

BOXES AND BOOKS IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

In early modern England, boxes furnished minds as readily as they furnished rooms, shaping ideas about the challenges of interpretation, and negotiations of the book as text and material object. Engaging with recent work on material culture and the history of the book, Lucy Razzall weaves together close readings of texts and objects, from wills, plays, sermons and religious polemic to chests, book-bindings, reliquaries, and coffins. She demonstrates how the material and imaginative possibilities of the box were dynamically connected in post-Reformation England, structuring modes of thought. These early modern responses to materiality offer ways in which the discipline of book history might reframe its analysis of the material text. In tracing the early modern significance of the box as matter and metaphor, this book reveals the origins of some of the enduring habits of thought with which we still respond to people, texts, and things.

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MODERN ENGLAND

Materiality, Metaphor, Containment

LUCY RAZZALL



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Contents

| | |
|---|----------------|
| <i>List of Figures</i> | <i>page</i> vi |
| <i>Acknowledgements</i> | viii |
| <i>A Note on Texts</i> | x |
| Introduction | i |
| 1 Chests of the Mind in Early Modern England | 30 |
| 2 The Renaissance of the Box: Metaphors of Interpretation | 61 |
| 3 The Word in a Box: Reforming the Book | 103 |
| 4 How to Read a Reliquary | 148 |
| 5 ‘Because this box we know’: Embodying the Box | 191 |
| Conclusion | 219 |
| <i>Bibliography</i> | 231 |
| <i>Index</i> | 252 |

Figures

| | | |
|----|---|--------|
| 1 | Chest, Portugal or England, 1603–49 | page 5 |
| 2 | George Meriton, <i>Nomenclatura clericalis, or The young clerk's vocabulary in English and Latine</i> (London: Richard Lambert, 1685), Rv–R2r | 46 |
| 3 | Johann Amos Comenius, <i>Hoc est, Omnium fundamentalium in mundo rerum, & in vita actionum, pictura & nomenclatura</i> (London: J. Kirton, 1659), K7v–K8r | 47 |
| 4 | Wooden box in the shape of a book, containing twelve painted trenchers, England, seventeenth century | 106 |
| 5 | Silver gilt binding for a 1620 King James Bible and 1621 Book of Common Prayer, British, c. 1621–5 | 108 |
| 6 | Library chest of the parish of St James, Gorton, 1655 | 109 |
| 7 | Embroidered binding for a Bible and Book of Psalms, British, c. 1649 | 114 |
| 8 | Embroidered cabinet with scenes from the story of Esther, British, after 1665 | 140 |
| 9 | Anonymous, <i>The Black Boxe of Roome opened</i> (London, n.p., 1641), title-page | 152 |
| 10 | Leather case for a reliquary, French or Swiss, c. 1350–1400 | 155 |
| 11 | <i>Reliquiæ Baxterianæ, or, Mr. Richard Baxters narrative of the most memorable passages of his life and times</i> (London: T. Parkhurst, 1696), frontispiece | 184 |
| 12 | <i>Reliquiæ Baxterianæ, or, Mr. Richard Baxters narrative of the most memorable passages of his life and times</i> (London: T. Parkhurst, 1696), title-page | 185 |
| 13 | Book chest reputedly belonging to Hugo de Groot, Netherlands, 1600–15 | 200 |

| | | |
|----|--|-----|
| | <i>List of Figures</i> | vii |
| 14 | Strongbox, probably German, late sixteenth or early seventeenth century | 201 |
| 15 | Edwarde Rainbowe, <i>A sermon preached at Walden in Essex, May 29th</i> (London: Printed W. Wilson, for Gabriel Bedell, M. M[eighen] and T. C[ollins], 1649), Br | 220 |

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ix

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A Note on Texts

Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from the works of William Shakespeare are taken from *The Complete Works*, ed. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from the works of Desiderius Erasmus are taken from the *Collected Works*, 89 vols (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974–2019). All references to individual volumes from this edition are abbreviated to *CWE*.

In all direct quotations from early modern English sources, I have modernised the use of *i/j* and *u/v*, and expanded contractions wherever possible.