinner (of Chester) examine in great detail the newspaper distribution networks of the North Wales town of Wrexham, consisting of the post, shops, hawkers, messengers, and agents during the second half of the nineteenth century. Finally, Stephen Colclough (lecturer in English, University of Bangor), examines the 1914 “dispute between the retail newsagents of Lancashire and the wholesalers that supplied them,” which ultimately encouraged regional unions to form the National Federation of Retail Newsagents, Booksellers and Stationers in 1919.

Biography is the other major approach in this collection. Jennifer Moore (a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Limerick) offers a sketch of John Ferrar (1742–1804), an Irish printer and writer active in Limerick for over 30 years and Dublin for almost a decade. Ferrar wrote a history of Limerick, ran the region’s major newspaper for 20 years, and used his family connections and business networks to influence the politics and culture of the day. Máire Kennedy (in charge of special collections in the Dublin City Libraries) uses the figure

of William Flynn (1740–1811), who “represented a typical printer and bookseller of the late eighteenth century,” to explore different aspects of the book trade in the Munster region of Ireland, specifically the port of Cork and its surrounds. Ria Snowdon presents an overview of the life and career of Sarah Hodgson, who inherited her father’s Newcastle printing business in 1784 (which included the influential weekly *Newcastle Chronicle*), married her late father’s apprentice in 1785 (who took over the business), and then successfully ran the business herself after her husband died (in 1800) for 22 years. Graham Hogg (senior rare book curator at the National Library of Scotland), writes of the struggles of George Miller (1771–1835), a printer and bookseller of Dunbar, Scotland, who by virtue of two manuscript volumes is the most well-documented Scottish provincial bookseller of the hand-press period. Elizabeth Tilley (Lecturer in English, National University of Ireland) uses the example of James Duffy (1809–1871), a Dublin periodical publisher, to explode the long-accepted notion that Irish periodicals from 1830–1870 were unsustainable. In a very focused study, Victoria Gardner (a newly minted Ph.D. from St. John’s College, Oxford) analyzes a hitherto unexamined account book recording the weekly business of the *Chester Chronicle* (1783–1786) during the first three of John Fletcher’s 52-year ownership. Fletcher (1756–1835) was a surveyor, engineer, and businessman, and his work with the paper helped launch him into town politics and civic administration.

The implicit (and convincing) argument of *Periodicals and Publishers* is for a more complex approach to researching “provincial” book and printing trade networks. The result is a deep understanding of the relationships that drove (and impeded) the flow of books and pamphlets into every corner of the literate public. — Richard J. Ring, Providence Public Library.

Nicolas Barker. *The Glory of Writing: The Calligraphic Work of Francesco Alunno.*

Los Angeles: Cotsen Occasional Press, 2009. 2 vols.: vol. 1, 141p.; vol. 2, 231p. (ISBN 9780974516837).

Francesco Alunno has been a lucky man, at least in retrospect. Until quite recently, to the extent that he would have been remembered at all, it would have been as a minor humanist figure of the Venetian renaissance who wrote some journeyman pieces on Petrarch, Boccaccio, and other Italian writers of the age. However, he has had the good fortune of being tracked by Nicolas Barker for more than forty years. Barker had been seeking not the humanist writer but the humanist calligrapher who eschewed translating his script into print. Celebrated in his own day as a leading writing master, Alunno the calligraphy disappeared from view after his death in the mid-16th century. Barker's quest led him eventually to Lloyd Cotsen and the Cotsen Children's Library at Princeton where Alunno's remarkable manuscript album of cartoni had at last found an institutional home. What more could any humanist calligrapher desire than having his legacy reclaimed by the likes of Barker and Cotsen? It's all here: erudition, taste, and patronage.

The Glory of Writing is truly quite glorious. It comprises two sumptuous tomes nestled together in an ingeniously designed case so that it can rest securely on a bookshelf. However, that shelf needs to be sturdy, since the set is quite heavy. A carrying handle would have been an even nicer feature. One volume contains Barker's exhaustive monograph on Alunno; the other is a beautifully produced facsimile of the two-hundred gorgeous calligraphic cartoni. Designed by Patrick Reagh, the set provides a luxurious context for a visual feast. To enter into the cartoni is to enter a world unfamiliar to most: the world of a renaissance writing master. In the best of them—and Alunno is surely among them—one finds a singular coming together of discipline and whimsy, repetition and invention, the practical and the fantastical. It is a world of great subtlety and nuance, precision

and exactitude, even as it makes sport with grotesques, cartoons, and other ad hoc embellishments. These writing teachers were master calligraphers who, according to Barker, invented calligraphy in the wake of the printing press. They were, quite literally, the first professional writers, poised to exploit the new niches created for writing by the advent of moveable type.

Barker's meticulous monograph will tell most readers more than they may want or need to know about Alunno. Since little is known about the life of this Ferraran priest and teacher, much of Barker's patient narrative is written in the subjunctive. Barker is at his best when he leaves the dusty arcane of the historical record and guides us skillfully through Alunno's delicious cartoni. There we can follow Alunno's love of letter forms and his mastery of them, his interest in exotic alphabets, and above all his extraordinary commitments to the teaching of mathematics. While it is not unusual to find numbers in writing manuals, calligraphic "teaching units" relating to mathematics are quite rare. In Alunno's cartoni we encounter exquisitely rendered sets of frames within frames, uniting numbers, words, illustrations, and vignettes that function both as lesson plans and as advertisements for the skill and learning of the teacher. They cover everything from real estate and the cloth trade to money changing and basic commercial arithmetic.

This splendid pair of lavishly produced volumes reminds us forcefully of how much a part of the "history of the book" are the traditions of writing in the West, post-Gutenberg. And if the calligraphy of the early modern and modern masters has never generated the respect and veneration it did in other cultures, the sheer beauty of its monuments—like these cartoni—is undeniable. However, now that Alunno the calligrapher is finally in print, let us hope that Princeton will soon migrate him to the Web, lest he be lost again!—*Michael Ryan, Columbia University.*