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Sydney Castle Roberts

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Published to mark the four hundredth anniversary of the first book to be printed in Cambridge by John Siberch in 1521, this book traces the development of the Press over four centuries. S. C. Roberts, who became Secretary to the Press Syndicate in 1922, blends archival research with an anecdotal style to produce this informative account. Appendices list the university printers up to 1921, including most famously Thomas Thomas, John Legate, Thomas Buck and John Baskerville, and the books published in each year between 1521 and 1750 by authors such as Erasmus, George Herbert, John Donne, John Milton, Isaac Newton and Thomas Browne. Aimed at the general reader, this lively account of the Press's major achievements is illustrated with a number of portraits and historical documents and remains a useful introduction to the history of the oldest publishing house in the world.

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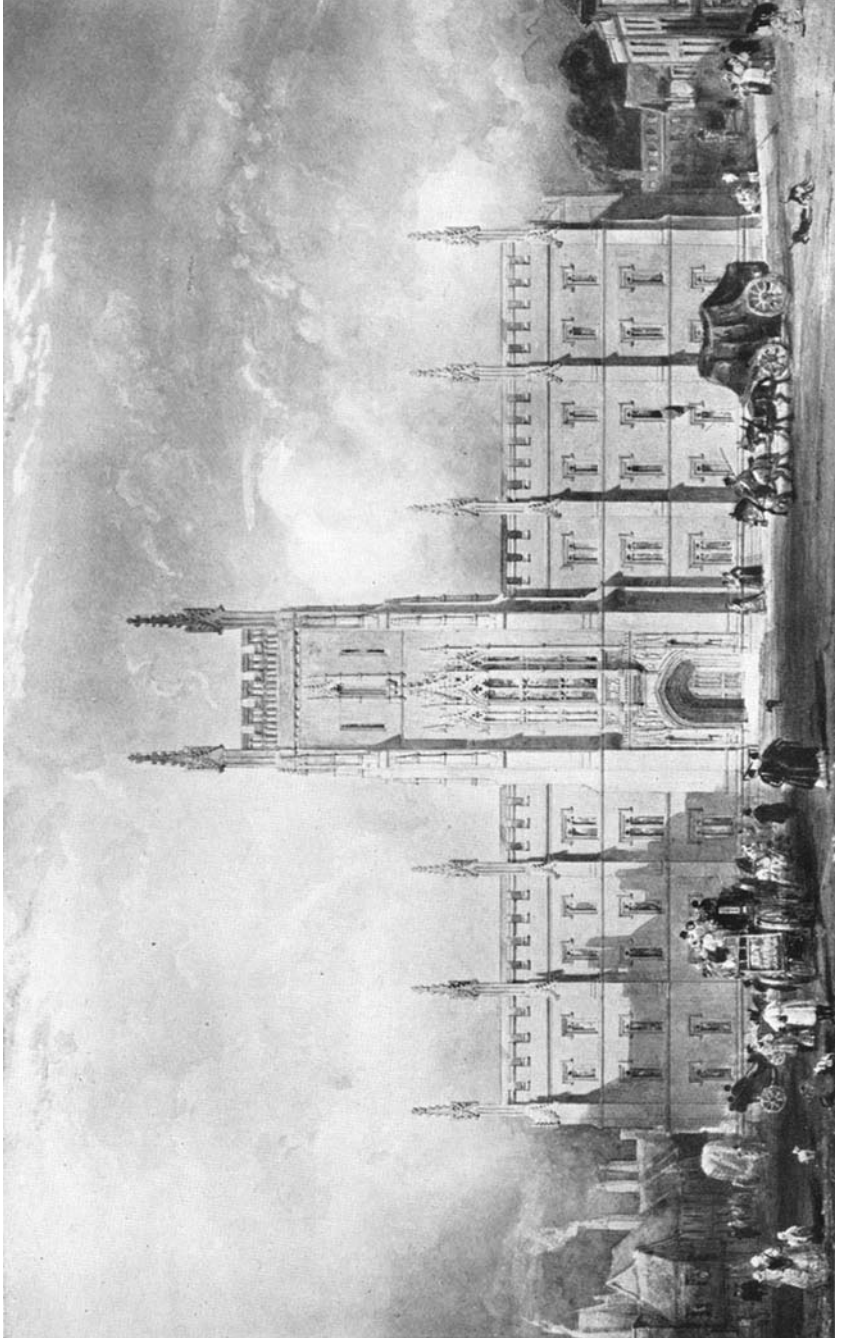
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THE PITT PRESS BUILDING

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A HISTORY OF THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

1521–1921

BY

S. C. ROBERTS, M.A.

SOMETIME SCHOLAR OF
PEMBROKE COLLEGE



CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

1921

PREFACE

AS may be inferred from the title-page, this book has been written to mark the four hundredth anniversary of Cambridge printing.

Of the original authorities used in its compilation the most valuable has been the large collection of documents relating to the Press which are preserved in the Registry of the University. Access to this collection has enabled me to glean some fresh information concerning the careers of the university printers and a series of accounts and vouchers from 1697 to 1742 has brought to light several new titles of books printed at Cambridge during that period.

The making of this book, however, would not have been feasible, in the limited time at my disposal, had I not been free to use the work of the pioneers, from Christopher Wordsworth and Henry Bradshaw onwards, and the chief items of this work are recorded in the short bibliography on page xiii.

In addition, my personal obligations are many: Mr Francis Jenkinson, University Librarian, Mr Charles Sayle, Mr A. T. Bartholomew, and many other members of the Library staff have helped me ungrudgingly, both in putting their own special knowledge at my command and in guiding me to the

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proper authorities; the Registry (Dr J. N. Keynes) and his staff have similarly given me ready access to the documents in their charge; Mr J. B. Peace, University Printer, provided me with the picture which serves as frontispiece and with the revised plan of the Press buildings; Mr G. J. Gray corrected several of my statements in proof and gave me the benefit of his own latest researches into the career of John Siberch before they were published; to many other friends (including my colleagues in the several departments of the Press) I am indebted for items of advice and help too many to be enumerated.

I have also to thank the Master of Trinity College for leave to reproduce the portrait of Bentley; Messrs Bowes and Bowes for the blocks used on pp. 6 and 14; and the Cambridge Antiquarian Society for leave to make use of the papers on Cambridge printing published in their *Proceedings*.

Those who are familiar with the *Catalogue of Cambridge Books* and the *Biographical Notes on Cambridge Printers* will appreciate the measure of my debt to the work of the late Robert Bowes. When, in 1913, I sent him a copy of a magazine article on the University Press, he wrote:

I am by it carried back to my pleasant work of 25 to 30 years ago, and I am very glad in my 78th year to see younger men interesting themselves in the subject.

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Time has robbed me of the pleasure of offering him a work which owes much to his research.

Finally, it should be stated that the book attempts to trace the general history of Cambridge printing and not to enter into the finer points of bibliographical technique. Similarly, only the briefest sketch is given of the growth of Cambridge publishing in the last 50 years; to do more would be to cross the border-line between history and advertisement. In Appendix II I have carried on the work begun by Mr Jenkinson for another 100 years. The list of books, though it may claim some new titles, makes no pretension to finality; it is rather a starting-point for the professed bibliographer.

S. C. R.

1 August 1921.

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