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James Christie
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Bibliotheca Ratcliffiana

The library of the Chandler John Ratcliffe (1707–76) was amassed before the onset of ‘bibliomania’, and perfectly illustrates the last days of a period of book collecting when scholars and commoners could hope to compete with wealthy noblemen. The collection contained over a hundred incunabula, including forty-eight Caxtons, and a fine selection of sixteenth-century English books, alongside contemporary literature and Presbyterian tracts. Many of Ratcliffe’s incunabula had been purchased from James West, others from Anthony Askew. In turn, his books were acquired by a circle of his contemporaries, including William Herbert, Charles Chauncy and William Hunter. However, the purchase of some of the finest books by the aristocratic Justin McCarthy Reagh provided a hint of what was to come. Reissued here is James Christie’s 1776 sale catalogue, featuring handwritten annotations by an attendee at the auction who recorded the prices paid and the names of buyers.

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JAMES CHRISTIE



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C A T A L O G U E

Of the Elegant and truly Valuable

L I B R A R Y

Of *JOHN RATCLIFFE*, Esq;Late of *BERMONDSEY*,

D E C E A S E D,

The Whole collected with great Judgment and Expence during the last thirty Years of his Life;

Comprehending the largest and most choice Collection of the rare old English Black Letter, in fine Preservation and in elegant Bindings, printed by Caxton, Lettou, Machlinia, the anonymous St. Alban's Schoolmaster, Wynkyn de Worde, Pynlon, Berthelet. Grafton, Day, Newberie, Marshe, Juge, Whytchurch, Wyer, Rstell, Coplande, and the Rest of the Old English Typographers; several Missals and MSS. and two Pedigrees on Vellum, finely illuminated;

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To be viewed on Monday the 25th, and to the Time of Sale, which will begin each Evening at Six o'Clock.

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. Mr. Ratcliffe's curious Manuscript Catalogues will be sold in the last Day's Sale.

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C. T.	-	Corio Turcico.
M. B.	-	Morocco Back.
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R. r.	-	Ruled.