The first separately printed English translation of Horace

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NOTES

The First Separately Printed English Translation of Horace

The library of Helmingham Hall, Suffolk, some ten miles north of Ipswich, still contains many remarkable books and manuscripts, including a Caxton Cessolis and the Lauderdale manuscript of King Alfred’s translation of Orosius, a copy coeval with Alfred. And as some of the books which once were there have been dispersed (including the fine early fifteenth-century English Psalter now deposited in the Department of Graphic Arts at Harvard), the tradition that the great collection of English black-letter ballads which George Daniel bought about 1832 from William Fitch, postmaster of Ipswich, was sold to Fitch by the housekeeper at Helmingham Hall is probably correct. Henry Huth stated that when Fitch purchased them they were merely wrapped in a piece of parchment and tied with whipcord. Doubtless, to the housekeeper of Admiral J. R. D. Halliday Tolemache, owner of Helmingham Hall at the time, they would seem to be merely a bundle of old songs and of value only to an antiquary such as the postmaster of Ipswich. That collection, however, though numbering probably less than 150 pieces, contained a very large part of the printed Elizabethan broadside ballads which have been preserved.

It is said that George Daniel paid Fitch only £50 for the collection. If so, it was a great bargain even for that day, for at the fourth Bindley sale, in 1820, the Luttrell seventeenth-century ballads had sold for many times that figure. Daniel soon traded eighty-five of these broadsides to Thomas Thorpe, the bookseller, for some unidentified Shakespeareana. Later Daniel described those which he had disposed of as ‘chiefly of a religious and moral character and insufferably tedious and dull,’ even though they included six by Thomas Churchyard, five by William Elder-ton, and one by Richard Tarlton. As Daniel himself probably watched them sell at the fourth Heber sale in 1834 for over £120, his unflattering remarks need not be taken too seriously, although it is apparent that on the whole he kept the better ones for himself.

Daniel published, in 1845, twenty-five copies of an account of the ballads he had retained under the title An Elizabethan Garland, and at his sale, in 1864, they were bought for £250 plus ten per cent by Henry Huth, who first published them, with an introduction by W. G. Hazlitt, in Ancient Ballads and Broadsides (The Philobiblon Society, 1867). On the death of Henry Huth’s son, A. H. Huth, the Trustees of the British Museum were generously permitted by the executors to select the Daniel ballads as one of the fifty books bequeathed to them, on agreeing to forego a variant block book and the 1604 issue of Hamlet.

Thorpe offered the ballads he had
acquired from Daniel to Richard Heber, who replied by return of post, '... Though I feel ashamed of my own folly and extravagance, I cannot resist the bait thrown in my way, and have accordingly written to my bankers to pay you on demand £200... Mr. D. has certainly fallen into the inheritance of the Stationers' Company, or some ancient enchanted stall of ballads from which these sleeping beauties issue in their clean smocks, after a lapse of 250 years and upwards... He issues paper like the country bankers. — I wish I could find Bank of England notes as fast as he does old ballads. For, alas, he has spoiled the old proverb of buying for an old song.'

At Heber's sale the eighty-five ballads were sold in eleven lots, all but one of which were bought by Thomas Thorpe for William Henry Miller. While they were in the Britwell Court Library a selection was published by John Payne Collier in the first volume of the Publications of the Percy Society, 1840-41. In 1872, Wakefield Christie-Miller compiled an Alphabetical List of the Black Letter Ballads & Broadsides Known as the Heber Collection, of which twenty copies were printed in quarto and one in folio; in 1912, Sidney Richardson Christie-Miller presented to the Roxburghe Club a reprint of them edited by Herbert L. Collmann and entitled Ballads and Broadsides Chiefly of the Elizabethan Period. At the Britwell sale, 16 December 1919, these ballads, with five added from other sources, were sold to George D. Smith, acting as Henry E. Huntington's agent, for £6400, and they are now in the Huntington Library in San Marino.

In the introduction to the Roxburghe Club reprint of the British ballads, Mr Collmann states, 'Something of a mystery surrounds lot 386 [of the fourth Heber sale], which consisted of three ballads, translations from Horace, Martial, and Francisca Chavesia. It is impossible to believe that these could have failed to arouse the interest of a classical scholar like Mr. Miller, yet the ballads did not come to Britwell, nor has any attempt to trace them proved successful.' Nonetheless two of them, the Martial and Chavesia, have been for many years in the Chetham Library, Manchester. The third, the Horace, has only recently been acquired by the Harvard Library. These three broadsides were bought at the Heber sale in 1834 by Payne and Foss, booksellers, for six guineas, and were still in their possession in 1841, for in that year they recorded them in their annual catalogue as lot 5556. According to the marked copy of this catalogue now in the Grolier Club, the Martial and Chavesia were bought at that time by J. O. Halliwell, who presented them to the Chetham Library in 1851. They are recorded in the catalogue of his gift, printed in that year, under Nos. 565 and 470. The Martial broadside is reproduced and elaborately discussed by Evan J. Jones in the University of Wales Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies, III (1927), 286-287, while the Chavesia was reprinted with commentary by William A. E. Axon in Notes and Queries, 8th Ser., XII (1897), 181-183.

The Horace, which is the last of the broadsides from Helmington Hall to find a permanent home, has apparently never been reprinted. Indeed, except for the notice of it in the Heber and the Payne and Foss catalogues, and references obviously based on the former, it appears to have escaped at-
Attention altogether. And yet it is apparently the earliest separately printed translation of Horace into English, for, though undated, it was entered to Thomas Colwell in the Stationers' Register as the next to the last book entry of the ninth year of the Company, i.e., on or shortly before 22 July 1565 (Arber I. 273). It was almost a year later (Arber I. 372) that Thomas Marsh entered for Thomas Drant’s translation of Horace’s satires, A Medicinable Morall, which he printed with the date 1566. In the address ‘To the Reader,’ Drant states, ‘I began this work (a thynge of small accompt) two yeres agone, or more, and have dispatched it piece meal, or inche meal, with smale prudence or none to my studie or profession,’ but he is here referring to the translation, not the publication. Short poems and fragments of Horace had, of course, appeared earlier in English translation or adaptation, but always in collections or, as quotations, not in separate publication. Translations of Carmina, IV. 7, and of various minor bits, for example, are to be found in the first edition, 1557, of Tottel’s Miscellany (ed. Hyder E. Rollins, Cambridge, Mass., 1926–29, 11, 273, and elsewhere).

Colwell’s entry reads ‘a boke intituled the fy fierce twoo Satars or poyses of Horace englisshed by Lewes Evans scholamaister &c,’ but only the second of the two ‘Satars’ has been preserved. This was printed on a single sheet of paper which now measures 370 x 265 mm. The chains are horizontal and the watermark in the lower half is of a hand and star with the initials NR at the wrist and an outline 3 on the palm, similar to Briquet, No. 11378. The first satire was probably printed on a similar sheet which was pasted to the left margin of the second, for the heading of the second satire is off center (see Plate I). Furthermore, the left margin of the second satire is not enclosed within double rules, as are the other margins, and the verso of it shows signs of having been pasted down. The full heading probably read somewhat as follows: ‘[THE FYRSTE TWO SATARS OR] POESYES OF HORACE / [Translated into Englyshe] Meeter, by Lewes Evans Schoolemyster.’ The word ‘OR’ presumably was printed in the top left corner of the second satire, for at that point the paper has been repaired by kneeling. If one may judge from the dimensions of the Daniel-Huth broadsides of about this date as given in the British Museum Catalogue of the Fifty Manuscripts & Printed Books Bequeathed by Alfred H. Huth (1912), pp. 83 ff., the second satire is an unusually large one, and the fact that it is trimmed close to the outer rules may not mean that it is now much smaller than when it was originally purchased, probably by one of the sixteenth-century Lionel Tollemaches of Helmingham. In any case, the first satire has been missing at least since the time when this great collection came out of Suffolk.

Very little is known about Lewis Evans, schoolmaster. He may well have been one of several Welshmen of this name who are recorded by Anthony à Wood as having been at Oxford in the middle of the sixteenth century, but he is almost certainly not the turncoat controversialist to whom the following publications have erroneously been given by Wood, Hazlitt, the DNB, and other authorities. In 1561, Owen Rogers published A
POZYES OF HORACE

PLATE I
New Labet Entitled Howe to Wyue Well by Lewys Evans, of which the only known copy is in the library of the Society of Antiquaries. It may be the schoolmaster Lewys Evans and, if so, is of particular interest, for it is one of the earliest surviving printed ballads which are truly ballads and written in ballad metre. The scholar who corrected and augmented several of the Purfcaunt editions of John Withal’s Shorte Dictionary was almost certainly the schoolmaster, and it may have been he who wrote The Abridgement of Logique, of which the only recorded copy, lacking the title, is in the Bodleian (attributed by Colonel Frank Isaac, in unpublished notes, to the press of Henry Denham, ca. 1589).

If one of Evans’s two translations had to be lost, it is something of a pity that the second, with its repulsive subject matter and sensational tone, should have been the one to survive—not that Evans’s version of the first, to judge by his treatment of the second, would have been a great addition to the canon of Tudor translations. In any event, the surviving portion of the ‘fyrste twoo Satars’ is a very welcome foundation piece to the Harvard collection of English translations and editions of Horace.

William A. Jackson

The Purchases of a Seventeenth-Century Librarian

The letter quoted below (from a collection of autographs deposited in the Harvard College Library) is an interesting document for the history of libraries and of book-collecting. The writer, Antonio Magliabechi (1631-1714), keeper of books for Cosimo III de’ Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, was gifted with a miraculous memory, and possessed an insatiable thirst for learning. His knowledge became so encyclopaedic that the most eminent scholars from all parts of Europe sought his advice; but, because of his eccentric habits, his friends were few. Ugly in appearance, he lived in an ill-kept house, so deeply intent on his work that he often failed to eat or wash. He assembled for himself a collection of books which he bequeathed to his patron; this library of more than 30,000 volumes, the Strawberry Hill Press, was written to secure financial support for Robert Hill, a self-taught and industrious tailor and schoolmaster, whose learning and reputation are compared to Magliabechi’s.

When one went to see him, they most usually found him lolling in a sort of fixed wooden cradle, in the middle of his study, with a multitude of books, some thrown in heaps and others scattered about the floor, all round him; and this his cradle, or bed, was attached to the nearest pile of books by a number of cobwebs: At their entrance, he commonly used to call out to them: “Not to hurt his spiders!” — A Parallel, pp. 30-31.
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