In Robert Darnton’s *The Business of the Enlightenment* there is a moment in chapter five where we come upon the actual fingerprint of one of the printers who made the book. Here is the scene:

Sometime one can break the anonymity. For example, page 630 in volume 15 of the quarto of the *Encyclopédie* in the Bibliothèque de la Ville de Neuchâtel contains a vivid fingerprint, made by one of the STN’s printers. The wax seal shows that the printer of that page (sheet 47) was a certain “Boussière”—evidently a nickname and a shorthand, inappropriate one in the context with Malézieux and Monnier, a letter from a master printer in Neuchâtel to Tunis, which Boussière added to his list of “fresh ink.”

Here we reach the STN’s shop. We see a deformed Norman, who had a chequered career in the printing houses of Paris and then transplanted to Lyons, where he fells with the king’s family—father, mother, and son, the Barras. After committing several misdemeanors in Lyons, the Libraire de Boussière de la République took to the road together and eventually showed up in the little shop in Dole, where they printed leaflets for the peddlers of the Franche Comté.

There is no doubt that this and similar fingerprints came from the printers themselves, the result of a long-standing relationship with the STN’s print shop. The fingerprints on the ink and the rough edges of the binding—this, if they were made with the pages or were being produced as sheets. Also, such adventures anticipated other resulting copies with fingerprints on the title pages.

And it continues:
The passage, for all its power, retains, as I think you can see/feel a pretty much perfectly “Socratic” position on this unexpected moment of archival intimacy. (Third person is maintained – someone asked this, and I was not sure, but going back to it, I see the answer...).

At the end of the book, Darnton returns to the fingerprint, in the context of an affecting and insightful invocation of the cycles by which the old rags of the clothes of aristocrats became the fibers on which the book that would spell their demise was printed:

"But is it me, or does this whole business leave a really strong sense of a missed historical opportunity?"