

A ticket inside the front cover of the copy here under discussion reads, 'Ruled, bound and sold by Thomas Allen, No. 12, Queen Street, New York.' No bindings signed by either Hodge or Campbell are presently known. The materials and the style of decoration on the Cleland and Allen bindings exhibit obvious differences. Allen's book is bound in full tree calf. Gold tooling is confined to a narrow, Greek key design around the cover borders and an even narrower roll around the cords of the spine, which is divided into seven panels. Panel two bears the red title label 'Brown's | Family | Bible'; panel four carries the name of its first owner, Hezekiah P. Ivers, followed by the date, 1792. The remaining five panels contain two sizable, gold-tooled impressions of striking dissimilarity: a naturalistic, six-petaled flower reminiscent of an earlier style, alternated with an enclosed cameo surrounded by a looped, neoclassical wreath, in a style that was very popular in the 1790s. This first Bible to be printed in New York is complete with the list of subscribers, headed by the name of George Washington and including that of Ivers, for whom this copy was bound.

The Hodge and Campbell volume, the binding of which is ascribed to Charles Cleland, does not bear the ticket that he used on a Scottish thesis of 1784, now in the Broxbourne Collection. The folio Bible is bound in red morocco, gold tooled, with about a dozen delicate tools applied with taste and imagination. Cleland placed the following advertisement in the *New-York Journal* of 1792: 'Bookbinder, lately from Edinburgh . . . has commenced business at No. 37 Maiden Lane.' Cleland spent three more years at three different locations in New York, and another three years elapsed before he was found in Philadelphia, where, from 1799 to 1805, he was located on Walnut Street.

There is a third known copy of *The Self-Interpreting Bible*, the most elaborately bound of all. In its imprint, this copy bears the name 'T. Allen' only, and contains his ticket, which

declares it to be 'Bound and Sold by Thomas Allen, No. 12, Queen Street, New York.' This copy is described in detail as entry number 11 in the Grolier Club's *Catalogue of Ornamental Leather Bookbindings Executed in America Prior to 1850* (New York, 1907). That catalogue notes that the Bible is 'bound in red morocco with gold rolled border' and that the spine is 'inlaid with green and yellow bands and panels.' This Bible is pictured as the frontispiece for *American Bookbindings in the Library of Henry Pene Du Bois, New York, 1903*. It bears the name of its original owner, Mary Ellis, tooled in gold on the spine and was later owned by Beverly Chew, whose collection of great American bindings is now in the Huntington Library.

Thomas Allen has thus emerged from the comparative obscurity of a name and address in New York City directories to preeminence in the trio of Scottish emigrant bookbinders trained in Edinburgh: Robert Hodge, Thomas Allen, and Samuel Campbell.

Hannah D. French

Copyright of Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society is the property of American Antiquarian Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.