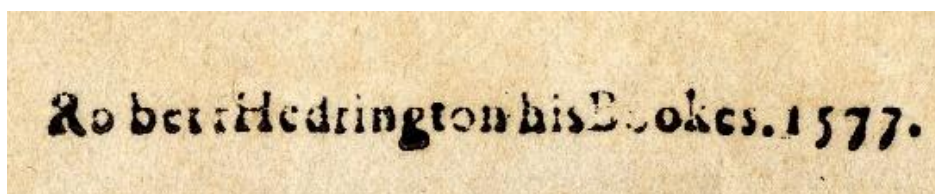


## Robert Hedrington and Wynkyn de Worde at Winchester College

The letterpress stamp ‘Robert Hedrington his Bookes. 1577.’ is found in a number of distinguished early English books, two of them in the Fellows’ Library of Winchester College. Lists of Hedrington’s books have been published on several occasions, and all have included the copy at Winchester of Raymond of Capua’s *Life of St Katherine of Sienna* (Wynkyn de Worde, 1492–93).<sup>1</sup> The Fellows’ Library also houses another of Hedrington’s books, *The Orchard of Syon* (Wynkyn de Worde, 1519), which has so far escaped notice. An appendix to this note provides an up-to-date catalogue of Hedrington’s books, adding one to the most recently published list and removing another.<sup>2</sup>



Hedrington’s stamp was first remarked upon by William Blades in his census of Caxtons, and he identified seven books by the English prototypographer as having belonged to Hedrington. Later bibliographers have amended Blades’ list, removing some Caxtons which he had mistakenly associated with Hedrington, and reporting books by other printers with his ownership. A total of seven printed books and two manuscripts with Hedrington’s stamp can be identified. While his library must therefore have been quite small, even by the standards of the sixteenth century, the surviving books are of considerable interest. They include three editions printed by William Caxton (c. 1422–c. 1491), two by Wynkyn de Worde (d. 1534), and one by Richard Pynson (1448–1529). The preponderance of editions by early typographers is striking, and it has been suggested that Hedrington might be considered the first deliberate collector of early English printing, an activity otherwise thought to have begun only in the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup> The identification of Hedrington’s copy of *The Orchard of Syon*, one of the most luxurious of early English printed books, provides further evidence in support of this interpretation.

Hedrington has proved a frustratingly elusive character and it has been impossible to discover any biographical information about him. The only possible insight into the man himself is provided by the latest publication bearing his stamp: John Ponet’s *A shorte treatise of politike power* (Strasbourg, 1556). The author of this tract was bishop of Winchester from 1551 to 1553 before becoming the highest ranking of the Marian exiles, and it was in Geneva that he wrote his

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<sup>1</sup> William Blades, *The Life and Typography of William Caxton, England’s First Printer* (London, 1861–63), p. 263; Seymour de Ricci, *A Census of Caxtons* (Oxford, 1909), p. 163; Brian North Lee, *Early Printed Book Labels* (Pinner, 1976), p. 174; A. S. G. Edwards, ‘Robert Hedrington His Bookes, 1577’, *The Book Collector* 40 (1991), pp. 102–3.

<sup>2</sup> As was noted in the catalogue of books sold from Longleat, Edwards followed Blades in mistakenly including the copy of Caxton’s *Golden Legend* (1483) at the John Rylands Library among Hedrington’s books. The Rylands copy is made-up and Hedrington’s stamp appears only on a supplied leaf. The same leaf (k6) is missing from a copy marked in several places with Hedrington’s stamp that was formerly in the Botfield collection and sold from Longleat in 2002 (Christie’s, London, 13 June 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Margaret Lane Ford, ‘Deconstruction and Reconstruction: detecting and interpreting sophisticated copies’, in B. Wagner and M. Reed, eds., *Early Printed Books as Material Objects* (The Hague, 2010), pp. 296–97. Seventeenth-century collectors of English incunabula included John Selden, whose library contained at least eleven Caxtons when it entered the Bodleian in 1654; the library of Richard Smith, sold by auction in 1682, also included a substantial group of Caxtons. See Kristian Jensen, *Revolution and the Antiquarian Book: Reshaping the Past, 1780–1815* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 78–80.

radical Calvinist defence of resistance to secular rulers. Hedrington's ownership of this volume gives some indication of his religious beliefs and it surely allows us to discount the possibility that he purchased his early books out of sympathy for the medieval devotional texts that most of them contain. This is then a further indication that his interest in Caxton and his successors was predominately antiquarian.

The two books from Hedrington's library at Winchester are certainly the kind of early English imprints which might particularly appeal to a collector. Wynkyn de Worde's edition of the *Life of St Katherine* would undoubtedly have been mistaken for a Caxton by a sixteenth-century purchaser. The edition is undated and was printed by de Worde soon after Caxton's death, using Caxton's smaller text type (Type 4), and with his large printer's device on the colophon leaf.<sup>4</sup> De Worde's edition of *The Orchard of Syon*, a Middle English translation of the revelatory visions of St Katherine of Siena, was published much later in his long career. Its printing was funded by Sir Richard Sutton, steward of the Bridgettine house at Syon.<sup>5</sup> According to the book's epilogue Sutton had found a manuscript of the work 'in a corner by it selfe' and 'hathe caused at his greate coste thys booke to be prynted trustinge that moche fruyte shall come therof.'<sup>6</sup> It is one of the most handsome products of De Worde's press, enlivened with much red printing and inventive typesetting, and adorned with fine initials and eight specially commissioned woodcuts.<sup>7</sup>

Hedrington's stamp appears twice in each of the Winchester volumes, in both cases on the final leaf of text and the verso of the facing page. It is composed of metal type, rather carelessly inked, and impressed by hand. Hedrington's is among the earliest recorded English book stamps and the first known from more than a single example.<sup>8</sup> There are no other early marks of ownership in either book, both of which had reached Winchester College by 1634. They are referred to in a catalogue of the Fellows' Library begun in that year as 'The Revelations of St Catherine' and 'Her Life'.<sup>9</sup> The identification of *The Orchard of Syon* is made certain by the number still visible on the fore-edge, which corresponds to that given in the catalogue. The 1634 Catalogue shows that the *Life of St Katherine* was at that time bound together with four other works.<sup>10</sup> This Sammelband must have been made up after Hedrington's book arrived at Winchester since one of the editions it contained was already in the Fellows' Library in 1565.<sup>11</sup> At some point the volume was broken up and the *Life of St Katherine* is now in a late nineteenth-century binding with gilded edges that obscure any trace of the original fore-edge number.

The 1634 Catalogue provides the only early record of Hedrington's books at Winchester. They do not appear in the inventories of the Library compiled in 1609 and 1616, nor in the Library Donations Book.<sup>12</sup> Nothing can be concluded from these absences. The Donations Book

<sup>4</sup> Raymond of Capua [Raymundus de Vineis], *Life of St Katherine of Sienna and St Elizabeth of Hungary* (Wynkyn de Worde, Westminster, 1492–93). *STC* 24766; Duff 403. On the dating of this edition see Lotte Hellinga, 'Tradition and Renewal: Establishing the Chronology of Wynkyn de Worde's Early Work', in K. Jensen, ed., *Incunabula and their Readers: Printing, Selling and Using Books in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 2003), pp. 14–15, 27.

<sup>5</sup> Raymond of Capua, *The Orchard of Syon* (Wynkyn de Worde, London, 28 September 1519). *STC* 4815.

<sup>6</sup> Raymond of Capua, *The Orchard of Syon*, sig. B3v.

<sup>7</sup> Edward Hodnett, *English Woodcuts, 1480–1535* (Oxford, 1935), nos. 862–69. Martha W. Driver, *The Image in Print: Book Illustration in Late Medieval England and its Sources* (London, 2004), pp. 140–6.

<sup>8</sup> Lee, *Book Labels*, pp. 173–75; David Pearson, *Provenance Research in Book History* (London, 1994), pp. 87–88.

<sup>9</sup> Winchester College Fellows' Library MS 202, fol. 15r. New accessions were added to the catalogue until 1669, but the original entries from 1634 are written in a single hand that is easily distinguishable from subsequent additions.

<sup>10</sup> Charles de Bovelles, *Quaestionum theologiarum* (Paris, 1513); Petrus Hispanus: *Summa experimentorum sive thesaurus pauperum* (Antwerp, 1497); Nicolaus Praepositus, *Dispensarium ad aromatarios* (Lyon, 1499); MS 51: 'Tabulae Botanicae cum interpretatione Angl. et Belg.', England, late fifteenth century.

<sup>11</sup> James Willoughby, *The Libraries of the Collegiate Churches*, 2 vols. (London, 2013), II, p. 821 (SC345.11).

<sup>12</sup> Winchester College Fellows' Library MS 225; Winchester College Muniments 21892a; 21893.

was begun in 1652 and has some retrospective coverage back to 1543, but the records of sixteenth and early seventeenth-century gifts are very incomplete. The two early seventeenth-century inventories likewise omit many volumes known to have been present. All that can be said for certain is that both of Hedrington's books entered the Fellows' Library at some point between 1577 and 1634. Both have been rebound in modern times and no evidence of their earlier bindings is preserved. The *Life of St Katherine* contains several marginal annotations in English in a sixteenth-century hand. These have been heavily cropped in rebinding but clearly comment disapprovingly on the text. A partially obliterated annotation at the top of the first page, apparently in a different sixteenth-century hand, includes an intriguing description of the work as a 'legend of lyes'. One of these annotators may be Hedrington, though no similar marginalia are found in any other books with his stamp.

The *Life of St Katherine* and *The Orchard of Syon* are quite unlike most of the books added to the Fellows' Library in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, nearly all of which were quite recently published works of theology, classics, law and history. Among a collection predominantly of working texts for a community of scholars, the two volumes once belonging to Hedrington must have seemed out of place. Shelfmarks added to the Library catalogue in the 1660s show that *The Orchard of Syon* had by then found a home in a section of the Library largely given over to Bibles, concordances, harmonies and sermons, and that it shared a shelf with several other curious volumes which cannot have been any practical use to the fellows. These included a Parisian Book of Hours printed on vellum, an early edition of Durandus's *Rationale Divinorum* (Lyon, 1506), a Sarum Missal (Paris, 1556), and the Book of Common Prayer in Latin (London, 1560).<sup>13</sup> The physical location of the book suggests the difficulty of finding an appropriate place for it in the classification system of a Protestant institutional library. At the same time, the evidence of shelfmarks shows clearly that *The Orchard of Syon*, like the books beside it, was regarded as interesting enough to be worth preserving in the chained section of the Library. It did not share the fate of many obsolete works which were removed from the chained shelves in the middle of the seventeenth century and placed in a cupboard or storeroom referred to as 'Arch'. Unlike the Bodleian's 'Archivum', where particularly valuable books were kept, this seems at Winchester to have become predominately a place for dumping unwanted volumes, very few of which remain in the Library today. Like *The Orchard of Syon*, the *Life of St Katherine* was kept among the chained books. Bound with four other works on various subjects, it was shelved alongside other composite volumes in a section of the Library stocked mostly with medieval theology and controversial works of the Reformation.

Although they are not mentioned in the Donations Book, *The Orchard of Syon* and *Life of St Katherine* must surely have been given as gifts to the Fellows' Library. While books were often purchased with the commencement fees paid by commoners and money from benefactors, these were always useful, scholarly texts.<sup>14</sup> It is tempting to think that the books might have been given by Hedrington himself—it would certainly be an extraordinary coincidence if two volumes from his library had found their way to Winchester independently of one another—but no one of that name (or any of its likely variants) had any connection to the College in this period. Both books may of course have passed from Hedrington to another collector who gave them to the College, but did not leave any mark of his ownership. The related subject matter of the two books surely increases the likelihood that they travelled together.

<sup>13</sup> The 1634 catalogue gives no date for the Book of Hours 'impress. in pergamenō', which does not survive.

<sup>14</sup> Though not always in recent editions: for example a copy of Alberti, *De re aedificatoria* (Florence, 1485) purchased with fees received in 1642 and Vesalius, *De corpore fabrica* (Venice, 1568), in 1651.

Hedrington's books were unusual additions to an English institutional library of the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, but there are some near-parallels among other donations to the College in this period. In 1608 the Fellows' Library received a manuscript Book of Hours with musical notation for the Office of the Dead.<sup>15</sup> Other gifts around this date included a Wycliffe New Testament and an illuminated *Golden Legend*.<sup>16</sup> Altogether the Fellows' Library was given seven medieval manuscripts by five separate donors between 1608 and 1614. Most, if not all, of these manuscripts must at this date have been regarded as curiosities rather than useful additions to a working library. They suggest that, by the early seventeenth century, the College was regarded as an appropriate repository for items of antiquarian interest. It was presumably for this reason that two books from Hedrington's extraordinary collection found their way to the Fellows' Library.

Richard Foster  
Fellows' Librarian, Winchester College

### Appendix: Books from the Library of Robert Hedrington (fl. 1577)

#### Manuscripts:

Bodleian Laud Misc. 602: Walter Hilton, *The Scale of Perfection*, mid 15th century.

University College, Oxford, MS D 181: *The Pilgrimage of the Soul*, translated from the French of Guillaume de Guilleville, early 15<sup>th</sup> century.

#### Printed Books:

Bodleian Douce 162: Virgil, *Eneydos* (William Caxton, Westminster, after 22 June, 1490).

Cambridge University Library: *Godfrey of Boloyne* (William Caxton, Westminster, 20 November, 1481).

Emmanuel College, Cambridge: John Ponet, *A shorte treatise of politike power* (Strasbourg, 1556).

Oscott College: Henry Parker, *Dives and Pauper* (Richard Pynson, London, 5 July, 1493).

Private Collection (formerly Longleat House, sold Christie's 13/6/2002): Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend* (William Caxton, Westminster, after 20 November, 1483).

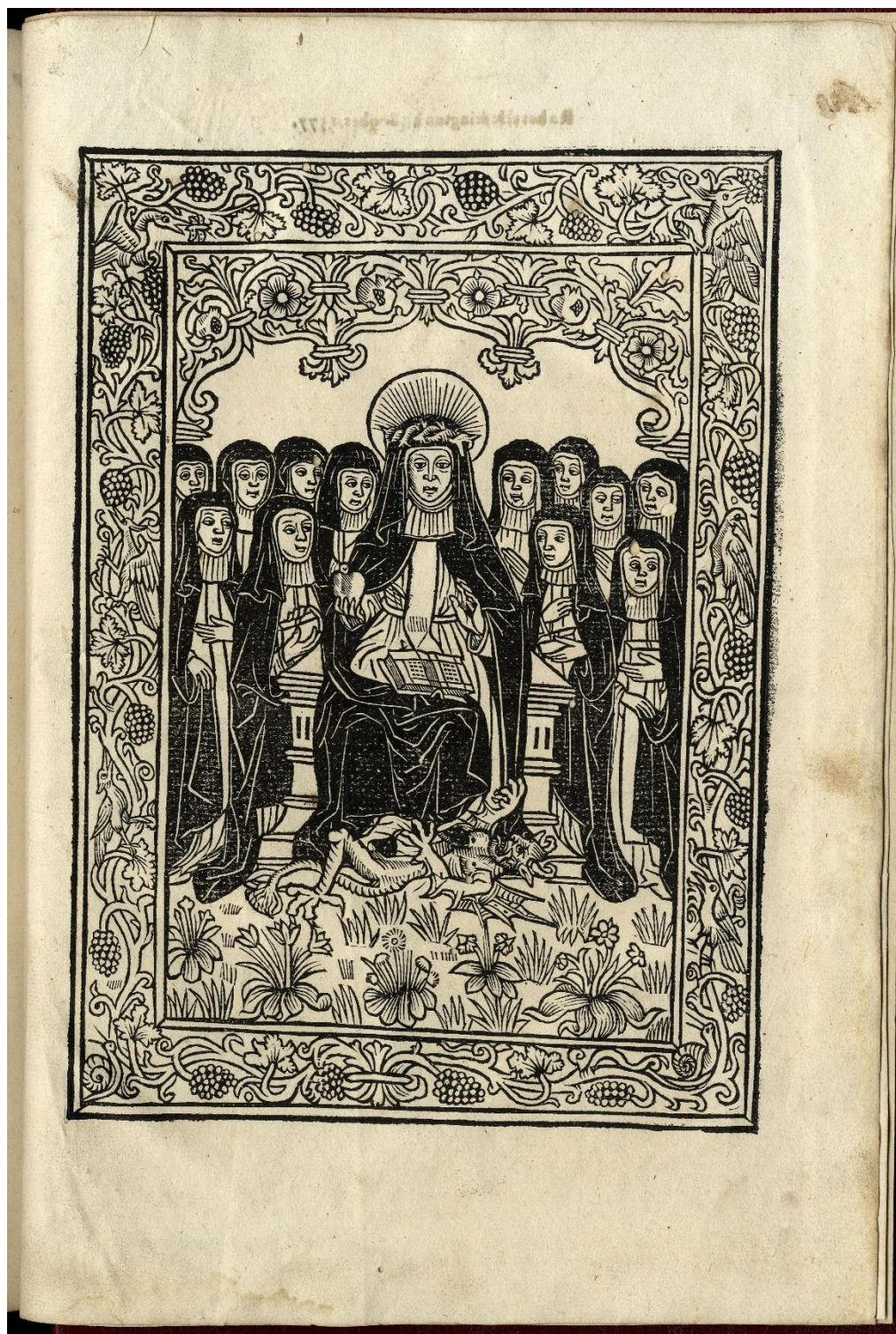
Winchester College: Raymond of Capua [Raymundus de Vineis], *Life of St Katherine of Sienna and St Elizabeth of Hungary* (Wynkyn de Worde, Westminster, 1492-3).

Winchester College: Raymond of Capua [Raymundus de Vineis], *The Orchard of Syon* (Wynkyn de Worde, London, 28 September, 1519).

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<sup>15</sup> Fellows' Library MS 225, p. 17. The donor, John Lant was organist of Winchester Cathedral. This was not his only manuscript: in 1614 Lant gave Christ Church, his alma mater, a magnificent Gospel lectionary commissioned by Cardinal Wolsey.

<sup>16</sup> Given by Guy Dobbins in 1609 and Henry Jurden in 1611: Fellows' Library MS 225, pp. 18, 22.



*The Orchard of Syon* (Wynkyn de Worde, London, 1519), sig. B4r.  
Fellows' Library, Winchester College  
Courtesy of the Warden and Scholars of Winchester College