

SWEDENBORG'S PRINTER IN AMSTERDAM

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Following a request, I tried to find the name of the printer of the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg in Amsterdam. So can we find out who the printer was?

Of the eighteen titles which constitute the published Theological works of Emanuel Swedenborg, starting with *Arcana Coelestia* and ending with *True Christian Religion*, six titles were published in London, and twelve in Amsterdam. Of the six titles published in London, *Arcana Coelestia* was published in eight volumes, starting with Genesis part I in 1749, part II in 1750, part III in 1751, part IV in 1752, part V in 1753, then Exodus part one in 1753, part II in 1754, and part III in 1756. Swedenborg himself went to London to print parts I and II from 1749 to 1750, and after that sent his second or final draft of each volume (3 through 8) to London, retaining the first draft and awaiting each printed first edition to signal completion. He also saw through a translation into English of part II, by John Marchant, published in 1750.

A second batch of five works were published in 1758 in London: *Heaven and Hell*, *New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine*, *Last Judgment*, *White Horse*, and *Earths in the Universe*. Of the total eighteen published theological titles, fourteen were published anonymously, showing just the title of the work and *Londini* or *Amstelodami* plus year in Roman numerals, as identification on the title pages. Only the last four titles had his name attached: *Conjugal Love* (1768), *Brief Exposition* (1769), *Commerce of Soul and Body* (1769), and *True Christian Religion*, finished in 1770 but published in 1771. The first two above had *ab Emanuele Swedenborg, Sueco*, the third, *Commerce*, omitted *Sueco*, but the fourth, *True Christian Religion*, replaced *Sueco* with *Domini Jesu Christi Servo*, Servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. Still, these four also had simply *Amstelodami* referring to where they were published. None of the eighteen title pages, whether published in London or Amsterdam, identify the name of the printer anywhere.

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We do know, however, that Swedenborg used two printers in London, because he refers to them at the back of *Conjugial Love*, printed in 1768 in Amsterdam. At the very end of this work he lists all the *Libri Theologici Hactenus a me editi* (theological works edited by me up to this point) listing *Arcana Coelestia*, *Heaven and Hell*, *New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine*, *Last Judgment*, *White Horse*, and *Earths in the Universe*. He then continues to list all the works he printed in Amsterdam, but no name of a printer.

This note at the back of *Conjugial Love* continues: “These books have been available in London from the Printer Mister Hart, in Poppings Court, Fleetstreet, and with Mister Lewis, in Pater Noster Row, near Cheapside.” It is all in Latin, with, however, the addresses written out in English. Swedenborg knew both Lewis and Hart very well, and there are letters preserved from them, and as well, Lewis was later called on to be a character witness for the late Swedenborg when that was needed. All of these details are reported in Tafel’s documents.

But Swedenborg moved his operations to the Netherlands in 1763. Why? Perhaps because of the Seven Year War, in which Sweden and England were enemies. But I have not found any evidence as to who the Amsterdam printer was. Swedenborg remains silent on the subject. As Providence would have it, however, a man first met Swedenborg at the very print shop of our mystery printer. The year was 1768, which was when Swedenborg was printing *Conjugial Love*. The name of the man who met him was John Christian Cuno. Cuno of course mentions the name of the printer where he met Swedenborg. But let us trace some earlier history.

Looking first at Swedenborg’s scientific works, we find he had published books in the Netherlands before: both *Economy of the Soul’s Kingdom* (EAK, 1740), and *The Soul’s Kingdom* (AK, 1744), were published there: on the EAK title page is “venditur Londini et Amstelodami, apud . . .” and the name of a printer. On the AK title page is “Hagae Comitum, apud . . .” and another name.

Did Swedenborg use one of these printers for the Writings also? We return to John Christian Cuno, who met and got to know Swedenborg well, and wrote extensive memoirs about him; these have by now become a major source of knowledge of Swedenborg’s day to day dealings while in Amsterdam (Tafel ii, p. 441–485).

Cuno was born in Berlin, and so wrote in German. His memoirs were not published until 1858, by Dr. August Scheler, a Belgian Librarian who discovered them in the Library, under the title of *Aufzeichnungen eines Amsterdamer Bürgers über Swedenborg* (Notes by an Amsterdam citizen on Swedenborg). This publication, of course, has become a major source of anecdotal material on Swedenborg. All of Cuno's memoirs translated into English are reproduced as Document #256, in Tafel's *Documents Concerning Swedenborg*, published in 1877. In Tafel Volume ii part. i, p. 445, we read of Cuno's first meeting with Swedenborg: "My first acquaintance with him [Swedenborg] dates from November 4, 1768, when I happened to meet him in the . . . bookshop of Mr. . . . The old gentleman [Swedenborg] speaks both French and High German, yet not very readily . . . He lodged near our old church in . . . Kälbergasse where he engaged two comfortable rooms."

Since Cuno met Swedenborg at the shop of an expatriate working in Amsterdam in 1768 when *Conjugal Love* was published, it is all but certain that this was the printer Swedenborg used for all the Writings published in Amsterdam. And who was it?

The printers Swedenborg had used in Amsterdam were, for *The Animal Kingdom*, Adrianum Blyvenburgium, and for *Economy of the Animal Kingdom*, "venditur Londini et Amstelodami, apud François Changuion." And the gentleman at whose bookshop Cuno had met Swedenborg was: François Changuion! He was a "French expatriate" working in Amsterdam.

It therefore follows that François Changuion published the following works in Amsterdam, anonymously:

1. *The Four Doctrines: Lord, Sacred Scripture, Life, Faith*, 1763;
2. *Continuation of the Last Judgment and the Spiritual World*, 1763;
3. *Divine Love and Wisdom*, 1763;
4. *Divine Providence*, 1764;
5. *Apocalypse Revealed* 1766; and with Swedenborg's name attached,
6. *Conjugal Love* 1768;
7. *Brief Exposition* 176;
8. *Commerce of the Soul and Body* 1769; and
9. *True Christian Religion* 1771.

So now we may perhaps be able to say that the printers of the Theological Writings of Swedenborg in London were John Lewis, who also printed Marchant's English translation of *Arcana Coelestia* volume 2, and John Hart; and that the printer of the Theological Writings of Swedenborg in Amsterdam was: François Changuion. □