Worcester Cathedral Library.

By W. Salt Brassington.

The cathedral of Worcester has a larger roll of visitors yearly than any English cathedral, St. Paul's, London, excepted; but of the thousands of pilgrims who descend to the graceful crypt of Bishop Wulstan's Norman church, and ascend to the leads of the tower from which Charles II. viewed the skirmish at Powyke Bridge on the morning of the Battle of Worcester (September 3rd, 1651), perhaps scarcely a dozen persons find their way through the cloisters to the library.* Two recesses in the wall of the eastern cloister, near the door leading into the nave, contained cupboards or aumbrys, in which were stored the books belonging to the Benedictine Monastery of Worcester; for be it remembered, this cathedral was one of the "new" or converted foundations dependent upon a monastic establishment.

There is a door at the western extremity of the cloisters, near a Norman archway, through which may be seen "the smooth Severn stream," whereon fancy pictures Milton's fair Sabrina staying her sliding chariot on a moonlight night to listen to the solemn chant and music from the minster. Fancy—no, time fails for fancy; we must ascend the turret stairs pass through the antechamber, and enter the library; it is an apartment some 200 feet long by 20 feet wide (approximately), situated over the south aisle of the nave. This gallery is, in technical language, the southern triforium of the nave; that is, the space formed between the sloping roof of the aisle and the vaulting beneath it.

The annals of the library would form an interesting volume; in outline they are as follows.† Soon after the Conquest, Hemingus, a monk of Worcester, compiled a chartulary for his priory, and therein the library is mentioned for the first time; Countess Godgifu, Lady Godiva of Coventry, upon the death of her husband Leofric, Earl of Mercia, in 1057, restored to the priory the manors, which the earl had taken from the church, together with much household stuffs, and a "Bibliotheca divided in two parts." At the time of the Danish invasion the silver and gold of the altars were taken away, the chalices, crosses, and book-clasps melted. Since the Saxon period the library has undergone vicissitudes. In 1378 the aumbrys were superseded by a room built at the west side of the cloisters. In 1464 Bishop Carpenter refounded the Library in the Charnel House, to be opened for four hours daily, and free to all persons wishing to consult its treasures for the sake of erudition. In 1642 Lord Essex's troopers rifled the library, tore up the bibles and service books, and rode about the streets of Worcester in the surplices and vestments of the clergy. When Botfield, the historian of Cathedral Libraries, visited Worcester, a. 1845, he found the books located in the Chapter House;‡ then the MSS. and printed books together numbered about 6000 volumes. According to the catalogue there are now about 4000 printed books. The MSS. include 169 folios and 28 quartos, mostly upon theological subjects, but there are a few Latin

* I am indebted to Canon Creighton for permission to work in the cathedral library as well as for much courtesy.—W. S. B.


classics and medical treatises. There is a copy of Wycliff's Bible, c. 1381, and an almost unique copy of Vacarius on Roman Law. Many of the beautifully illuminated MSS. are undoubtedly the handiwork of the Worcester monks. The Anglo-Saxon MSS. are enumerated in the second volume of "Thesaurus," by Dean Hicks, Oxon., 1705. In a preface to "Sermons by W. Hopkins," 1708,* the dean has preserved also an interesting account of the library of his cathedral. In 1880 Maurice Day, M.A., the librarian, compiled and published a catalogue of the printed books. In addition to the theological treatises usually found in ecclesiastical libraries, there are at Worcester many valuable early printed books; collections of the older works on history, jurisprudence, medicine, and archaeology, including various rare volumes upon numismatics. Perhaps the most ancient printed book in the library is "Biblia Latina Vulgata : Vet. et Nov. Test. cum Epistola S. Hieronymi ad Paulinum presbyterum. Venetiis, 1478" (a.d. 2). Also there is a copy of the Nuremberg Chronicle—wanting a title. William Caxton is represented by the "moral" Gower's—"Confessio Amantis": large folio. "Enprynted at Westmestre by me Willyam Caxton and fynysshed the ij day of Septembre the fyrst yere of the regne of Kyng Richard the thyrd" (i.e. 1483, not 1494, as printed in the colophon by mistake). (P. H. 2.) There are three volumes of Wynkyn de Worde's printing:—

(1.) "The Floure of the Commandementes of God." 1521. (Q. K. 15.)
(2.) "The Descripcyon of Britayne, and Cronycles of Englonde." 1528. (M. F. 10.)

This is one of the finest specimens of De Worde's press: it is a fine tall copy in original binding, which, however, has been rebacked.

But in The Bookbinder we are interested chiefly in the exterior of books. At Worcester there are many examples of English, French, German, and Dutch bindings which merit description. In a glass case in the Chapter House specimens of the work of Nicholas Sperying and Garratt Godfrey, the early printers of Cambridge, of the mysterious I. R., and of English and foreign binders of less repute are exhibited. Thanks to the care of the librarian, Mr. John Hooper, M.A., the bookbindings are in excellent preservation. Some

* Copy in Worcester Library (S. II. 18).
XVI. CENTURY STAMPED LEATHER BINDING, FRENCH (F).

In the Cathedral Library, Worcester.
of the older volumes are curiously decorated. Upon the fore-edge of the leaves where the
semble - argent, 10 torteaux, 4, 3, 2, 1. These are the arms of the see of Worcester.

The accompanying illustration represents in a diagrammatic form one side of a French
binding, numbered in the catalogue x. c. 12, containing:

(1.) Antonius Mancinellus. Sermonum decas. Parrhisiis 1511. (Very rare.)
(2.) Laurentius Valla. De ementita Donatione Constantini Imperatoris. 1520. 4to.
(3.) Albertus Magnus. Mariæ. Lugd. 1503. 4to.

The boards measure 8in. × 5in., and the block 6½in. × 4in. The bands are four in
number, clasps gone. The design comprises a central compartment 5in. × 2in. surrounded
by a border; at the top a bird, probably a dove; below the figure of God the Father in
the act of benediction issues from clouds of glory; beneath, King David in devotional attitude
beside his harp completes the symbolical allusion to the Holy Trinity; upon a label is a text
difficult to decipher, but allowing for the contractions it may be: “Domine Deus salutis
meæ.” It is at once apparent that the border and the central panel are incongruous; the
border in all probability was copied from an engraving in a Paris printed Book of Hours,
such an one may be found in the Archiepiscopal Library at Lambeth Palace, printed by the
widow of Thielman Kerver, c. 1525, probably from old blocks.* By the kindness of Messrs.
Unwin Brothers we are able to reproduce two of Kerver’s borders, taken from the Horae of
1525, so that readers may compare for themselves the engraving and the drawing of the
stamped leather binding. It will be seen that the dark background of the blocks is covered
with minute white spots. This method of “killing the black” was introduced by the German
engravers towards the end of the XV. century, and about the beginning of the XVI. century
it was generally used by the French engravers as well as the German and Dutch. About
1520 it was wholly superseded by cross hatching.† The design was taken originally, no
doubt, from an illuminated MS. Pigouohet, who was at one time associated with Kerver, or
one of his workmen, may have engraved it. Be this as it may, the interesting point to notice
is the relationship existing between book illustration and book binding, and the influence
exerted by the German School upon art in France.

* Messrs. Unwin have reprinted these blocks, with many others, in their very quaint

"Ephemerides. The Dayes of the Year 1889. A London Almanack in the olde style.”

† "A Treatise on Wood Engraving.” By J. Jackson and W. A. Chatto. 1861.

[To be continued.]
The terms obverse and reverse belong to the science of numismatics, but there appears to be no reason why they should not be applied also to bookbindings, since books, like coins, have but two sides; and certainly the terms are convenient. The reverse of the Bookbinding numbered X. C. 12 in the catalogue of Worcester Cathedral Library in some respects is as remarkable as the obverse, of which an illustration has appeared in the pages of The Bookbinder; for the sake of distinction we will call it the acorn pattern. In construction the design is simple—a series of semicircular arches joined at the points, which are terminated by acorns, facing another series similar in all respects, and placed in such a manner that the acorn points on one side are opposite the centres of the arches on the other side. The spandrels of the arches are ornamented with halves of conventional four-petal flowers. In some instances, usually in borders, the acorns on one side touch the apices of the arches on the other, but in other cases the two series on arches are placed farther apart, so that the points of the acorns on both sides would rest upon a line drawn down the centre of the panel; then the spaces between the arches are ornamented by two flowers, a daisy and a flower of four petals.

The acorn pattern appears on bookbindings in three arrangements at least:

1. Alone upon a panel, without a border.
2. Upon a panel, surrounded by a border.
3. Upon a border surrounding a panel.

In the present example the panel is surrounded by a border of dragons, oak branches, rosebuds, and thistles. To my mind the often-recurring dragon, oak, and rose suggest that the artists of the Middle Ages attached a special significance to these symbols. On bookbindings they appear to have attained their highest development as ornaments in the sixteenth century. They are not heraldic badges, and with equal certainty they are not meaningless adornments; they occur both in Pagan and in Christian art; they are as common in Asia as in Europe, but the full meaning attached to them I cannot at present give.

The acorn pattern appears to have been used by bookbinders in France and Germany, probably by English and Italian craftsmen also. M. Gruel mentions examples bearing the names of Jehan Norins and Hans Van Collen. The Jehan Norins binding is upon a classic printed at Paris by R. Stephanus (Robert Estienne, printer to the King) in 1529. The binding by Hans Van Collen protects a volume in 8vo., printed by J. Gymnicus at Cologne in 1541. I have a rubbing of a similar panel from a binding probably executed in England. Another appears on a 4to, printed by Simon in 1528. The acorn pattern was used as a border upon

* Manuel de Reliures.
a binding now in the British Museum, covering a book printed by Richard Pynson in 1522. On the same binding there is another border of the dragon, oak, and rose. It will be noticed that in our illustration a shield occupies a place at the foot of the border; this shield once bore arms or initials, but they have been defaced.

[To be continued.]
Worcester Cathedral Library.

By W. Salt. Brassington.

(Continued from page 123.)

Few, if any, very early vellum bindings remain in the Library of Worcester Cathedral, but in Edgar Tower, the ancient gateway to the monastery, there are numerous volumes in white roughly dressed sheepskin half-bindings with oaken boards, evidently the work of the Benedictine monks, who chose this plain and durable style for their business books and minor records. Plain vellum bindings without boards were frequently used by Caxton to protect the books that issued from the sign of the “Red-pale.” Such are the copies of ‘Tully de Senectute’ in Queen’s College, Oxford, ‘Art and Craft,’ ‘Directorium,’ and the ‘Game and Play of the Chess’ in the Bodleian.* Such may have been the binding of the only Caxton at Worcester—Gower’s “Confessio Amantis”—but unfortunately the volume has suffered at the hands of the modern binder, has been shamefully “ploughed,” and now appears in a coat of plain brown leather, which it may have worn for about a century.

The “Descripteon of Britayne, and Cronycles of Englonde,” printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1528, are bound up with another and much later treatise. The two books have the large device used by de Worde, but differ in detail. The central block with Caxton’s mark is the same in both. A leaf has been torn from the “Cronycles,” otherwise both books appear to be perfect, although the edges have been chopped in ruthless fashion, and a modern leather binding substituted for the old one. Caxton printed two editions of the “Chronicles” (1480 and 1482), which differ little from the older “Cronicle of Brute.” The “St. Alban’s Chronicle,” printed a few years later, is said to be the same text, interpolated throughout with a history of the Popes and ecclesiastical matters. Wynkyn de Worde’s Chronicle, commonly called “Fructus Temporum,” is a compilation from Caxton’s and the St. Alban’s edition of the same work: it is a folio, and ran through no less than five editions (1497, 1502, 1515, 1520, and 1528). The Worcester copy belongs to the last edition.

The tinted illustration opposite represents the obverse of a richly tooled brown leather binding, which covers the choicest treasure in the Library, a perfect copy of the first edition of “Nova Legenda Anglie,” usually called “Capgrave’s Lives of the Saints.” The author, about whom little is known, died in 1464. “This book, though not one of the rarest, is one of the most elegant specimens of Wynkyn de Worde’s press.”† It is dated 1516. The second edition appeared in 1527.

The binding is very much in its original condition, except that it has been rebacked, and has lost the clasps; stout oaken boards, pierced by the ends of four bands fastened by means of wooden pegs, and covered with rich brown leather, marked by means of tools of two kinds, stamps and rollers. Roll bands richly ornamented with fabulous beasts, and conventional flowers enclose an oblong panel, which is crossed by diagonal double lines; each lozenge-shaped space thus left being ornamented with a lace-like device of the pineapple order; around the border’s outer edge the halves of similar ornaments are arranged.

The character of the design suggests that the artist attempted to reproduce on leather a pattern worked in embroidery by the skilful fingers of a mediaeval dame. The binding appears to be of workmanship contemporary with the printing of the book, in execution and arrangement the design is thoroughly German, bespeaking either a foreign workman or a foreign model; ornamentation similar, though not exactly corresponding, emanated from the workshops of both Caxton and Pynson, and there can be little doubt that this book was bound by one of De Worde's own workmen. The border is an early instance of the use of the pattern-roller in England. To trace the history of the Worcester copy of the "Legenda," is a matter of great difficulty, but it is possible that it was purchased direct from the printer, and that it has remained at Worcester ever since; it is probable that it was one of the purchases of the last Prior but one, the good William Moore, who always added a few books to the Monastic Library when he took his periodical journey to London. We find in a list of books supplied to Worcester Monastery in 1518-19 the following entry:—

"Legenda s'tor in Englishe vi. s." Can this be the "Capgravius" in which we are interested?

Note.—It may be well to note that the diagrams illustrating these papers are as far as possible facsimiles, and the irregularities in the drawings are copies of like irregularities in the originals.


[To be continued.

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Front-Edge Cutting under Difficulties.

We have a hint to offer, and will ask the reader to imagine that a number of books have been marbled contrary to order, and the customer demands that they shall be re-done. Of course there is then no alternative but to re-trim them, and it is upon this re-trimming that we ask attention.

Now, to trim the ends of these books it would not be a troublesome job, but with the fronts it would be, especially if a large number had to be tied and jogged up, as is usually done. The common practice of tying-up books so that the round shall not slip back to its original position before the cutting has been completed is a long process, but there is a more simple and speedy way of accomplishing the same end, and to describe this is our object now. It is as follows:—Cut a piece of No. 20 binders' board the exact width and length of the front-edge to be cut. Set the gauge of the machine to the right distance, and with the binders' board push the front of the book so that it becomes perfectly flat and nearly even with the knife, and that when the cutting is done only a mere shaving can be cut off. The man at the cutting machine is the one who should see that the book is pushed to the right distance, while the boy holds the clamp lightly upon it, and at the proper time gives the last pull, so that the book may be held down firmly at the time the cutting takes place.

At the first thought it may appear impracticable that a book could be pushed back in this way and trimmed perfectly, but it can be, and thus the importance of giving a detailed account of this ingenious remedy for saving books as well as time under very critical circumstances.
Worcester Cathedral Library.

BY W. SALT BRASSINGTON. (Continued from page 153.)

Jehan Moulin, or du Moulin, for both forms are found, was a printer and bookbinder at Rouen in the early years of the sixteenth century. Books printed by Moulin are rare. M. Brunet in the fifth volume of “Manuel Du Libraire” (p. 1680), refers to a book of hours printed at Rouen in A.D. 1519. “Heures née dame a lusaige de Rouë tout au long sas rës requir nouvellement imprimees audit lieu par Jehan du Moulin.”

The almanac commences in 1519, and fixes the date of the book; it is ornamented throughout with arabesque borders poorly executed. Beneath the title is the printer’s mark, which is engraved in Brunet’s work and also in “Marques Typographiques” by L. C. Silvestre (p. 129). The mark represents a hexagonal windmill, three of whose sides are presented to the spectator; the body of the mill rests upon a somewhat slender stem, upon which is suspended a shield bearing the monogram I.M. Two unicorns support the shield; beneath the mill appears the name, J. Moulin, in gothic letters.

Moulin used at least two stamps for adorning the sides of the books he bound, and, like his printer’s mark, both stamps represent a rebus on the name of Moulin or Miller. These stamps are executed with great breadth of treatment and quaintness of design. The illustration given herewith represents the obverse side of the binding of a book numbered X G. 4. in Worcester Cathedral Library. The volume contains:

“Paraldus (guilhermus) episc. Lugd. summe de vitiis.” 1519, 8vo.

“Peraldus (seu Paraldus) gul. summarium virtutum ac vitiorum,” Ludg. 1585, &c.

The binding has three bands and two clasps. The sides measure 7 in. × 4 in. The stamps measure 6 in. × 2½ in. The scene represents a miller with a sack on his back, riding through a forest of oak and ash upon his ass. Between the branches overhead, the stars, Charley’s wain it may be, shine down upon the traveller. The ass is a leisurely beast, and browses as he goes. Below this picture are two hogs devouring acorns, and below the hogs is the name, “Jehan Moulin.” There is reason to think that Moulin visited England; be that as it may, many volumes bearing his stamp are to be found in old English libraries.

[To be continued.

Book Decoration of the Fifteenth Century.

FIG. I.—FRONT PAGE.

Alart Du Hameel, a Flemish goldsmith and engraver, was celebrated by the fantastic and semi-grotesque decorative designs which he applied to metal and other art work. He knew how to transform the most unpromising subjects—like the radishes in our present example—into beautiful scrolls, and also was a master in the Gothic style of ornamentation. The few engravings by him, which are still in existence, are of the utmost rarity, and some of them were sold but a few years ago for enormous sums ranging from £1000 to £1500 apiece.
Worcester Cathedral Library.

By W. Salt Brassington.

(Continued from page 185, Vol. II.)

Jehan Moulin chose, as a rule, to place his name in the form of a rebus upon his bindings. In the illustration upon the opposite page, the windmill occupies the centre of the stamp, above are the stars, and below the patient ass browses the grass that grows around the foot of the mill; while the Miller, still with his sack on his head, ascends the ladder to the mill door. Two bluebottle flies of quite alarming dimensions hover, one on each side, and above the Miller's head appear the letters "Jehâ" (Jehan) completing the rebus. Moulin's two stamps appear always to have been used together; they are sui generis, and are worthy of the city from which they appear to have emanated. Rouen is famous for her early printers, and it may not be out of place to mention a few of them. One, Mâssier, is said to have introduced the art into the Norman city somewhere about the year 1475. Guillaume Tailleur, who assisted our Pynson, had a press there at an early date; a citizen called Jehan le Bourgeois was somewhat distinguished; then followed Martin Morin, Raulin Gualtiers, and Jehan Moulin, who appear to have set up their presses soon after the commencement of the sixteenth century.

Besides the Parallus, the volume bound by Jehan Moulin, though printed at Leyden, I can discover but one book in this library that emanated from Rouen. The volume in question is the "Breviary of the Second Use of Hereford," 12mo., printed at Rouen in 1505. It is perfect with the exception of the two last leaves at the end; there is another copy of this, the only printed edition of the Hereford Breviary, in the Bodleian Library. In addition to the stamped bindings already mentioned, there is a volume bearing upon its sides early panel-stamps, displaying the armorial bearings of Henry VII. and Henry VIII.; the stamps are similar to those used by Julian Notary, John Reynolds, and other early sixteenth century binders, but they bear the initials "H. N.," and they are, perhaps, the earliest Heraldic stamps of this kind yet discovered.

In these notes it has been possible only to indicate in the slightest manner some of the treasures of the great Library of Worcester Cathedral; but what has been written may be suggestive of a more exhaustive treatise to some future student of Bookbindings. In the next issue of The Bookbinder it is intended to touch upon some of the relics in Lichfield Cathedral Library. If possible, the series of illustrations that have accompanied these articles will also be continued.