CHAPTER I

From Henry VIII to the First Edwardian Prayer Book

In 1534, the marital plans of Henry VIII led him to break with Rome, to deny the authority of the pope who would not grant him a divorce, and to declare himself the Supreme Head of the Church in England. But although he thereby ceased to be a *Roman* Catholic, the comparatively few reforms he allowed in the conduct of religion were more political than doctrinal. Those such as Thomas Cromwell (Henry's vicar general and vicegerent in spirituals) and Thomas Cranmer (archbishop of Canterbury) who wanted to steer the church in directions inspired by European reformers had to move slowly and warily, because by no stretch of the imagination could Henry himself be described as a Protestant.

On 3 March 1542, the Convocation of Canterbury decreed (probably at the suggestion of the Supreme Head) that from henceforth all church services in England should be ordered according to 'Sarum use':[A] that is, the version of the liturgy and rites associated since Norman times with the diocese of Salisbury, and already far more widespread throughout the kingdom than the uses of York, Hereford, and a few less influential sees. To ensure uniformity (and to hasten the demise of rival uses), the following January the king granted a joint patent to the former partners Richard Grafton and Edward Whitchurch, giving them a lifetime monopoly of printing all Sarum liturgies, namely

> The masse booke/ the Graill, the Antyphoner, The Himptnall, The portaus, and the prymer bothe in Latyn and in Englishe of Sarum vse for the province of Canterbury . . . And . . . that they and their assignes oonly and none other person nor persons . . . haue libertie to printe the bookes abouesaid.[B]

[A] Bray, *Records of Convocation*, 267. The name 'Sarum' derives from the habit of contracting Latin *Sarisburia* to *Sa* followed by the symbol usually reserved for terminal *-rum*.
[B] TNA: PRO, C 66/716, m. 34 (28 January), quoted from the warrant, C 82/804/[14] (23 January).

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Grafton and Whitchurch, who would become the most important printers of Edwardian prayer books and would also contribute to those of 1559, had begun their careers as merchants with no intention of becoming printers.[A] Grafton served as an apprentice in the Grocers' Company, and was made a freeman in December 1534 while in his early twenties. Whitchurch, probably a year or two Grafton's junior, was freed from his apprenticehip in the Haberdashers' Company in June 1536. After their first mercantile venture with another young Haberdasher ended in litigation, the partners' shared zeal for religious reform led them to finance the printing in Antwerp of the translation that became known as the 'Matthew' Bible of 1537.[B] They followed that success with an even more ambitious project: a substantial revision by Miles Coverdale of that translation, to be printed in an unusually large format and destined to become known as the 'Great Bible'. No press of the required size had ever been constructed or used in England, so the job was given to François Regnault in Paris.

About three-fifths of the printed sheets had already been shipped to England, and Regnault had almost finished the remainder, when the Inquisition summoned him and seized all the sheets still in his hands. But although the French authorities never released the confiscated sheets and eventually burned them, they not only allowed the publishers to acquire one of Regnault's presses and some of his types, ornaments, and even employees, but were apparently the first to suggest that solution. And so Grafton and Whitchurch set up a printing house in the Greyfriars' former precinct in London, and rapidly learned how to run it. By November 1539 they had replaced all the confiscated sheets and begun selling the Great Bible, and because Henry's injunctions of 1538 had required every parish church in the land to acquire a copy, they proceeded to reprint the whole book six times with extensive financial assistance from another Haberdasher.[C]

By the time they had finished supplying the nation's churches with bibles, their printing house had become the largest and most productive yet seen in England. There is no obvious sign of dissension between them, and

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[A] The following brief account of their Henrician careers is condensed from *Stationers and Printers*, 1, 357–74, 378–85.

[B] This was the second English translation to be printed, preceded by the Coverdale Bible of 1535 (itself reprinted in 1537). Cyndia Susan Clegg's claim that it was printed in Amsterdam ('The 1559 Books of Common Prayer', 106) is mistaken.

[C] For the injunctions, see *Stationers and Printers*, 1, 377–8. The Haberdasher was Anthony Marler, who was probably related to the man sued by the partners over their earlier trading venture (1, 379–80).

they continued to collaborate for many years, but sometime around the turn of 1542–43 Whitchurch took a share of the materials and set up a printing house of his own. Whether he did so before or after the two were jointly granted the patent for Sarum liturgies is uncertain. In late 1544 Grafton (alone) was appointed printer to the young Prince Edward, and the following May he and Whitchurch were given another joint patent, this time for a royally approved primer.[A] Meanwhile, whichever of them had custody of the actual patent for liturgies had apparently lost it, and in January 1546 they paid for an inspeximus exemplification of it.[B] Had they known that Henry had only a year left to live, and that Catholic service books would not be needed during the next reign, they could have avoided that expense.

The Book of the Common Prayer, 1549

The accession of Edward VI in January 1547 brought promotion for Grafton, who replaced Thomas Berthelet as King's Printer in April.[C] On the same day he and Whitchurch received a new patent for any and all

> bookes concerning dyvyne *ser*uice or conteyning any kinde of sermons or exhortac*i*ons that shalbe vsed suffred or Aucthorised in our Churches of Englande and Irelande . . . being in the Englysshe or Lattyn tongue.[D]

Archbishop Cranmer had been working towards a vernacular form of the liturgy since the 1530s, and as early as 1544 had persuaded Henry to allow the publication of an English litany that could be included in the Sarum service. Under Edward he began anew, and (with the aid of other like-minded divines) by late 1548 he and his collaborators had prepared what would be published in March 1549 as *The Book of the Common Prayer*.[E] The Act of Uniformity that both authorized and imposed it (2 & 3 Edw. VI, c. 1) was introduced in the Commons by a bill that was read on 19 December

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[A] Ibid., 1, 557; STC 16034, LL2ʳ.
[B] TNA: PRO, C 66/769, m. 16: a certified copy under the Great Seal, probably costing nearly as much as the original grant. It is possible (though I think unlikely) that the copy was procured because one of them doubted the motives of the other who had custody of the original. But I can see no obvious signs of mutual distrust at any date, and a year later they were jointly granted another patent.
[C] TNA: PRO, C 82/868/[4] (warrant of 20 April); C 66/805, m. 1 (enrolled patent, 22 April).
[D] TNA: PRO, C 66/802, m. 7 (quoted from the warrant of 20 April, C 82/868/[19]).
[E] Note the second '*the*'. As author of *The Bibliography of the Book of Common Prayer, 1549–1999* (2002), David N. Griffiths was entitled to devise his own conventions, so his unvarying '*The book of common prayer*' for all pertinent entries from 1552 (regardless of the original spelling, capitalization, or line-division) can be defended. But using the same rubber stamp instead of Cranmer's own wording for the editions of 1549–51 suggests inattention.

1548, but was redelivered to Secretary Smith rather than proceeding. It reappeared and was read in the Lords on 7 January, where after two more readings it passed on the 15th – but while both archbishops supported it, eight of the eighteen bishops present dissented. After three readings in the Commons it passed without division on the 21st.[A]

Both Whitchurch and Grafton must have begun printing the book as soon as (or even before) the Lords had voted, because although the Act would not become law until it received the royal assent on 14 March, their colophons are dated the 7th and 8th of that month respectively.[B] The new form of service was to become compulsory at Pentecost next (9 June), so the printers still had three more months to make progress towards the ideal of providing at least one copy for every parish. How close they came to that goal, however, is unknown. Each produced at least four more editions dated 1549 (a date that probably became a mere formula before they had finished), but the exact order of those reprints is not completely clear. Whitchurch's STC 16270 and 16270a are both dated May on the title-page and 4 May in the colophon, while his 16272 and 16273 are dated June on the title-page and 16 June in the colophon. In each case one of those colophon dates is merely reprinted from its copy, and it is quite likely that at least one edition was really finished as late as 1550. The precise dates of the Grafton editions are equally uncertain, because all have title-pages that claim the month as March 1549. The two that are probably latest (16274–5) have colophons dated June, but it is unclear which is the earlier. Meanwhile John Oswen of Worcester, who had been granted a patent to print books for church use in Wales and the Marches,[C] printed the only known edition in quarto (16271, dated 24 May) and a folio dated 30 July (16276). Although Humphrey Powell had no comparable patent, he printed a folio edition in Dublin in 1551 (16277),[D] apparently unaware that it was shortly to be replaced by a substantially revised version.

In Chapters 4 and 5 I shall discuss the physical structure of the first two folio editions of 1559 in some detail. In each case that structure was inherited from an edition of 1552, and how those earlier editions evolved will be examined in Chapter 2. Those editions in turn were shaped by lessons the printers learned while mass-producing the first Edwardian

[A] *CJ*, 1, 5–6; *LJ*, 1, 331, 354.
[B] Both title-pages were printed later than the colophons, and are dated simply '*Mense Martij*'.
[C] *Stationers and Printers*, 11, 604, 649–50.
[D] On 15 July 1550 Powell was paid £20 by a royal warrant 'towardes the setting vp of a printe in Ireland' (TNA: PRO, E 315/259, 114ᵛ), and in the colophon of his prayer book he describes himself as 'Printer to the | Kynges Maiestie', but the patent rolls contain no record of the grant of a royal office.

version in 1549.[A] But when I looked closely at the 1549 editions I realized that despite the historical importance of their contents they had never been studied really carefully as physical objects. Even the basic question of which edition was the first had never been properly investigated, and will here be answered for the first time.

In order to explain how I reached some of the conclusions here offered – how one can tell which parts of a book were printed first, or who printed them – it will be necessary to spell out in some detail how books were printed and, perhaps even more significantly, how they were not. The next section is therefore of particular importance, for unless it is read attentively some of the deductions offered later may not be properly understood. Sixteenth-century printed books (and this may be the single most note-worthy fact to learn and remember about them) were not manufactured one at a time, and did not emerge from the press one after another as if on a conveyor belt.

How the Books were Printed

Until Chapter 9, almost all the books mentioned in this one will be *folio* editions. All that means is that each pair of leaves (each *bifolium*) is a single sheet folded in half, so each leaf is half the size of a sheet of the paper used (which in the case of the prayer books measured approximately 38 × 28 cm, or 15 × 11 inches). A folio book consists of a series of *quires* (or *gatherings*), which occasionally consist of only a single folded sheet but are usually made up of multiple sheets (though seldom more than six) folded together, and therefore contain between four and twelve leaves (between eight and twenty-four pages). Each quire is eventually sewn through the fold to a series of cords that lie across the spine and will secure the boards to the finished book.

Each folio sheet has two pages printed on each side, and the pair of pages for one side of each sheet is called a *forme*.[B] Because very few printers had really large supplies of type, folios were usually printed *by formes*. If we use a quire *in sixes* as an example (three sheets, six leaves, twelve pages), the usual method of printing it was to *cast off* the text for the first five of those pages: to mark up the copy and indicate where each page should begin, and to begin setting with pages six and seven (the innermost forme of the quire).

[A] The pun inherent in mass-producing Protestant communion books has been noticed at least a few times during the past century, and should not be claimed as original if noticed again.

[B] The two formes of a folded sheet are rather obviously distinguished as the *outer forme* and the *inner forme*.

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While that forme was being printed the *compositors* (type-setters) would set pages five and eight to be printed on the other side of all those sheets (to *perfect* them) – and after distributing the type from pages six and seven back into the type-cases, would set pages four and nine to print on the first side of the next heap of sheets.

Few printers could afford to keep supplies of type large enough to print more than a few folio pages before an earlier forme of type had to be scrubbed, rinsed, dried, and distributed back into the cases. If a thousand copies of a book were being printed, what existed halfway through the process was not five hundred copies of the book but a thousand copies of half of it, and no copy could be completed and sold until the very last forme was being printed.

To inform the eventual binder of the order in which the quires should be bound, each quire was identified by a *signature* (a letter or other character) printed below the text on its first page. To explain the order of the other sheets in the quire, below the text on the first page of each (a right-hand page, or *recto*) the relevant number would follow the signature. In a three-sheet quire designated D, therefore, below the text on the first three rectos would appear D (or D1), D2, and D3 respectively (or D.i., D.ii., and D.iii.).

Because the pages were seldom set or printed in text order, page-numbers were very easy to get wrong and comparatively seldom used. Numbering leaves (*foliation*) was more common (although also prone to error), but frequently done without. In a bibliographical study such as this one, leaves or pages are usually cited by the more reliable signatures (although they too can be misprinted), and referred to as (for example) leaf A5, page E3^r (for *recto*, or front), page G1^v (for *verso*, or back), and so on.[A]

An unsigned quire in a book's *preliminaries* (quires of prefatory material, dedications, contents lists, or anything else preceding the main text) is conventionally identified by bibliographers as π (Greek *p* for preliminary), and a second such quire would be called ππ or 2π. Sometimes preliminary quires are lettered, and if the letter is one *also* used in the signatures of the main text it is cited with a superior π prefixed ($^\pi$A). But a letter *not* used to sign the main text (as lower-case a in the preliminaries of a book otherwise signed only in capitals) does not need a prefix.[B]

[A] The signatures are always cited in roman, no matter what kind of face is used in the original; the numbers are always cited in arabic, and references to versos (or other pages with no *printed* signature) are not bracketed.

[B] An unsigned quire whose position obviously implies a letter (for example, between quires signed D and F respectively) is cited with the inferred letter (in this case *E*) in italic.

A book's signatures can also be used to describe its overall structure (or *collation*) by means of a formula. At this point I should perhaps reassure any reader whose reactions to the word *formula* include an aversion to anything suggesting either calculation or any branch of mathematics or science. A collational formula is no more than a compact, step-by-step description of how the book is made up: how many quires, how many leaves in each, and how they are signed. And while the complete formula for any of the earliest editions may look a little intimidating at first sight, to begin what I think of as the 'archaeological' approach, I intend to divide each formula up into sections: the preliminaries; what I shall call parts 1 and 2 of the main text (each part subdivided); and two belated afterthoughts.

The Preliminaries

Each of the earliest editions of 1549 has a *colophon* (a statement of who printed it, where, and when, but not on the title-page where that would be called an *imprint*) dated in early March. Edward Whitchurch's colophon (at the end of the book) is dated 7 March and Richard Grafton's (at the end of the Communion service) a day later, so the common (and careless) assumption has long been that Whitchurch's edition beat Grafton's into the shops by a day and is therefore the *editio princeps*. I shall reexamine that conclusion later in the chapter, but since each title-page is dated simply '*Mense Martij*' with no day specified (Figure 2), and since their preliminaries are identical in structure, I need record the formula for them only once:

2°: ❧^{2} $^{\pi}$A^{8},

The '2°' (which I shall not repeat for the other sections) simply indicates that the book is a folio, in which each sheet contains two leaves (a quarto would be '4°'); the comma after $^{\pi}$A^{8} merely separates the preliminaries from the main text. The first 'quire' is a single sheet: a bifolium whose first leaf has the title-page on the recto and a list of contents on the verso. Title-pages are almost never signed, but leaf ❧2 is signed with an 'Aldine leaf' rather than a letter. At its right extremity the tip of Whitchurch's leaf bends downwards and Grafton's upwards, but that is not important. What *is* significant is that both printers misprint the leaf number as 'i.' instead of 'ii.'.

It could hardly be clearer that one of these sheets was printed from the other, rather than each independently from manuscript copy. It is unsurprising that the wording of the title is identical, and the minor differences of line-division are easily accounted for by the differences in size and

proportion of the central spaces in the two woodcut compartments. More dramatic is the resemblance between the two lists of contents, in which although the spelling of individual words differs quite freely, each line-division in the entries that exceed one line is in exactly the same place (including the redundant double hyphen in 'Communion of the=|same' in item ix). The first paragraph of the Preface on ❧2^r is necessarily divided differently because Whitchurch had to fit the text around a larger orna-mental initial, but in the second paragraph and the whole of the second page all lines divide at the same point in both. It is also reasonably clear that whichever printer was the first to set and print this, it was the *last* sheet of his edition to be printed, as is often true of title-sheets.[A]

The second preliminary quire ($^{\pi}$A^8, prefixed by π to distinguish it from the first quire of the main text) was also used as copy by whichever printer was the second to print it. But whoever printed it first may have done so at almost any time during the proceedings. The first page ($^{\pi}$A1^r) has only a section title that introduces the next three pages; they contain an explan-ation of the order in which the Psalms are to be read throughout each month ($^{\pi}$A1^v), a table illustrating that order ($^{\pi}$A2^r), and an explanation of the order in which the rest of the Bible is to be read ($^{\pi}$A2^v). The remaining twelve pages of the quire contain a liturgical calendar, with each month filling a page.

The calendar quire presented special challenges, and in each printing house would have been assigned to experienced workmen with specific skills. Thirteen of the sixteen pages needed to be set by compositors capable of handling tabular material: the table of Psalms ($^{\pi}$A2^r) and the more difficult nine-column calendar pages (similar to those of 1561 reproduced in Plates 6 and 7). One of the difficulties is that in such tables the vertical and horizontal rules, which are printed from thin strips of brass, cannot cross each other. In those tables, therefore, most of the vertical lines are really made up of short, line-high rules, each set in approximately the right place according to a mark scratched on the setting rule on which the compositor assembled the type.[B]

Moreover, each forme of the calendar quire is printed in two colours, and not all pressmen had the necessary skills or experience for that. When set, the whole forme was first printed in red on a sheet of parchment. The words to be printed in red were then carefully cut out so that when the cut

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[A] Had the Preface (which is essentially an introduction to the calendar's lectionary) been available when the calendar quire itself was printed, it would have made better sense to print the preliminaries as a single ten-leaf quire (as each printer would subsequently do in later editions).

[B] Numerous examples are illustrated in Figures 27–28 and Plates 4, 6, and 7.

parchment was placed (as a *frisket*) between the type and a clean sheet of paper, only the selected words actually touched the paper. When all the sheets had been printed with those words in red the frisket was removed, and the forme was cleaned. The red words were taken out and replaced by spaces and quads so that the rest of the text and the rules could be printed in black.[A] Because of this extra difficulty, the Grafton calendar quire was printed in sufficiently large numbers to supply at least two editions (perhaps as many as 3,000 copies; perhaps more), and the preliminaries in at least his first two editions are essentially identical. Whitchurch, however, apparently printed only enough for a single edition, and arranged the preliminaries slightly differently for his next edition.

The Main Text, Part 1

Whitchurch (STC 16267) A^8 $B–I^6$ K^8 $L–X^6$ Y^8
Grafton (STC 16268) $A–I^6$ K^8 $L–T^6$ V^8 X^6 Y^8

At this point we meet parts of two collational formulae that are much simpler than they may seem at first sight. Here I have followed tradition by listing Whitchurch first, so let us begin by walking through his formula. His main text begins with an eight-leaf quire A, but continues with a series of eight six-leaf quires signed B–I. Another eight-leaf quire signed K is followed by eleven more six-leaf quires (L–X), and the section finishes with a third eight-leaf quire (Y). At first sight Grafton's formula may look very different, but in fact it contains exactly the same number of leaves (138). The 'major' differences are that while both printers have eight leaves in quires K and Y, Whitchurch also does so in quire A but Grafton in quire V.

What I have here called part 1 of the prayer book deals with the 'usual' services for the whole year. Section 1a presents the order for Matins and Evensong, which are essentially the same for every day of the year (although a few special variants are indicated in those sections). Section 1b then prints all the special Introits, Collects, Epistles, and Gospels prescribed for use during the Communion services held on ninety special days thoughout the year, while Section 1c presents the 'basic' Communion service itself. If we divide the collational formulae by those sections the two

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[A] Quads were extra-wide spaces, usually ranging in width from half the body-height of the type (one *en*) to three times the body-height (three *ems*). Because the whole quire was printed in two colours, each of the non-tabular pages also took advantage of the opportunity to include some red emphasis.

editions appear even less different. In this case I have placed Grafton first, because there is clear evidence that he was the first to *print* part 1.

	1a	1b		1c
Grafton	A^6	$B–I^6\ K^8\ L–T^6\ V^8$		$X^6\ Y^8$
Whitchurch	A^8	$B–I^6\ K^8\ L–V^6$		$X^6\ Y^8$

Grafton began, in fact, with section 1b (the Introits etc.), whose running titles throughout are 'At the Communion'. He correctly predicted that section 1a would need no more than a single quire, and so began setting the texts for the first Sunday in Advent on the first page of a quire he signed B (numbering the recto page 'Fol. vii.' on the correct assumption that quire A would probably contain only six leaves). The work apparently proceeded regularly as a series of six-leaf quires until at least part of the way through quire L (whose leaves are numbered in roman numerals Lxi–Lxvi) and perhaps beyond, until a problem arose. Either part of the manuscript copy had been misplaced or the authorities decided only belatedly to add special texts for Easter Monday, but one way or another it became necessary to scrap K^6 and to replace it with a quire with two more leaves (K^8, each of whose last three leaves is therefore numbered 'Fol.Lx.'). The work then proceeded without visible problems until quire T, whose completion left too much text remaining to fit into twelve pages. The copy for section 1c may not yet have been available, so rather than leave section 1b incomplete Grafton chose to use another eight-leaf quire (V^8) whose last leaf was left blank.

It was probably at this point that he went back to the beginning of part 1 and began to work on quire A, containing the orders for Matins and Evensong. The compositor cast off the first five pages so he knew where to start setting the sixth page ($A3^v$), readied his galley by heading it with a running title from a recently distributed verso page, and began to set. When he finished that page he began the next ($A4^r$), using a running title from a recent recto but remembering to change the folio number in the top right corner to 'iiij'. Once that forme was imposed and ready for the press he moved on to the next ($A3^r$:4^v), and then another. Since he had started from the middle of the quire one might expect inner forme $A2^v$:5^r to be next – and it may indeed have been the next to be *set*, although outer forme $A2^r$:5^v was the first to be *printed*. But it was not until the press had started printing inner forme $A2^v$:5^r that someone realized that although the folio numbers had been corrected, the actual running titles still read 'At the Communion' as throughout section 1b.[A] The press was stopped and

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[A] As the first page of the order for Evensong, page $A4^r$ should not have had a running title at all.