

The Cries of London. London: E. Newbery, 1784. 8vo, 62 woodcuts (including frontispiece), 4 inches x 2 9/16 inches (101 mm x 65 mm), 139 pages.

The earliest known London street hawkers' shouts were published in the form of broadsides in the late sixteenth century, presumably for the amusement of men, as the few extant examples contain bawdy banter. *The Cryes of the City of London Drawne after the Life*, published by Pierce Tempest in 1687, may be the first version for children. Marcellus Laroon's illustrations for the edition (copperplates engraved by John Savage and his assistants) were subsequently copied by many other children's book publishers. The *Cryes* must have been popular, for Tempest issued five editions, with the illustrations increasing from an initial forty to seventy-four in his final 1709 edition. Henry Overton purchased the plates from Tempest, republished them under his imprint circa 1711, and eventually passed them on to Robert Sayer. Myriad children's editions of *The London Cryes* (and *Cries of London*) were published up to about 1825. In 1754 John Kirk produced four different children's versions—in loose sheets, bound, boxed, or in scroll form—with a dozen prints.

This edition of the *Cries* was published by Elizabeth Newbery, the widow of Francis Newbery (d. 1780), who was a nephew of the famed children's book publisher John Newbery. (Only the publisher, printer's device, and date differ from the title page of Francis' edition of 1775.) There are cries of several dozen peddlers of foodstuffs and household goods with accompanying woodcuts and moral verses, but moral as the tone may be, the cries include a caricature of Jewish dealer in used clothing, indicative of the anti-Semitism prevalent in England at the time. The cries are followed by "A Description of London" in rhyme and a five-stanza "A Song on the City of London." Elizabeth Newbery's advertisement of 36 titles "for the Instruction and Entertainment of all the Good little Masters and Misses of Great-Britain, Ireland and America" rounds out the volume.

This copy of *The Cries of London* is in a contemporary binding of boards covered with Dutch floral paper. It is in the Douce Collection at Oxford's Bodleian Library. On the

recto of the frontispiece leaf is the signature “M H Haskoll | 1799”; the Douce stamp (“EX DONO FR. DOUCE | BIBL. BODL.”) appears on the title page. Francis Douce (1757–1834) was a British antiquary and the Keeper of Manuscripts at the British Museum from 1807 to 1811. His bequest of more than 19,000 volumes contained printed books from various periods, including nearly 500 incunables, as well as roughly 425 manuscripts. Eighteenth- and early nineteenth– century children’s books numbered among Douce’s wide range of collecting specialties.

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