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978-1-108-07358-5 - Caxton Celebration 1877: Catalogue of the Loan Collection of Antiquities, Curiosities, and Appliances Connected with the Art of Printing, South Kensington

Edited by George Bullen

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Caxton Celebration, 1877

The Caxton Celebration of 1877 commemorated the 400th anniversary of William Caxton's production of the first book printed in England. It centred on an exhibition in the South Kensington Museum (later the Victoria and Albert Museum) of Caxton's and other incunabula, together with significant artefacts in the later history of typography, printing and binding. The organisation of the celebration involved many of the great and good of Britain, Europe and the United States, from librarians and bibliographers to writers, musicians and statesmen. A leading light was William Blades (1824–90), whose two-volume biography of Caxton is also reissued in this series, and this catalogue was compiled by the librarian George Bullen (1816?–94). It is arranged in sections, from the start of printing in Britain to the most recent technological innovations, including stereotyping, electrotyping and photography, and provides a fascinating survey of the development of the art of printing.

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Caxton Celebration,

1877.

CATALOGUE

OF

THE LOAN COLLECTION OF ANTIQUITIES,
CURIOSITIES, AND APPLIANCES

CONNECTED WITH THE

ART OF PRINTING

SOUTH KENSINGTON.

EDITED BY GEORGE BULLEN, Esq., F.S.A.,

Keeper of the Printed Books, British Museum.



LONDON :

PRINTED AT THE ELZEVIR PRESS,

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INTRODUCTION.



THE whole English-speaking world cannot fail to feel deeply interested in the Exhibition which is now opened to public view in the Galleries at South Kensington. There can be little doubt, after the researches of Mr. Blades, the biographer of Caxton, that the "Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers" was the first book printed by our first English printer on English soil in the press set up by him in the Almonry at Westminster, just four centuries ago. "The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye" was translated by Caxton from the French of Raoul Le Fèvre in 1471, and was printed by him, in all probability, not long afterwards at Bruges, where Caxton was residing, being the first printed English book. The next printed English book was "The Game and Playe of the Chesse," "Fynysshid the last day of marche the yer of our Lord god. a thousand foure honderd and lxxiiii." This also, long thought to have been the first book printed at Westminster, has been considered by Mr. Blades to have been printed at Bruges; the original "Recueil des histories de troyes" having been also printed by Caxton, probably in 1476. Thus, to Caxton belongs the honour of having printed not only the first book in English, but the first book in the French language.

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In 1477, however, appeared "The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers," "emprynted by me William Caxton, at Westmestre," and it is to celebrate the printing of this volume, in all probability the first-fruit of typography in England, that the present Exhibition has been inaugurated.

It is to Mr. J. S. Hodson, the indefatigable Secretary of the "Printers' Pension, Almshouse, and Orphan Asylum Corporation," that the credit is due of having originated this celebration. So far back as the year 1847, indeed, the late Dean Milman, then Canon of Westminster, projected a monument to the memory of Caxton, but the movement was only partially successful, and the funds then collected were appropriated to the support of a "Caxton Pensioner" in connection with the "Printers' Corporation." Every one felt, however, that this was a very inadequate response to the appeal made by Canon Milman. This was especially the feeling of Mr. Hodson, who, as the year 1874 drew nigh, deemed that something further should be done in honour of the memory of Caxton, and for the benefit of decayed members of the "Printers' Pension Corporation." Like many others he believed that the "Chess Book" was the first book printed at Westminster, and sent forth his circulars accordingly. Among those, however, whom he addressed, was Mr. Blades, who, while he cordially concurred with him in the object he had at heart, represented that the year 1877 was the undoubted fourth centenary of the first book printed at Westminster, and recommended that that year should be adopted for the proposed Celebration. Mr. Blades, at the same time, made some valuable suggestions as to the form which the Celebration might properly assume, and the methods by which it might be carried out. Mr. Hodson cordially accepted both the date suggested by Mr. Blades and his other proposals, and it is to the united efforts of these two gentlemen that the success of the present Exhibition—as successful we hope that it may prove—will be mainly due.

The present year having been fixed upon for the Caxton Celebration, a Provisional Committee was appointed for carrying it into execution, embracing the following names :—

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Sir Charles Reed, *Chairman*; W. Blades, Esq.; W. Clowes, Esq.; J. Coe, Esq.; W. J. Coe, Esq.; G. E. Eyre, Esq.; R. C. Nichols, Esq.; W. Rivington, Esq.; G. A. Spottiswoode, Esq.; C. Austen Leigh, Esq.; W. Spottiswoode, Esq.; J. C. Wilkins, Esq.; J. S. Hodson, Esq., *Hon. Secretary*.

These gentlemen met together towards the end of 1876, in the Directors' Library of the Bank of England, on several occasions to discuss the object they had before them, to elect a general Committee, and solicit the aid of certain distinguished persons as Patrons of the undertaking. On the 17th February, 1877, a very successful meeting was held in the Jerusalem Chamber, not far from the presumed site of Caxton's printing office, at which Dean Stanley presided; and meetings were subsequently held at the Society of Arts and the Mansion House, at which lists of Patrons were announced, sectional committees formed, and an Executive appointed to conduct the Celebration about to be held. Among the Patrons were Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, His Royal Highness Prince Leopold, the two Archbishops, the Worshipful Company of Mercers, the Worshipful Company of Stationers, His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, Earl Spencer, Earl Stanhope, and numerous other noblemen and gentlemen, including the Governor and Deputy-Governor of the Bank of England.

As the scheme expanded itself, the choice of a fitting place for the Exhibition had to be decided. At first it was thought that the Hall of the Stationers' Company, which had been generously placed at the disposal of the Committee, would suffice; but this was found too small to accommodate the vast number of exhibits likely to be offered. The Royal Commissioners of the 1851 Exhibition were, therefore, appealed to for the use of the Western Galleries at South Kensington: this they graciously accorded, and granted every facility for arranging the various exhibits as they are now shown.

It was a main feature in this Celebration to collect together and exhibit to the public as many copies of the works of Caxton as could be procured by loan from the various public libraries, and

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the libraries of noblemen and gentlemen known to be in the possession of such treasures. Other objects of kindred interest, such as the productions called Block-books, and the books printed by Caxton's predecessors or contemporaries, were also thought to come appropriately within the scope of the Exhibition. These, also, the Committee agreed to solicit as loans from the several owners, as had been resolved for the Caxtons.

Her Majesty the Queen was among the first to accede to the appeal of the Committee by graciously consenting to send four Caxtons, one of which, "The Doctrinal of Sapience," is on vellum, from the Royal Library at Windsor, also the "Mentz Psalter" on vellum, together with other works of interest, including the Shakspeare of 1632, Charles I.'s own copy, with his autograph.

Lord Spencer sent fifty-seven Caxtons, and intimated, through Lord Charles Brudenell-Bruce, who, from the first, took the warmest interest in the proceedings, that the Committee might choose for the forthcoming Exhibition any of the various treasures in his library that might be thought appropriate. The Committee were not slow to accept this generous offer, and gladly availed themselves of Lord Charles Bruce's services in making the selection. The works thus lent comprise not only the Caxtons, but the early Block-books, and the rare woodcut of St. Christopher, the Gutenberg (or Mazarin) Bible (the first book ever printed), the Mentz Psalter, the St. Albans Books, the books of Rood and Hunte, &c., together with a number of works illustrating the development of the Art of Printing in foreign countries, as shown in Class B.

The Duke of Devonshire sent 18 Caxtons; the Earl of Jersey, 7 Caxtons; Mr. Christie Miller, 4 Caxtons, the excessively rare Boethius, printed at Tavistock, and Pynson's first book printed in England in Roman type; Mr. Tyssen-Amhurst sent 2 Caxtons and 1 Machlinia; the University Library at Cambridge sent 18 Caxtons, 1 Colard Mansion, and books by Rood and Hunte and Machlinia. The Bodleian Library sent 7 Caxtons; Sion College 6; Eton College, 2; the Archbishop of Canterbury, 3; the Marquis of Ailesbury, 1; Lord Tollemache, 1; the University of

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Göttingen, 6; the University of Ghent, 1; Constance, Marchioness of Lothian, 2 Caxtons; the Marquis of Lothian, 1 Colard Mansion; the Dean and Chapter of York, 3 Caxtons; the Dean and Chapter of Ripon, 2; Mr. Horwood, 2 Machlinias; Earl Beauchamp, 1 Caxton; St. John's College, Oxford, 9; St. John's College, Cambridge, 3; Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 2; Earl of Leicester, 1; Rev. E. Bankes, 1; Mr. Loveday, 1; Lord Zouche, 1; Rev. J. F. Russell, 3; the Bedford General Library, 1 Caxton, and 2 Indulgences printed by Caxton; Mr. W. Harrison, 1 Caxton and 2 Wynkyn de Wordes. Altogether as many as 190 copies of books printed by Caxton have been contributed to the present Exhibition, a number such as never before were gathered together, nor are likely to be again; and which represent as many as 104 distinct works printed by our first Printer.

As these and other objects poured in, in response to the appeal of the Committee, the following classification was resolved upon and has been carried out in the Exhibition Rooms.

CLASS A.**William Caxton and the Development of the Art of Printing in England and Scotland.**

SECTION I.—Documents relating to Caxton.

SECTION II.—Books from the Press of William Caxton and Colard Mansion at Bruges.

SECTION III.—Books from the Press of William Caxton at Westminster.

SECTION IV.—Books from the Press of Colard Mansion, from whom Caxton acquired the art.

SECTION V.—Books printed by Caxton's Contemporaries.

SECTION VI.—Books illustrating the progress of Printing in England after Caxton's death.

SECTION VII.—Books printed in Scotland.

CLASS B.**The Development of the Art of Printing in Foreign Countries.**

SECTION I.—Impressions from Wooden Blocks.

SECTION II.—Block Books.

SECTION III.—Impressions from Moveable Metal Type.

SECTION IV.—Printed Books.

SECTION V.—Production of Native Presses in the East.

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CLASS C.

The Comparative Development of the Art of Printing in England and Foreign Countries, illustrated by Specimens of the Holy Scriptures and Liturgies.

SECTION I.—Holy Scriptures.

SECTION II.—Liturgies.

CLASS D.

Specimens noticeable for Barity or for Beauty and Excellence of Typography.

SECTION I.—Unique or rare Books not exhibited in Classes A, B, or C.

SECTION II.—Specimens noticeable for beauty and excellence of typography.

SECTION III.—Facsimile Reproductions.

CLASS E.

Specimens of Printing.

SECTION I.—Printing by Steam and Commercial Printing.

SECTION II.—*Newspaper Printing*: Early Copies of English Newspapers, arranged in chronological order.

CLASS F.

Printed Music.

SECTION I.—Music printed from Wood Blocks.

SECTION II.—Music printed from Type, the staff lines in red and the notation in black.

SECTION III.—Music printed from Type (one printing only).

SECTION IV.—Tablature, and other modifications of notation.

SECTION V.—Music printed from Engraved Plates.

SECTION VI.—Music printed from Stamped Plates.

SECTION VII.—Music printed by Lithography and other modes not previously classified.

CLASS G.

Book Illustrations and other Specimens of Engravings, Printing in Colours, and other Processes.

SECTION I.—Woodcuts.

SECTION II.—Copper-plates.

SECTION III.—Printing in Colours from raised Blocks.

SECTION IV.—Lithographs.

SECTION V.—Photographs.

SECTION VI.—Zincographs, &c.

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CLASS H.

Portraits and Autographs of distinguished Authors, Type-founders, Printers, and Booksellers.

SECTION I.—Portraits in Oil, &c., of Printers.

SECTION II.—Engraved Portraits of Printers and Publishers.

SECTION III.—Engraved Portraits of Celebrated Men at one time Printers.

SECTION IV.—Views, Interiors, &c.

SECTION V.—Autographs of Printers.

SECTION VI.—Autographs and Portraits of Literary Men.

CLASS I.

Books relating to Printing.

CLASS K.

Curiosities and Miscellanies.

In this Department is exhibited all appertaining to Printers and Printing not readily included in any other class.

CLASS L.

Type and other Printing Materials.

SECTION I.—Old Types, Punches, Matrices, Moulds, and other Type-founders' Tools.

SECTION II.—Type Casting Machines.

SECTION III.—Types, Plates, and other Materials used in the various processes of music printing.

SECTION IV.—Type-founders' Specimen Books (selected).

CLASS M.

Stereotyping and Electrotyping.

SECTION I.—Apparatus for Stereotyping and Electrotyping.

SECTION II.—Specimens of Stereotype and Electrotyping plates and blocks.

CLASS N.

Copperplate Printing, Lithography and Photography.

CLASS O.

Paper and Paper-making.

Under this classification the several Books, Engravings, Portraits, Machines, Curiosities, and other objects contributed to the Exhibition have been catalogued by various members of the sub-

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committees, some of whom have also written brief introductions to the subjects treated of in the different classes.

Thus, in Class A, Mr. Blades, besides cataloguing all the Caxtons and Contemporary English Printed Books, has written a brief notice of Caxton himself, of his relations with Colard Mansion, and his introduction of the Art of Printing into England.

In Class B, Lord Charles Bruce has catalogued the Block-Books and Early Printed Books of Foreign Countries, commencing with the first printed book, the Gutenberg or Mentz Bible of 1455; and has prefixed to the list an account of the Development of the Art of Printing in Foreign Countries.

Valuable information relating to the efforts of the printers at Utrecht and Alost has been supplied by Mr. Bradshaw, of the University Library, Cambridge.

Under Class C Mr. Henry Stevens has catalogued the valuable series of Bibles exhibited in the cases, and has written an introduction to the same.

In this Introduction Mr. Stevens has treated at large of the often discussed question—"where and by whom was the Coverdale Bible printed?" and has put forth very strong reasons in favour of his belief that the printing was executed by Jacob Van Meteren at Antwerp. We cannot, however, in any way support his conclusion that the translation itself was the work of Van Meteren and only revised by Miles Coverdale. The subject being one of great interest, and Mr. Stevens being a great authority in Biblical Bibliography, he has been, of course, allowed to treat of the matter in his own way—especially since he has been the first to discover the mention made by Ruytinck of the relations that existed between Van Meteren and Coverdale.

In Class D, Mr. Kershaw has catalogued the specimens noticeable for rarity or for beauty and excellence of typography.

In Class E, Mr. Tuer has catalogued the various specimens of printing by steam, &c.

In Class F, Messrs. Littleton, Cummings, and Barrett have catalogued the remarkable specimens of music-printing from

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the earliest times, and have prefixed an introduction by the last-mentioned.

In Class G, Mr. Reid has catalogued the various woodcuts, copper-plates and other engravings, to which Mr. Daniel Grant has prefixed an introduction.

In Class H, the various portraits, &c. have been catalogued by Mr. Blades.

In Class I, Mr. Overall has catalogued the various works relating to printing, lent by Mr. Blades and others.

In Class K, the curiosities and miscellanies have been catalogued by Mr. Brabrook.

In Class L, Mr. Talbot Reed has given an account of the "Rise and Progress of Type-founding in England;" and Mr. Arthur Powell has treated of the "Instruments and Appliances of the Letter-press Printer."

In Class M, Mr. Powell has described the various machines, processes and specimens of stereotyping, electrotyping, &c. He has also described the processes of copper-plate printing, lithography, and photography in Class N.

In Class O, the various specimens of paper and water-marks, have been catalogued and described by Mr. Brabrook.

In Classes A, B, C, and D, Mr. Graves has given general assistance in advising, cataloguing and arranging.

Finally, Mr. Blades has acted as general manager in the arrangement of the Exhibition in the upper rooms; and Mr. G. Bullen, Chairman of the Sub-committee on Printed Books, has acted as general editor of the catalogue.

GEO. BULLEN.

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Patrons.

HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE LEOPOLD, F.S.A.

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF MERCERS.

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF STATIONERS.

THE RIGHT HON. AND MOST REV. THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

THE RIGHT HON. AND MOST REV. THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, D.D.

THE MOST REV. THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN, D.D.

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, K.G., LL.D., F.R.S. (*Chancellor of the University of Cambridge*).

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ARGYLL, K.T., P.C., D.C.L.

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER, K.G.

THE MOST NOBLE THE MARQUIS OF SALISBURY, K.G. (*Chancellor of the University of Oxford*).

THE MOST NOBLE THE MARQUIS OF LORNE, K.T.

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF ABERDEEN.

THE RIGHT HON. EARL STANHOPE, F.S.A.

THE RIGHT HON. EARL SPENCER, K.G., LL.D.

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF POWIS, D.C.L.

THE RIGHT HON. EARL RUSSELL, K.G., F.R.S., F.R.G.S., F.S.S.

THE RIGHT HON. EARL BEAUCHAMP.

THE RIGHT HON. EARL LEICESTER, K.G.

THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF EXETER.

THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN, V.P.S.A.

THE RIGHT HON. SIR THOMAS WHITE (*Lord Mayor of London*).

THE RIGHT HON. BARONESS BURDETT-COUTTS.

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THE RIGHT HON. LORD SELBORNE, P.C.

LORD LOTHIAN.

LORD RONALD GOWER.

HIS EXCELLENCY COUNT MÜNSTER (*German Ambassador*).HIS EXCELLENCY BARON SOLVYNS (*Belgian Ambassador*).EDWARDS PIERREPONT, ESQ. (*United States Minister*).

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SIR ROWLAND HILL, K.C.B., D.C.L., F.R.S.

RIGHT REV. BISHOP CLAUGHTON, D.D.

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VERY REV. R. W. CHURCH, M.A., DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S.

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 ALFRED TENNYSON, Esq., D.C.L. (*Poet Laureate*).
 EDWARD HOWLEY PALMER, Esq., (*Governor of the Bank of England*).
 HENRY HUCKS GIBBS, Esq., F.R.G.S., (*Ex-Governor of the Bank of England*).
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