



# Printed wrappers of the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries

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## Printed Wrappers of the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries

**I**N recent years several articles on the origin and development of the book-jacket have been published,<sup>1</sup> and the earliest so far noted appears to be that for Heath's *Keepsake*, 1833 [1832]. There have, however, been few, if any, studies of the evolution of the printed wrapper during the first three centuries of printing, although there are numerous accounts of particular examples, mainly of the fifteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the present paper is to outline the development of the printed wrapper and to enlist the attention of bookmen in the search for specimens which may fill in the gaps in this account of a minor, though interesting part of book production.

Printed wrappers have had two main lines of descent, both of which go back well into the fifteenth century. In the earlier and truer form the wrapper is an entity by itself, printed at a different time and even on a different press or by another shop or process, and is unconnected physically with the book or pamphlet which it encloses except by the stitching or glue with which it is attached. It is usually printed on paper,<sup>3</sup> but paper generally of a thicker sort than the book to be enclosed, and occasionally on paper pasted down on some stiffening material, either a heavier paper or pasteboard. If the printed matter on the wrapper is applicable only to one book, or if all copies of a given book in original condition are covered by the same printed wrapper which is not found on any copy of another book, it may be called a publisher's wrapper. But if the design is applicable to any book of the same size, or if it occurs on books of different publishers or even

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Times Literary Supplement*, 12 May 1950, p. 300; *Publishers' Weekly*, 6 September 1947, p. B 154, and references in both the above. John Carter has been the chief explorer of this field and over the years has steadily pushed back the date of the earliest specimen.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., Leo Baer, *Mit Holzschnitten verzierte Buchumschläge des XV. und XVI. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfort, 1923); E. P. Goldschmidt, *Gothic & Renaissance Bookbindings* (Cambridge, 1928), I, 163-164; and Leo Baer, *Holzschnitte auf Buchumschlägen* (Strasburg, 1936).

<sup>3</sup> Examples, however, are known printed on vellum, and indeed, technically, any material used to cover a book which was attached to that book by means other than lacing of the bands would be a 'wrapper.'

different books of the same publisher, then it is properly termed a binder's wrapper.

The other type of wrapper may be called the 'integrated wrapper.' This is printed on the recto of the first leaf of the first quire and on the verso of the last leaf of the last quire, with the other sides either blank or containing no material which is continuous with matter which is an integral part of the book, so that if these first and last leaves were canceled, the book would appear merely to lack two leaves which might be blank. They should not be confused with 'wrap-arounds,' which are common on pamphlets of the eighteenth century and which are to be distinguished by the fact that they either are conjugate with one of the quires which they protect or at least contain, besides the title or half-title on the recto of the first leaf, part of the text, table, index, or advertisements which is continuous with matter which is an integral part of the book.

The earliest known printed wrapper of the type first described occurs on a copy of *Von Ordnung der Gesundheit* of Hans Schönsperger, Augsburg, 1482, in the Staatliche Bibliothek in Bamberg.<sup>4</sup> Evidently Schönsperger's artist was instructed to make a woodcut of a typical blind-tooled leather binding of the time, including the bands of the spine, and the whole has been almost miraculously preserved by the accident of having been loosely bound with other tracts in a pigskin cover. Not only was this first printed wrapper produced by an Augsburg printer, but so also were all five of the recorded ones of this type printed in the fifteenth century in Germany.

An example of one of these is shown in Plate I. It is found on the Klosterneuburg-Kreisler copy, recently bequeathed to Harvard by Mrs A. P. Loring, Jr, of Jodocus Pflantzmann's German translation of the twelfth-century collection of the imperial feudal laws compiled by Obertus de Horto, entitled *Keyserliche Lehenrecht* and printed in Augsburg by Lucas Zeissenmair in 1494. Soon after publication this copy was placed in a half deerskin paper-board binding and so has been preserved in remarkably fine condition.<sup>5</sup> Erhart Ratdolt had printed in Augsburg the year before an edition of the *Lehenrecht*, a copy of which is in the Harvard Law Library. Presumably after Zeissenmair's edition was published with its fine printed wrappers Ratdolt was im-

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Max Müller, 'Der älteste bisher bekannte Buchumschlag,' *Festschrift für Georg Leidinger* (Munich, 1930), pp. 195-197.

<sup>5</sup> No other copy of the woodcut used on the back cover has been preserved.

elled to imitate them for use on the unsold copies of his own edition. In Ratdolt's wrappers a panel of the front cover has inserted in type a blurb for the book with the date 1494.<sup>6</sup> It must be one of the earliest publisher's blurbs known.

The design of Zeissenmair's covers is copied with very little alteration, other than the addition of the scalloped outer border, from the blocks used for a similar wrapper made for an edition of the *Historia von den sieben weisen Meistern* printed at Augsburg in 1486 by Hans Schönsperger, a copy of which is preserved in the Württembergische Landesbibliothek in Stuttgart.<sup>7</sup> These same blocks were used two years later for wrappers which occur on several copies of the blockbook edition of Hartlieb's *Kunst Cirromantia*, Augsburg, J. Schapff, 1486.

In Italy, as Paul Kristeller first pointed out,<sup>8</sup> there were a number of similar woodcut bindings, the earlier ones of Ferrarese origin and the later ones Venetian. These are not strictly speaking printed wrappers, as E. P. Goldschmidt observed,<sup>9</sup> for they consist of woodcuts containing designs for both covers and the spine printed together on a single sheet of paper which was then pasted over a cardboard binding already affixed to the book. One of the earliest of these, on a copy of P. Riccius, *Annotata in Logicam Pauli Veneti*, Venice, G. de Tridino, 5 October 1488, is now in the Department of Graphic Arts at Harvard.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, the Italian printed covers differ from the early German ones in being binder's decorations applied to any book of the appropriate size, and not publisher's wrappers occurring on several copies of the same book—as in most of the German ones.

Besides the German and Italian printed wrappers of this type the only other example of the fifteenth century known to me occurs solely on the New York Public Library copy<sup>11</sup> of the Basle edition of the *Epistola Cristoferi Colom* printed for Bergman de Olpe in 1493. This

<sup>6</sup> Cf. H. W. Davies, *Catalogue of Early German Books of C. Fairfax Murray* (London, 1913), I, n. 238. That copy is now in the Morgan Library.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Otto Leuze, 'Mit holzschnitten verzierte Buchumschläge,' *Festschrift für Georg Leidinger*, pp. 165-169.

<sup>8</sup> *Bibliographica*, I (1895), 249 ff.

<sup>9</sup> *Gothic & Renaissance Bookbindings*, I, 163-164.

<sup>10</sup> Reproduced in Goldschmidt, *op. laud.*, Plates XIV and XV. A most unusual Italian printed wrapper is in the Broxbourne Library of Albert Ehrman. It is printed in red ink and contains a woodcut which occurs in the unique copy of the *Miracole della Madonna*, Bologna, 1491. Unfortunately the wrapper is empty, so it cannot be dated or localized.

<sup>11</sup> Four other copies of this book are known, all without the wrappers.



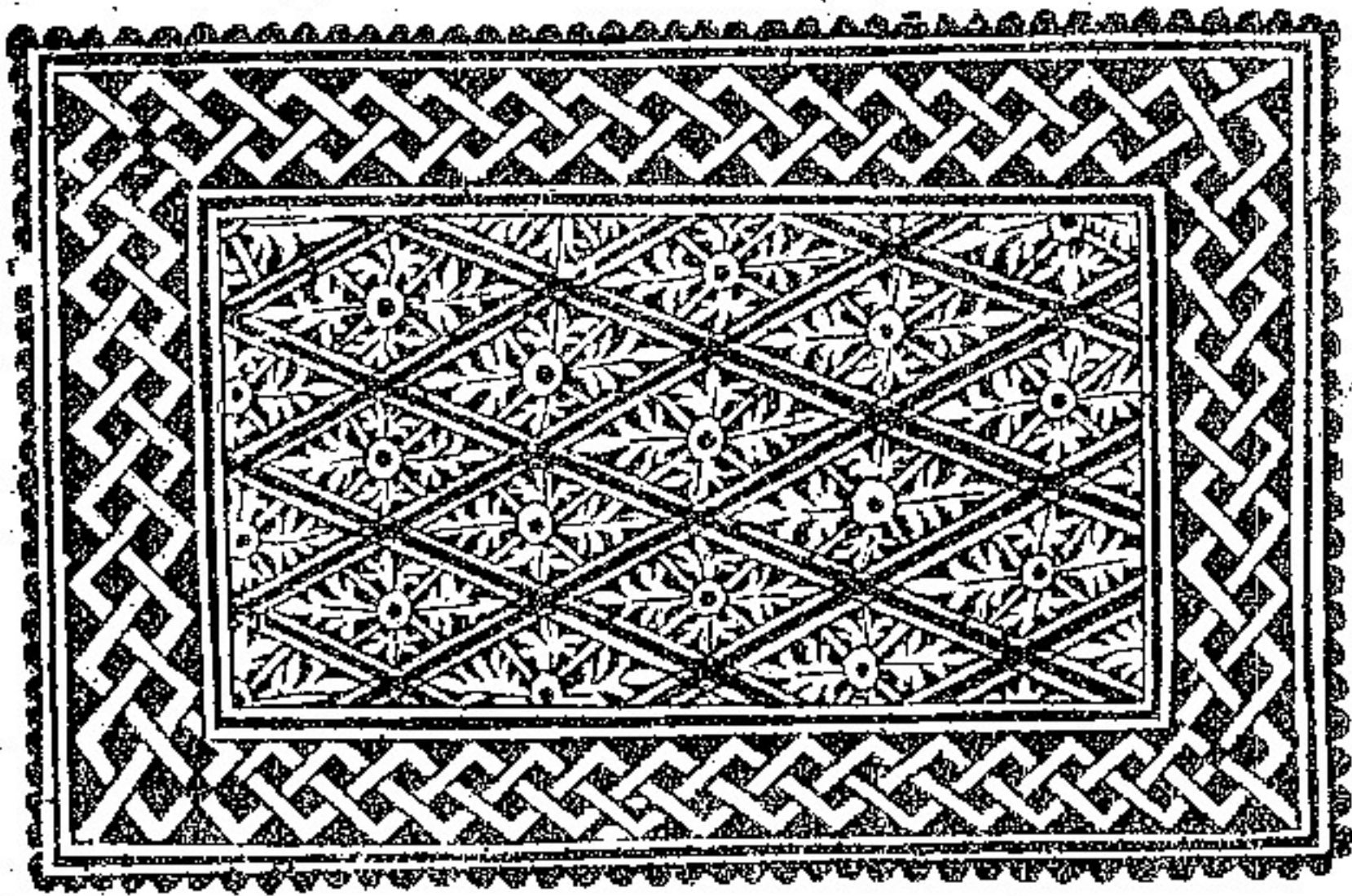
little book consists of an octavo sheet, the first three leaves of which are signed in roman lower case numerals. Wrapped around them is a quarter-sheet of a different paper, with chainlines about 35 millimeters apart compared to about 40 millimeters for the book paper. The recto of the front cover contains a woodcut of the royal arms of Spain headed 'Regnū hispanie.'; the verso bears a woodcut of a ship with type insert 'Oceanica Classis'. The recto of the back cover contains a full-length cut headed 'Fernād9 rex hispania', and the verso a cut of the arms of Granada headed 'Granata'.<sup>12</sup>

So much then for printed wrappers of the unintegrated type in the fifteenth century. In the early sixteenth century there were Ferrarese and Venetian printed wrappers similar to those described above. One of them having a woodcut which is repeated on both covers occurs on a paper wrapper of a book printed in Rome in 1525 now in the Morgan Library, and on a vellum wrapper of a Basic book of 1521 in the Metropolitan Museum. A Flemish woodcut printed wrapper occurs on a manuscript dated ca. 1552, sold at Sotheby's, 19 May 1952, lot 103 (with facsimile); and what A. W. Pollard has suggested may be an English one was found in a Wilton House scrapbook and is now in the Metropolitan Museum.<sup>13</sup> It is a fragment only and contains an octavo-sized woodcut of the Tudor arms, crowned, with lion and wyvern supporters, garter, and border with cartouche at bottom which contains in Gothic type the name 'Salomon Lawes'. It is colored presumably by stencil and has a considerable blank left margin, although the bottom has been trimmed. If this fragment was really intended for a wrapper, then from the unidentified name of Salomon Lawes it may have been a collector's wrapper rather than a publisher's. It may be merely a piece of printer's waste, which would explain the large left margin. It is possible, however, that it was intended for a bookplate, perhaps a stock one like the eighteenth-century book-pile bookplates.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Lenox Library, *The Letter of Columbus . . . A Facsimile of the Pictorial Edition* (New York, 1892). Frederick G. Schab of New York has pointed out to me that the woodcut of Philip the Good in the *Triumphal Arch* of Albert Dürer is flanked by a copy of the cut which occurs on the second leaf of this book.

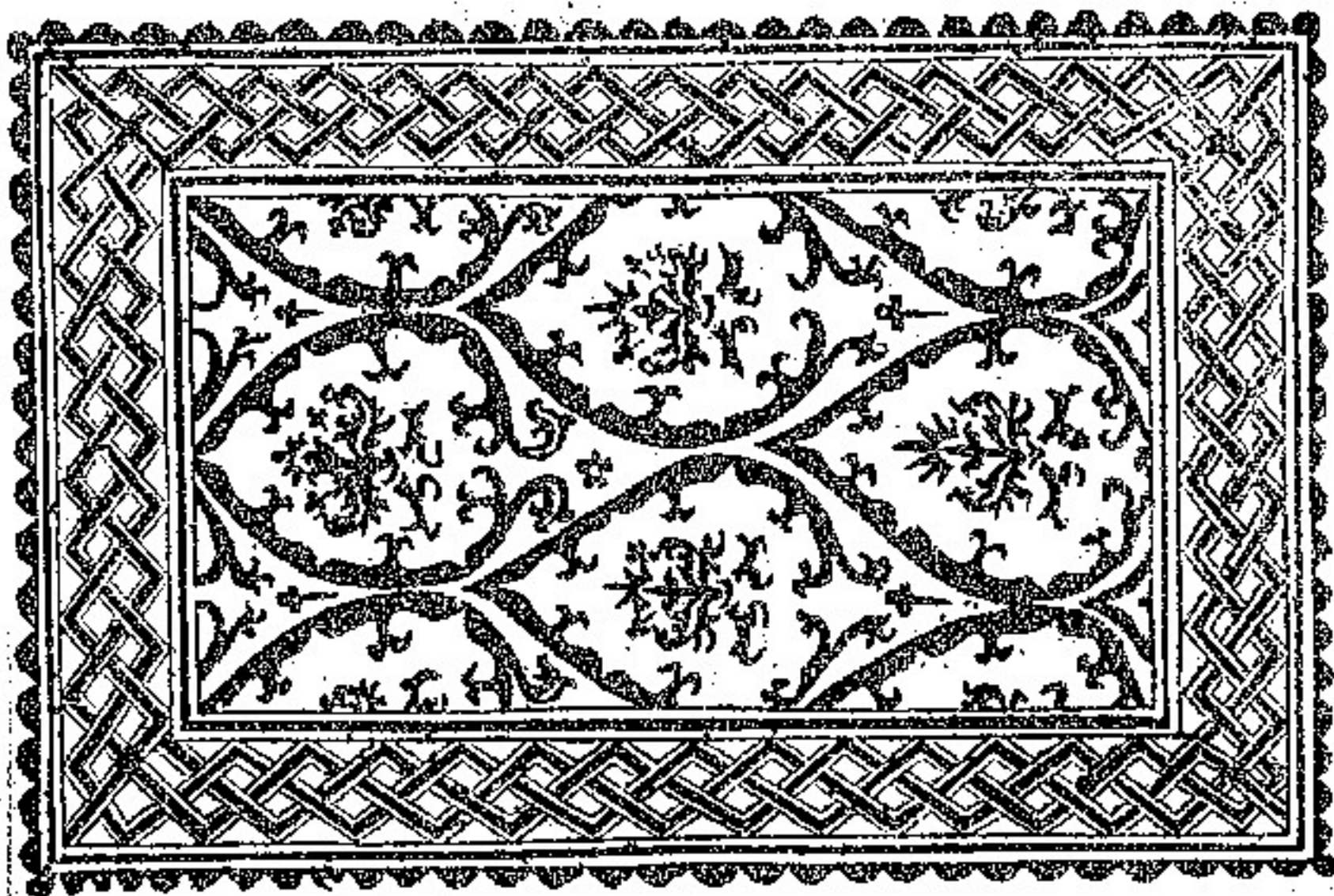
<sup>13</sup> See W. M. Ivins, *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, XXII (1927), 224-226.

<sup>14</sup> A very interesting early example of a blank bookplate is printed on the verso of the last leaf of Peter Wagner's edition of *Verselung von Leib, Seele, Ehre und Gut*, Nuremberg, 1489, a fine copy of which has recently been given to the Harvard Library by Christian A. Zabriskie. It has also been observed that the blank shield



BACK COVER

PLATE I



FRONT COVER



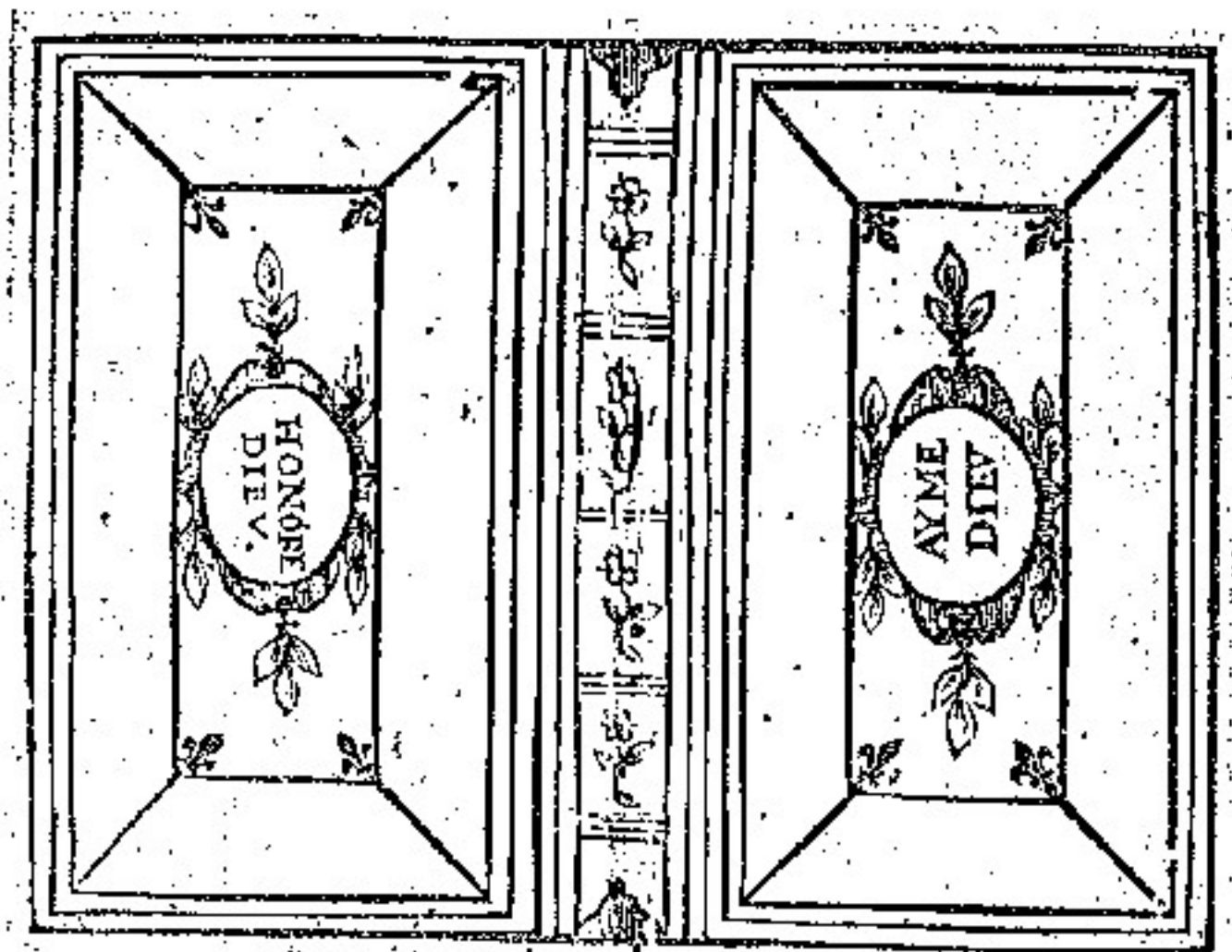


PLATE III

BOOKS lately Printed, and Sold by KNIFLAND  
and GREEN, in Queen-Street over against the  
Prison.

**R**econciliation with an offended Brother,  
Explained and Inforced. By *Williams*  
Esq. A. M. Pastor of a Church in *Bradford*.

**T**HE Captain of the Lord's Hosts appear-  
ing with his Sword drawn. Two Ser-  
mons Preach'd at *Salem Village*, on the Occa-  
sion of the War, February 25th 1740, &c. By *Peter Clark*,  
A. M. Pastor of the Church there.

**T**HE Young Man's Claim unto the Sacra-  
ment of the Lord's Supper. Or the Ex-  
amination of a Person approaching to the Ta-  
ble of the Lord. Composed by the Reverend  
*Mr. John Galt*, Minister of the Gospel in *London*.  
To which is added some Sacramental Medita-  
tions. By another Hand.

**D**iscourses on various Important Subjects,  
nearly concerning the Soul's Eternal  
Salvation, &c. I. *Justification by Faith alone*.  
II. *Professing into the Kingdom of GOD*. III.  
*Paul's Resurrection*. IV. *The Justice of GOD in*  
*the Damnation of Sinners*. V. *The Excellency*  
*of JESUS CHRIST*. Delivered at *Northampton*,  
chiefly at the Time of the late wonderful  
pouring out of the Spirit of GOD there. To  
which is added, an Account of the Conversion  
of many Hundred Souls in *Northampton* and  
other Towns in the County of *Hampshire*.  
By the Rev. Mr. *Edwards*, of *Northampton*.

THE  
Trial and Execution  
OF THE  
Bloody Brother.

Being a Relation of the Trial Sentence and  
Execution of *SAMUEL GOODFRE*, Esq;  
Captain of the *Ruby* Man of War at *Brighthelm*,  
and of *Matthew Halsey* and *Charles H. H. H.*,  
who had gently Murder'd on board the  
said Ship, by *JOHN DINELT GOODFRE*,  
Esq. on the 19th Day of *January* 1740, &c.



ROSEON: N. B. Printed and Sold  
at the Printing-House in *Queen-Street*.

PLATE IIb

# The *American* Magazine.



For MARCH 1745.

To be continued Monthly.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| I. The JOURNAL of the Proceedings and Debates of a Political Club, &c. containing the Speeches of the Gentlemen who assum'd the Characters of the Lord <i>Hebster</i> , the Lord <i>Hervey</i> , and the Earl of <i>Cholmondeley</i> , in the Debate on a Clause in the Pretender's Sons Bill, relating to the Forfeitures for High Treason. | § | VI. Of Uniformity in Religion, &c.  |
| II. Description of the City of London.   | § | VII. Dialogue between an Officer of the Centurion and his Friend, &c.                     |
| III. Dr. <i>Hough's</i> Letter to <i>Ld. Digby</i> .   | § | VIII. An Account of the Court of Inquisition or Holy Office in Spain.                     |
| IV. Character of Bishop <i>Hough</i> .   | § | IX. Of the Knowledge of Painting.   |
| V. Thoughts on Old Age.  | § | X. Defence of the Ladies.   |
|  | § | XI. An Account of the Quakers.  |
|  | § | XII. Abuses of Conversation.  |
|  | § | XIII. A Letter from a Gentleman in <i>Conneticut</i> , to his friend in <i>New-York</i> . |
|  | § | XIV. PECTICAL ESSAYS.   |
|  | § | XV. HISTORICAL CHRONICLE.   |

B O S T O N,

Printed and Sold by ROBERS and POWRE, in Queen-street next to the Prison; sold by B. FRANKLIN in Philadelphia; J. PARKER in New-York; M. POMROY in New-Haven; C. CAMPBELL, Post-Master in Newport. 1745.

Where may be had compleat Sets from the Beginning.

Price Three Shillings New-Tenor a Quarter.



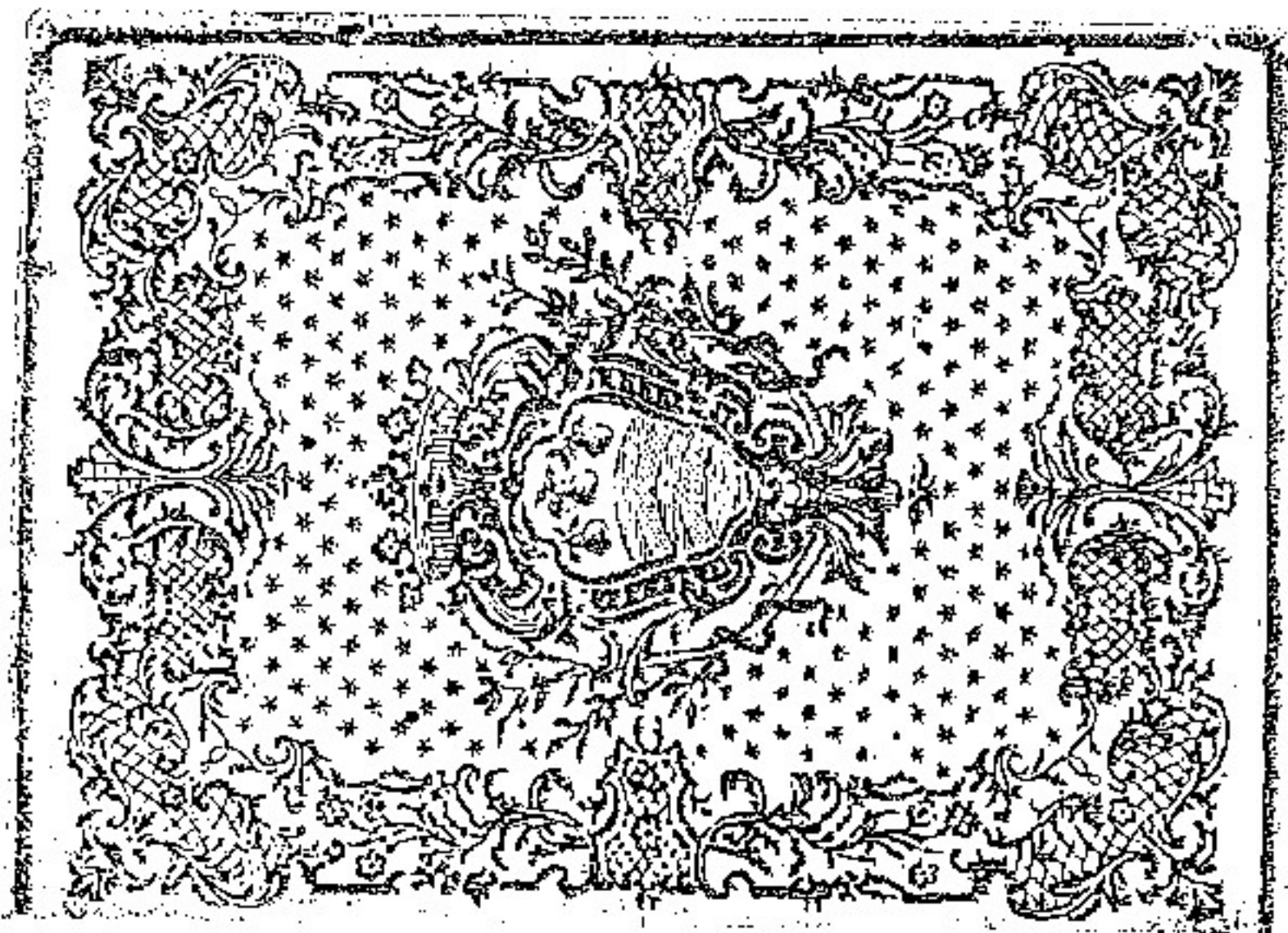


PLATE IVb

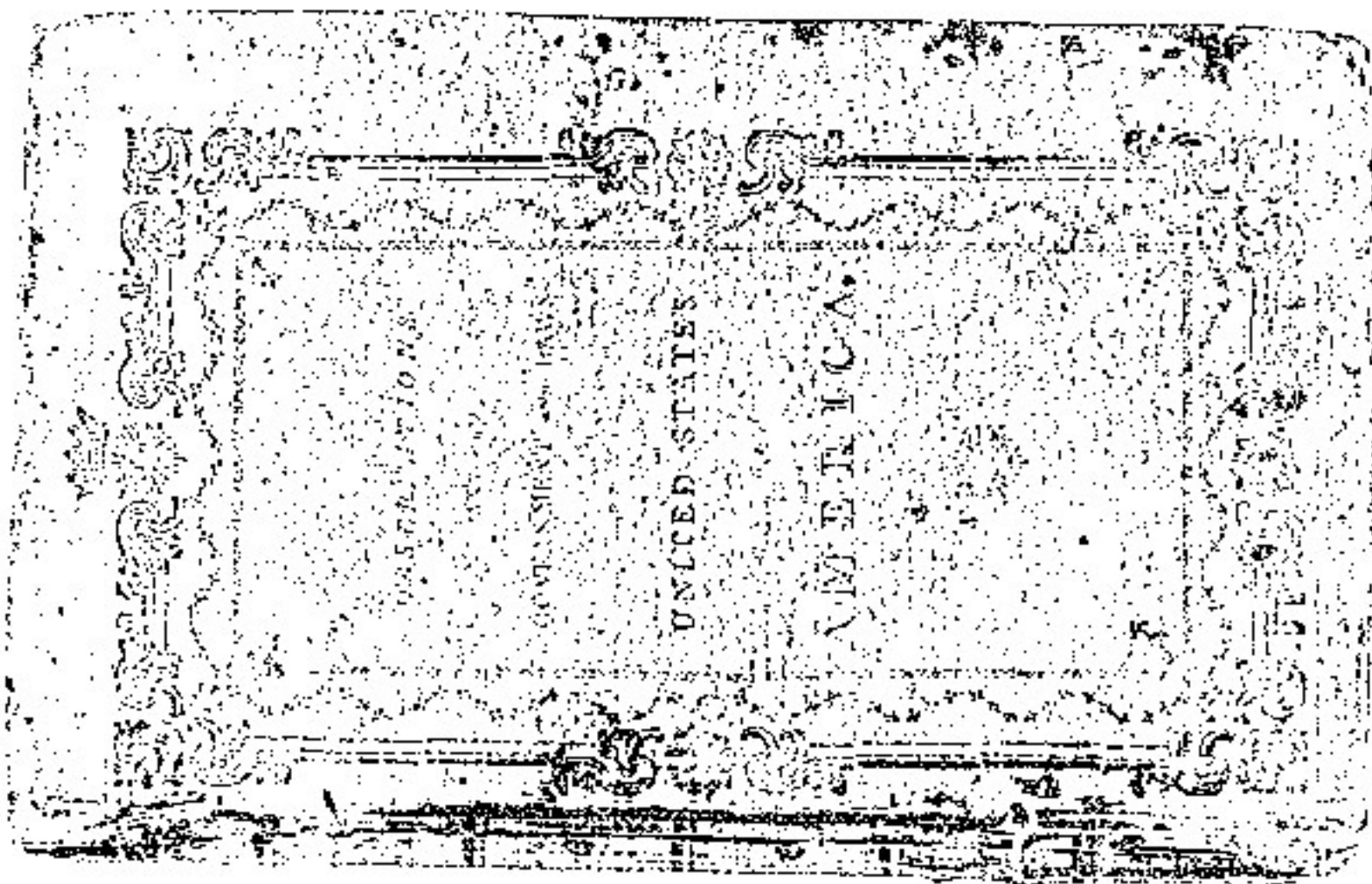


PLATE IVa

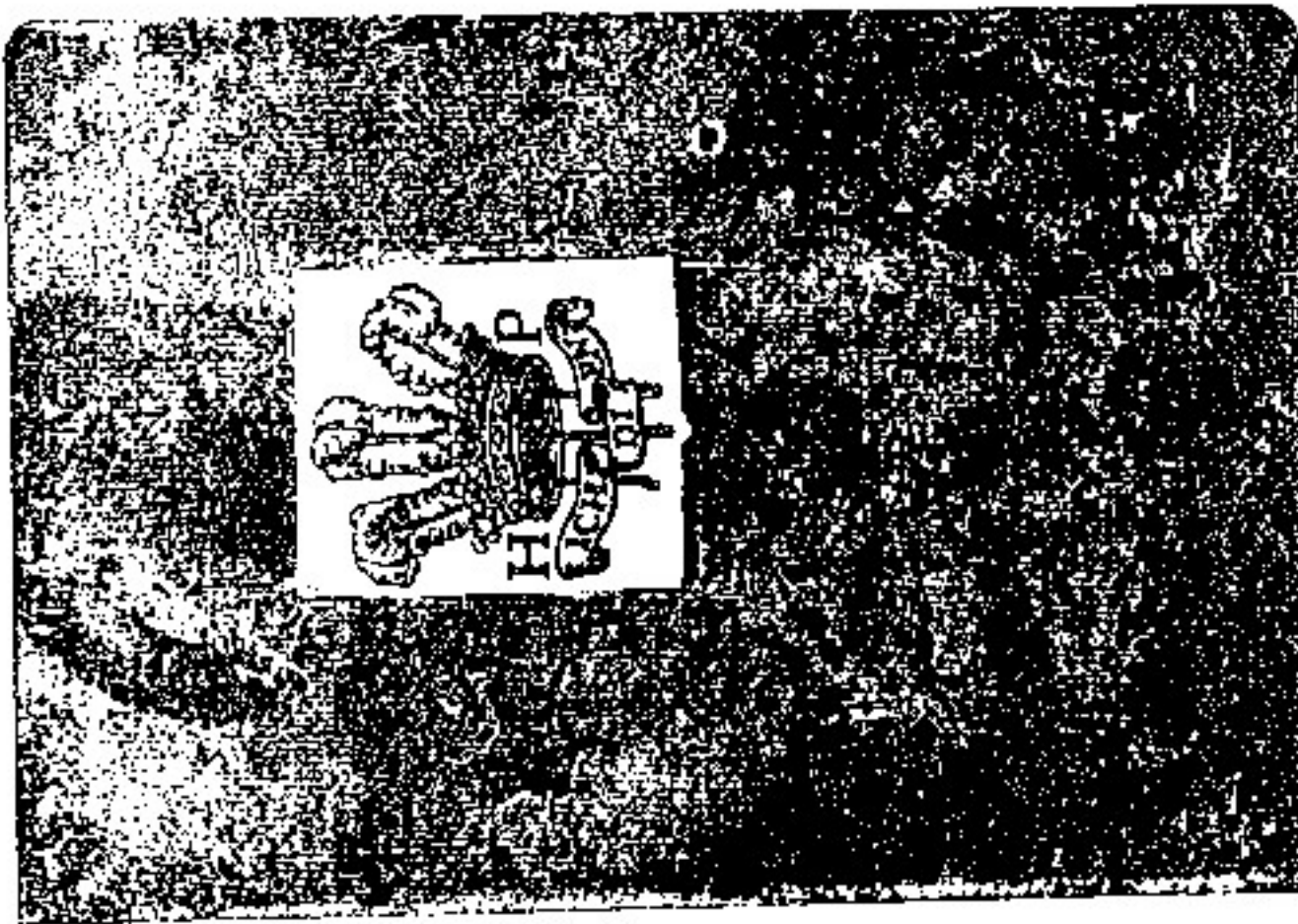


PLATE Vc



PLATE Vb

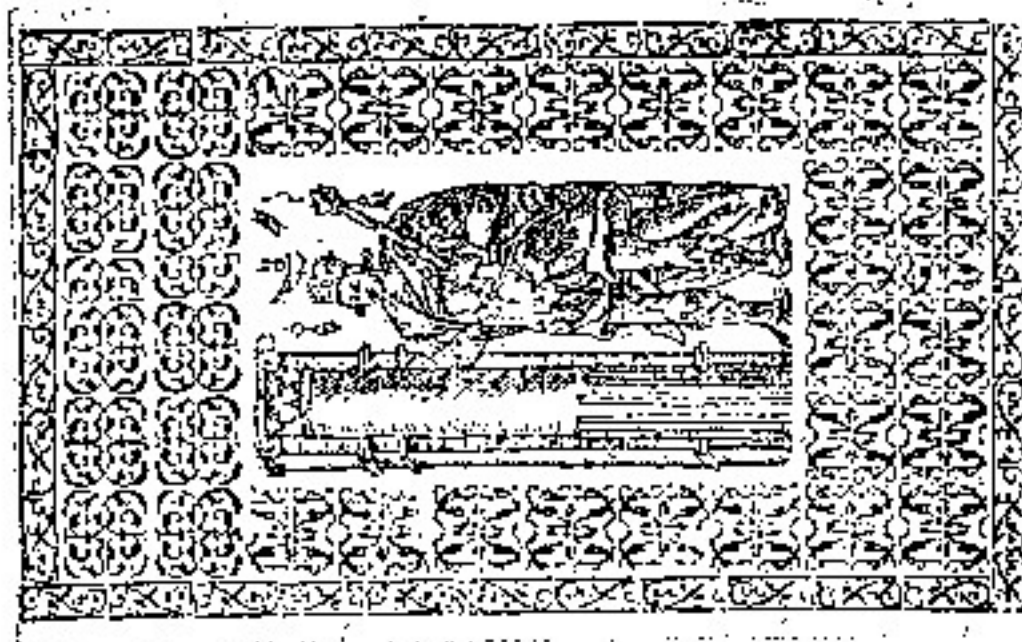


PLATE Va





PLATE VIa



PLATE VIb

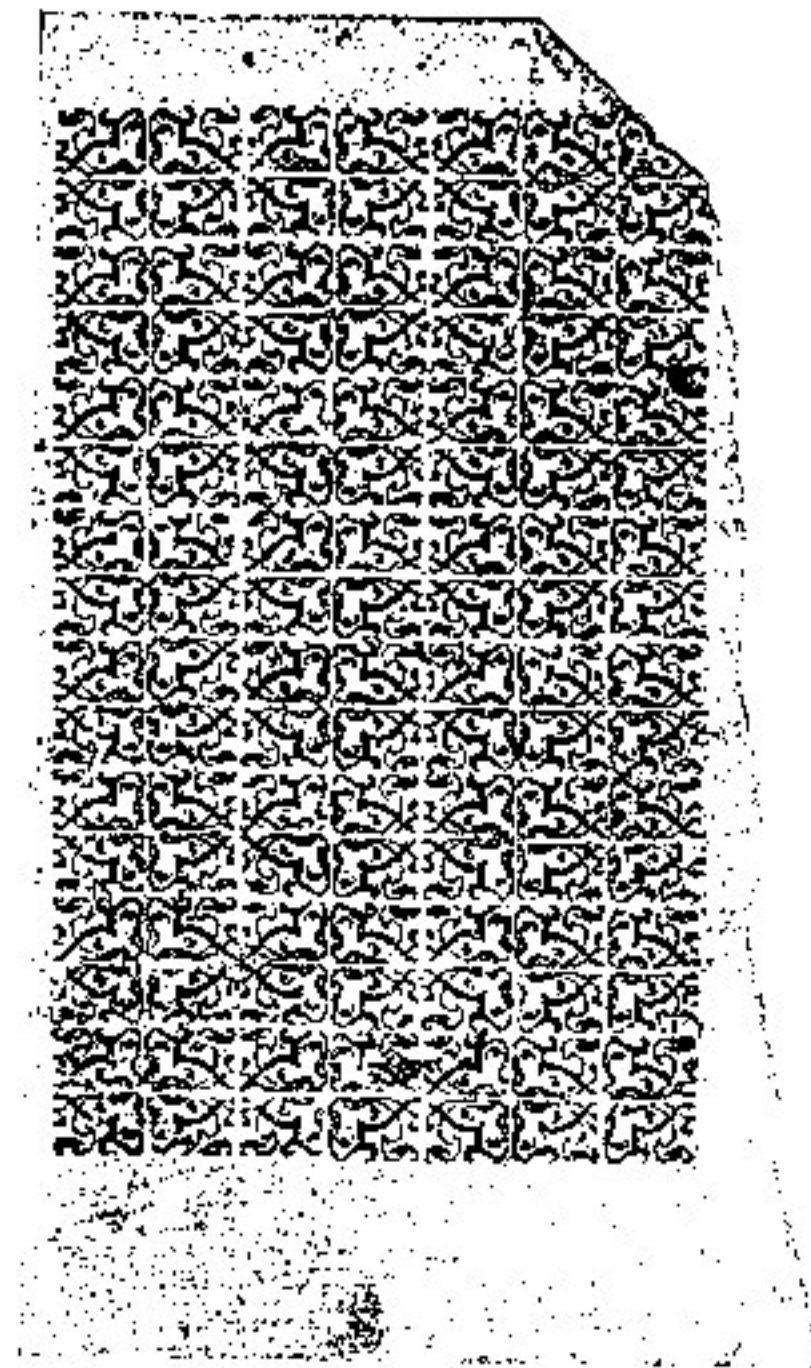


PLATE VIc



The only specimen of a true printed wrapper of the seventeenth century which I have found occurs on the Harvard copy of Philippe Le Noir's *Catechisme familier*, 12° in 6's, La Rochelle, J. Marcel, 1683 (see Plate IIa). It is pasted down on a sheet of waste paper and possibly because of the paste has a creamy color quite different from the paper of the book. This may really be a binder's wrapper, for it would be just as suitable for any other duodecimo devotional book. It has been preserved in this fine condition because it has had until recently a wrapper of waste vellum lightly sewn around it.

In the last third of the eighteenth century printed wrappers are very common indeed, but oddly enough the earliest example of this century that I have so far discovered occurs on the Harvard copy<sup>16</sup> only of *Some Account of the Trial of Samuel Goodere, Esq.*, 8° in 4's, Boston, [Kneeland and Green], 1741 (see Plate IIb). It is printed on a blue-gray stock which is familiar in numerous late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century examples. The title of the tract, which is a reprint of one of the London or Bristol editions of the same year, is somewhat different from the wrapper title, 'The Trial and Execution of the Bloody Brother,' and not so eye-catching. Such a technical innovation is unlikely to have been first used in the colonies, and one may expect that English or European specimens of an earlier date will be found. An even earlier American example in the library of the Massachusetts Historical Society has been called to my attention by Stephen T. Riley. It is not, however, such an exact prototype of the modern printed wrapper as the *Goodere* one just described, for the outside of its wrapper is marbled without any printing, while on the verso of the front cover only occurs an advertisement of books of the publisher of this little duodecimo in half-sheets, which is entitled *A Guide to Heaven, from the Word*, Boston, for N. Boone, 1728.

Magazines of the 1760's and later in blue, gray, or buff printed wrappers are common both in England and America, but the earliest magazine wrapper which has so far turned up is again a Boston production. It occurs on copies of *The American Magazine*, 4°, Boston, Rogers and Fowle; Philadelphia, B. Franklin . . . , 1743-45. It is a true wrapper and otherwise remarkable for having a woodcut view of

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on the back wrapper of some copies of the Ratdolt edition of the *Lebenrecht*, 1493, noted above, may have been intended for a similar purpose.

<sup>16</sup> The only other copy of this tract which has been traced, in the Massachusetts Historical Society, lacks the wrapper.

Boston from the harbor by James Turner repeated on each number (see Plate III; Harvard copy).

In the eighteenth century there was also revived the Italian type of printed wrapper intended to be pasted over a plain cardboard binding, as in the copy of the Abbé de Mably's *Observations on the Government and Laws of the United States*, 12°, London [probably really Amsterdam], J. F. R[osart], 1784 (see Plate IVa). From Italy itself there are numerous examples of folio poems, generally of an elegiac character, bound in stiff board covered either with paste-paper, often having in its design the arms of the dedicatee, or with similarly decorated tinted papers with the design printed in gold. They are mostly of the third quarter of the century. As they were probably prepared for the pieces on which they occur, they may be included at least as a special class (see Plate IVb: Clemente Bondi, *La felicità, poema*, [Parma, 1776?]; much reduced; Harvard copy, from the bequest of Mrs A. P. Loring, Jr).

To turn now to the integrated wrappers, the earliest belong to a group of eight Venetian books printed in 1493 and 1494 and now attributed to the press of Bernardinus Benalius of Bergamo. All of these have on their first and last pages handsome woodcuts, but most of them have on the reverse of either the first or last leaf a table or colophon, so that strictly speaking they are not wrappers, for they could not be cut off without removing an essential part of the book. Of this group of eight books, three are in the Harvard Library. An exact prototype, though not a very interesting one, of the integrated wrapper occurs on all three states of the 1502 Aldine Catullus, as well as on the Lyonnese counterfeit of it. In it there is printed on the first and last pages the three names 'CATVLLVS. / TIBVLLVS. / PROPETIVS. /'.<sup>16</sup> It is not quite clear what was Aldus's purpose in printing what is in effect a half-title at both the beginning and end of his book. Presumably Aldus sold his publications wholesale in sheets rolled in barrels, or, if retail, bound in various types of 'Aldine' bindings. It should be noted, however, that this book has no normal title-page and that soon thereafter Aldus usually printed his books with his anchor device both on the regular title and alone on the last page of the book.

In England, late in the sixteenth century and throughout the seventeenth century, a large number of integrated wrappers might be cited:

<sup>16</sup> The first state of the Aldine edition has the spelling 'PROPETIVS.' on the first page. Later this was corrected, although it appears also in the Lyonnese counterfeit.

The earliest which I have observed is Francis Seager's *The schoole of vertue*, 8°, R. Jones, 1593, which has the publisher's device, McKerrow No. 283, within a border of type ornament on recto of first leaf and verso of last. The only copy of that edition is the Lamport-Britwell-Huntington, but the later editions dated 1621, 1626, and [1642] all have on their first and last pages a fragment of a title-page compartment, McKerrow and Ferguson No. 229, surrounded by type-ornament (see Plate Va; reproduced from the unique copy of the 1621 edition at Harvard). On the verso of the first and last leaves in this edition, and in the [1642] edition on the verso of the first leaf only, is a woodcut of a domestic scene. The 1698 Dublin edition of this book has, again on the first and last pages, a cut of a schoolmaster surrounded by pupils.

Another example very much like the Seager occurs in the unique Harvard copy of *The A.B.C. with the catechisme*, 8°, T. P[urfoot] for the Company of Stationers, 1605. In it the recto of the first leaf contains an old woodcut of the Adoration of the Magi, while the verso of the last leaf contains a woodcut of a threshing scene (see Plate Vb). The unique copy of *A most straunge and wondrousfull accident happened at Weersburch by Franckford*, 4°, W. Barley, 1600, now at Harvard, has a large woodcut illustrating the text on the rectos of the first and last leaves, both versos being blank. Since no other copy of the book is known, it is not possible to determine if, while the last sheet was being printed, it was noted that the cut was on the wrong side of the leaf and some copies were printed with it on the verso.

Two copies are known of Samuel Daniel's *A funerall poeme uppon the death of the late noble Earle of Devonshyre*, [London, 1606]. The poem itself collates A-B<sup>4</sup>C<sup>2</sup>, but is preceded by a 'mourning' title, all black except for a triple white border and swash italic engraved inscription as above, verso blank. In the Huntington copy the text is followed by a leaf — missing in the British Museum copy — which is blank on recto and on verso entirely black except for a triple white border enclosing a triple white lozenge. These two leaves, from the watermarks, are part of sheet C, and therefore this wrapper is technically a 'wrap-around.'

Among the spate of elegies on the death of Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales, which came from the London presses in 1612 and 1613, several have 'mourning' wrappers, as, for instance, Christopher Brooke's *Two elegies*, 4°, T. S[nodham] for R. More, 1613, of which the first and last pages are entirely black except for the Prince of Wales's



feathers on the first (see Plate Vc; Folger copy). The London, 1615, English<sup>17</sup> and Latin editions of *God and the king: or a dialogue* were issued with woodcuts of King James, on recto first leaf, enthroned beneath tetragrammaton with label 'BY MEE KINGS RAIGNE.', and, on verso last leaf, receiving the book from the author (see Plate VIa and b, from the Harvard copy of the English 93-page edition). The other sides of these leaves are blank. The unique copy of *The booke of merrie riddles*, 4°, for R. Jackson, 1617, in the Folger Library, lacks the last leaf; but judging from later editions which have it (though in some cases they in turn lack the first leaf) a perfect copy would have on first<sup>18</sup> and last pages a semis of type ornament (see Plate VIc).

A work of greater literary pretensions, Robert Herrick's first publication, *A description of the king and queene of fayries*, 8°, for R. Harper, 1634, of which the only known copy so dated<sup>19</sup> is in the private library of the late Dr A. S. W. Rosenbach, likewise has integrated wrappers, for on the recto of the first leaf, otherwise blank, is a woodcut of a king holding court, and on the verso of the last leaf, otherwise blank, a cut of troubadours playing to a lady in a tower.

In many instances, integrated wrappers occur in books which are boxed with rules throughout, or which have all their pages framed either with type ornament or woodcuts. They may not, of course, have been intended as wrappers, but may merely represent the frames left in the formes prepared for the text. An example of the box-ruled type is Baron Ellesmere's *The speech of the Lord Chancellor touching the post-nati*, 4°, for the Societie of Stationers, 1609; while of the ornamented border type Sir John Hayward's *The sanctuarie of a troubled soule*, 12°, I. W[indet], sold by C. Burby, 1601, and Sir John Conway's *The poesie of floured prayers*, 12°, V. Sims, sold by E. White, 1611, are typical. No doubt if one could find perfect copies of most of these little decorated devotional books, many other examples could be added.

<sup>17</sup> There were two London 1615 editions in English of this 'authorized' publication: that with 93 pages of text is as described; the other, with 92 pages, may have been, but the end-leaves are lacking in all the copies I have seen. From a petition noted in *Acts of the Privy Council 1616-1617*, pp. 145, 159, it would appear that J. Beale, W. Jaggard, T. Snodham, and E. Griffin printed some or all of the London editions.

<sup>18</sup> The verso of this leaf contains a fine impression of McKerrow and Ferguson Compartment No. 108, of which otherwise only a poor impression is known.

<sup>19</sup> A copy dated 1635 is among Burton's books in the Bodleian.

It may well be that these integrated wrappers, which have been noted mainly on books of which only one or two copies have survived, have been the cause of their own destruction. For the most part they occur on slight little books of a popular sort which could easily be, and probably were, sold unbound—merely sewn or stabbed. In that condition the wrappers, not being on stiffer paper, would afford little protection, and the more temporarily effective they were as a cheap method of preparing for sale, the more certain they would be to cause the entire edition to disappear.

Printed wrappers on reinforced or thicker paper and the newly popular 'wrap-arounds' evidently superseded integrated wrappers during the eighteenth century, although it is not unlikely that some might be observed on children's books and small grammars of that period if copies could be found in original condition. As booksellers tended more and more to offer for sale larger and larger books in 'publisher's boards' it was inevitable that some of the more enterprising of them would decorate the boards with printed matter, sometimes merely pasted over the backs. These, however, are not really wrappers and, although we have noted some of their prototypes, beginning with those of Ferrara in the fifteenth century, we need not continue the story of their development here.

WILLIAM A. JACKSON

## List of Contributors

WILLIAM VAN LENNEP, Curator of the Theatre Collection in the Harvard College Library

LESLIE MAHIN OLIVER, Assistant to the Librarian in the Houghton Library, Harvard University

WILLIAM A. JACKSON, Professor of Bibliography and Assistant Librarian of the College Library in charge of the Houghton Library, Harvard University

EDWIN E. WILLIAMS, Chief of the Acquisition Department of the Harvard College Library

GÉRAUD VENZAC, Professeur à l'Institut Catholique de Paris

ANNA C. HOLT, Librarian of the Faculty of Medicine and School of Public Health, Harvard University

ARCHIBALD T. DAVISON, James Edward Ditson Professor of Music and Curator of the Isham Memorial Library, Harvard University

FREDERICK L. BEATY, Harvard University

GEORGE SHERBURN, Professor of English, Emeritus, Harvard University

KEYES D. METCALF, Professor of Bibliography, Director of the Harvard University Library, and Librarian of Harvard College

ROBERT F. METZDORF, Secretary of the Boswell Editorial Committee and Curator of Manuscripts, Yale University Library

DMITRY CIZEVSKY, Lecturer on Slavic, Harvard University

PHILIP HOFER, Lecturer on Fine Arts, Curator of Printing and Graphic Arts in the College Library, and Secretary of the William Hayes Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University