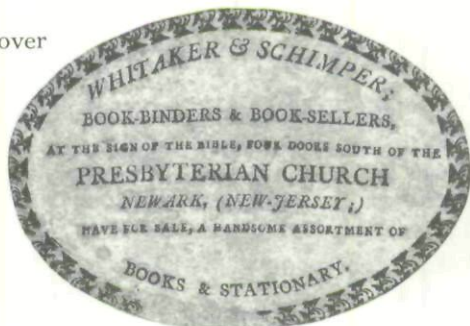


Reproduced at 70% of the original size.

The boards of both books are tooled identically in gilt.

Ticket from the inside front cover of the MacWhorter *Sermons*, reproduced at 67% of the original size.



Notes on American Bookbindings

THE BOOKBINDING FIRM OF WHITAKER & SCHIMPER

In the spring of 1978, Michael Papantonio was pleased to acquire an example of the work of the second Newark, New Jersey, binder known to him, the first being Benjamin Olds. At first sight the binding is solid, careful work on a presentation copy of Alexander MacWhorter's *A Series of Sermons*, published in Newark in 1803 by Pennington and Gould. However, on the inside front cover is an oval binder's ticket fully three inches across, identifying a hitherto unknown firm: Whitaker & Schimper of Newark. In addition, closer inspection reveals that all the rolls and stamps used on the binding are otherwise unknown, except for the circular medallion which appears earlier on books published in Newark by John Wood.

Whitaker and Schimper must have believed in advertising. The January 10, 1804, issue of the Newark *Centinel of Freedom* carries a long advertisement for their work, and includes a notice of a vacancy for an apprentice, 'application to be made immediately.' Whether the advertising helped to bring in business is doubtful, for only one other example of their work is known to me. The bindings collection at AAS contains an unsigned binding using the same tools, Sir Peter King's *History of the Apostles Creed* (Elizabethtown, N.J.: J. Woods, 1804).

The identification of unsigned bindings down through the eighteenth century is facilitated by irregularities in the hand-cut tools. By the first decade of the nineteenth century, technological advances made it possible to produce tools nearly identical in design. Customer demand for the fashionable style, in bindings as in everything else, spread the use of these identical

tools, making the identification of individual workers much more difficult. How surprising, then, and how satisfying to the student of binding, to find a new firm, with new tools, appearing out of the blue—and with its identity made plain.

Willman Spawn

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