Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs* and Early Modern Print Culture

Second only to the Bible and Book of Common Prayer, John Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments*, known as the *Book of Martyrs*, was the most influential book published in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The most complex and best-illustrated English book of its time, it recounted in detail the experiences of hundreds of people who were burnt alive for their religious beliefs. John N. King offers the most comprehensive investigation yet of the compilation, printing, publication, illustration, and reception of the *Book of Martyrs*. He charts its reception across different editions by learned and unlearned, sympathetic and antagonistic readers. The many illustrations included here, most of which are reproduced for the first time, introduce readers to the visual features of early printed books and general printing practices both in England and continental Europe, and enhance this important contribution to early modern literary studies, cultural and religious history, and the History of the Book.

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Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs* and Early Modern Print Culture

JOHN N. KING

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My greatest obligation is to Pauline and Jonathan, my wife and son, for sustaining this project for many years.
### Abbreviations

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation (A&amp;M)</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AcM</td>
<td>John Foxe, <em>Acts and Monuments of the English Church</em> (also known as the <em>Book of Martyrs</em>), 1st–9th editions (1563–1684).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL</td>
<td>British Library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>Folger Shakespeare Library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HL</td>
<td>Henry E. Huntington Library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JFWH</td>
<td>John Foxe and His World, ed. Christopher Highley and John N. King (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU</td>
<td>Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, The Ohio State University Libraries, Columbus, OH.</td>
</tr>
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Note on texts

Unless otherwise noted, London is the place of publication in pre-1900 books, and reference is to first editions. In the absence of pagination, I provide signature references from which I have omitted the abbreviation sig. Quotations from early printed books observe modern use of i/j, u/v, and w. Contractions are expanded, and book titles are supplied in abbreviated form with modernized spelling. I regularize typography to accord with modern usage. Literatim transcriptions from manuscripts and a xylographic woodcut contain expansions of brevigraphs and abbreviations in italics. All dates are in new style. Scriptural references are to The New English Bible with the Apocrypha (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971). I often refer silently to the following resources: ODNB; STC; The New Catholic Encyclopedia, 2nd ed. (Detroit and Washington, DC: Thomson/Gale Group in association with the Catholic University of America, 2003); The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed. (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1986); and The Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed., prepared by J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, 20 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). Available online at http://dictionary.oed.com/

Because the present investigation focuses on the materiality and artifactuality of specific copies of early modern editions of A&M, it avoids reference to folio editions, abridgements, and selections printed after the 1680s. I refer throughout to copies of the early printed editions for textual references, evidence concerning typography and page layout, and copy-specific evidence concerning reception history (e.g., handwritten notes entered by readers). Unless otherwise noted, this study refers to multiple copies of A&M preserved at OSU. I also refer to my examination of a large number of copies of early editions that are preserved at the library collections cited in the Acknowledgments. The textual corruption of the nineteenth-century editions of A&M is now commonly acknowledged due to bibliographical studies cited during the course of the present study. Their defects undergo correction in the online genetic edition of the first four editions of A&M, which represents a great boon to scholarship. Its provision of textual variations that make each of the 1563–83 editions unique is particularly important. Although the posting of textual
Note on texts

Transcriptions in A&M (online) is now complete, the present state of its commentary provides material concerning the reign of Mary I (i.e., Books 10–12 of the 1570–83 editions in addition to corresponding text in the 1563 version). The remainder of the commentary is forthcoming. Although I completed the writing of this book prior to the publication of the online version, I have incorporated references to introductory essays that were accessible as of 30 May 2005. I provide uncorrected pagination for all editions, but the reader may refer to A&M (online) in order to obtain corrected pagination for the four earliest editions.