



*I Marks of
Distinction*

Reflections on the
Reading Room
Windows

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J Marks of Distinction

Reflections on the Reading Room Windows

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The University of Illinois Library is world-renowned for its collections and services, but anyone who has spent time here as a student or researcher has come to know the Library for its spaces. From the contemporary design of the Grainger Engineering Library to the Richardsonian Romanesque architecture of the Math Library in Altgeld Hall, our unique, even iconic, environments have helped shape the campus experience for generations of scholars.

The stately sanctuary of the Main Library Reading Room is one such space, boasting nearly a third of an acre of study area under a soaring twenty-eight-foot ceiling. The Reading Room attracts students from all over campus with its open feeling, ample seating, and beautiful quarter-sawn oak woodwork. It is a space that we are committed to preserving and improving with the help of our Library Friends.

Those who have visited the Reading Room will also recall the magnificent windows, bringing abundant natural light into this gracious space. I'd like to thank Valerie Hotchkiss, Tad Boehmer, and the staff of the Rare Book & Manuscript Library for their careful work in explicating the printers' marks that adorn each of the windows, and illustrating their connection to the Library's magnificent collections. Their efforts help to illuminate the great many treasures we have in the University of Illinois Library.

John P. Wilkin, *Juanita J. and Robert E. Simpson*
Dean of Libraries and University Librarian

Curator's Preface

In a 1912 speech to the Board of Trustees, President Edmund Janes James proposed to allot one million dollars to create a grand new library. Though it took a few years to raise the necessary funds, construction got underway in the early 1920s. In 1926, the library moved from Altgeld Hall to its current location. Library director Phineas Windsor and architects Charles A. Platt and James M. White worked on interior designs for murals and wood and stone carvings, hiring J. Scott Williams to design twenty-seven windows for the Reading Room. An Englishman, Williams had studied at the Art Institute of Chicago. Featuring printers' marks in libraries was in vogue at the time and similar artistic programs can be found at Vassar, the Library of Congress, Johns Hopkins, and several other institutions. It seems fairly clear that the design committee relied heavily on W. Roberts' book, *Printers' Marks* (1893), for their list of worthies.

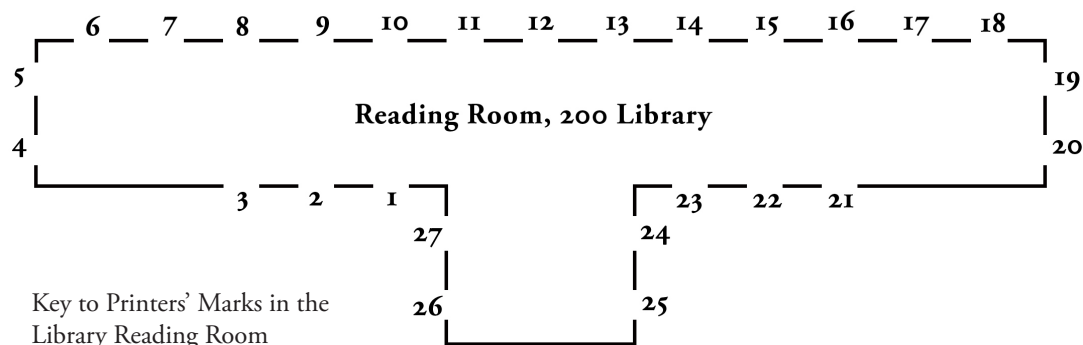
Williams' technique utilized a combination of painting, staining, firing, and etching in seeking to maximize the size of each pane and minimize the amount of leading. The decoration takes up only part of the tall windows, allowing for natural light to come through. Additionally, each of the central printers' marks has four small squares in the corners, decorated with watermark designs found in early handmade paper.

Printers' devices evolved from merchants' trademarks, or shingles, and were often ornate and enigmatic. The twenty-seven windows in the Main Library Reading Room and Grand Staircase are magnificent tributes to early printers in Europe, but many visitors may not notice them or realize their significance. This project seeks to bring them to light again within their historical and architectural contexts, highlighting each printer, his device, and a book from the University's Rare Book & Manuscript Library associated with each. We hope this project encourages you to look at the windows with a fresh perspective.

We are indebted to the work of previous scholars who studied these windows, especially Amanda M. Flattery, an early twentieth-century librarian at Illinois, and Muriel Scheinman, whose 1981 dissertation, *Art Collecting at the University of Illinois: A History and Catalogue*, has been invaluable.

Tad Boehmer

Curator of *Marks of Distinction: Reflections on the Reading Room Windows*



signify France, while a hellebore, which was also known as *verart*, evokes the printer's name. The entire mark is surrounded with a prayer to Christ to have mercy upon Verard and all sinners.



1. Antoine Verard (d. 1514) Paris, active 1485-1512

Represented by: Guillaume Durand. *Le racional des diuins offices*. Paris: Verard, 1503.

Calligrapher, illuminator, bookbinder, printer, publisher, and bookseller in Paris, Verard operated a busy shop at the sign of St. John the Evangelist in the early days of printing in France. He printed the first French-Latin dictionary, devotional works, popular poetry, and romances. A shrewd businessman, he also targeted the English market. Verard's device is cramped and complicated, with the royal crest of France surmounted by a crown and borne by two angels. Birds of prey (probably falcons) carry a heart containing a monogram that spells out "A. VERARD." All this rises toward a sacred heart and heaven beyond. The lilies

2. Sebastian Gryphius (ca. 1492-1556) Lyon, active from ca. 1524

Represented by: Desiderius Erasmus. *Adagiorum opus*. [Lyon]: Gryphius, 1528.

An international humanist-printer, Gryphius was born in Germany, trained in Italy, and worked in France. A prolific printer in Lyon, Gryphius specialized in law books, Greek and Latin classics, and current authors such as Erasmus and Andreas Alciato, the inventor of the emblem book. Like other scholar-printers in this period, Gryphius supported the editorial work of humanists. Perhaps not surprisingly, Gryphius chose for his device a griffin, whose powerful talon holds an iron ring attached to a block and a winged sphere. His motto: "Virtute duce comite fortuna" or "Guided by virtue, accompanied by good fortune" is the motto of present-day Lyon.



3. Christoph Froschauer (ca. 1490-1564) Zurich, active from ca. 1515

Represented by: Ulrich Zwingli. *Annotationes in evangelias*. Zurich: Froschauer, August 1539.

Trained as a printer and bookbinder in his native Germany, Froschauer came to Zurich in 1515 and was among the first printers to set up shop in that city. During a career of more than four decades, he printed over 700 titles in nearly one million copies. As Zwingli's publisher, he was also responsible for printing the *Zürcher Bibel*, the Swiss reformed Bible based on Zwingli's translations. *Frosch* is the German word for frog, and Froschauer's device includes several of them in varying sizes placed around a tree. A child holding a baton straddles the largest frog.



4. Christophe Plantin (ca. 1520-1589) Antwerp, active from 1555

Represented by: Olaus Magnus, Archbishop of Uppsala. *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus*. Antwerp: Plantin, 1558.

The French-born Plantin originally trained as a bookbinder, but soon found his way into printing and became a leading figure in the publishing world. The Plantin Press produced liturgical works, multilingual dictionaries, Bibles, and emblem books. Upon his death, Plantin's son-in-law, Jan Moretus, inherited the business. The well-preserved offices of the firm now house the Plantin-Moretus Museum in Antwerp. Plantin printed at the sign of the Golden Compass, which appears in his device, paired with the motto "Labore et constantia" ("By toil and steadfastness"). This combination of opposites is echoed in the idle male and the studious female figures placed on either side. The hand grasping a flaming sword and the pair of young women perched on the top of the device may be additions of J. Scott Williams, the artist who designed the windows.



5. Robert Estienne (ca. 1503-1559) Paris & Geneva, active from 1525

Represented by: Bible. N.T. Greek. [Geneva]: Estienne, 1551.

The scholar and printer Robert Estienne represents a great printing dynasty—his father set up a press in Paris in 1502, and his great-grandson maintained the business until 1673. Robert's success was impressive. A scholar of great acumen, he published scores of works by classical writers, often with his own notes. Working with the typographer Claude Garamond, he produced elegant works for the King of France. Later, moved by the Reformation, he fled Paris for Calvin's Geneva and along the way devised the system of dividing the Bible into verses—published in 1551,

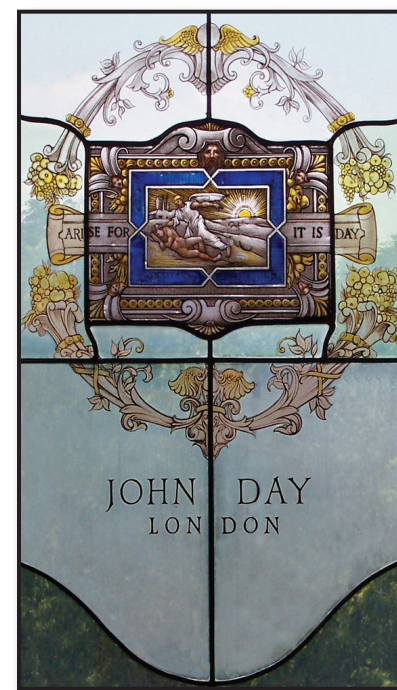
and still used today. The Estienne press operated at the sign of the Olive and an olive tree is featured in his device. Grafted branches stand strong while others fall to the ground—an allusion to the power of faith. A man (by some accounts, Moses) stands below, flanked by a motto, which can be translated into English as, "Be not high-minded, but fear" (Romans 11:19-20). The small cross at the foot of the device is the mark of its artist, Geoffroy Tory (ca. 1480-ca. 1533).



6. John Day (ca. 1522-1584) London, active from ca. 1546

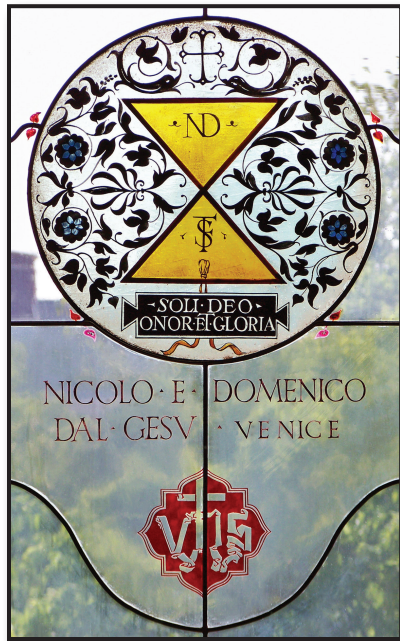
Represented by: Aelfric, Abbot of Eynsham. *A testimone of antiquitie*. London: Day, [1566?].

In nearly forty years at his press, John Day published almost 300 titles, ranging from ABCs and catechisms to John Foxe's famous *Book of Martyrs* and the first printed appearance of Anglo-Saxon characters. A loyal Protestant, Day is one of the most important printers of the English Reformation. Imprisoned during the reign of Queen Mary I, he was later honored by Edward VI and Elizabeth I. His patrons included some of England's greatest public figures, including Thomas Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. In Day's device, a man is awakened from his slumber on a hillside by an angel, surrounded



by the motto, "Arise for it is day." This makes reference both to the printer's name and to the dawning of the Reformation.





**7. Niccolò dal Gesù & Domenico dal Gesù
Venice, active 1505-1527**

Represented by: Joannes Lichtenberger. *Pronosticatione*. [Venice: Niccolò & Domenico dal Gesù, 20 October 1511].

The brothers Niccolò and Domenico de Sandro were engravers, booksellers, and editors working in Venice at the sign of Jesus (*Gesù* in Italian). Little is known about them, apart from their involvement in the production of a modest number of books in the first few decades of the sixteenth century. They also commissioned and sold *santini*, images of saints meant for use in private devotion. Two distinct marks used by the brothers are present in the window. In the central section of the window, two triangles stand end to end, perhaps signifying the collaboration between the brothers. The initials stand for “Niccolò e Domenico de Sandro, fratelli [brothers],” and the Latin motto declares, “Honor and glory to God alone.” Below is the monogram of Christ. Both marks are echoed in the small colored panes in the corners of the central panel.



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**8. Johann Froben (ca. 1460-1527)
Basel, active from ca. 1491**

Represented by: Bible. N.T. Erasmus. Basel: Froben, February 1516.

Froben is chiefly known for his editions of the church fathers and for publishing the first New Testament in Greek, an edition compiled by his friend Erasmus. Erasmus praised the scholar-printer aptly when he called him a “transalpine Aldus.” Hans Holbein the Younger provided illustrations and decorations for many of Froben’s imprints. The caduceus, symbol of the messenger god Mercury, is the centerpiece of Froben’s device. Held aloft by two hands issuing from clouds, it signifies not only the ‘message’ print makes possible, but also the balance necessary for good commerce. Atop this staff surrounded by serpents is a dove. The Latin and Greek mottos on either side of the window device both translate

as “[Be] wise simply,” but Froben often used the biblical motto reflected in his device: “Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.”



**9. André Wechel (ca. 1535-1581)
Paris & Frankfurt-am-Main, active from 1554**

Represented by: Pierre de Ronsard. *Exhortation au camp du roy pour bien combattre le iour de la bataille*. Paris: Wechel, 1558.

André Wechel was known for publishing Greek classics and the work of French humanists, such as Ronsard. He was the son of another printer, Chrétien Wechel, who first used the device. In 1572, in the wake of the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre, Wechel fled Paris, eventually setting up a new press in Protestant Frankfurt. His printer’s mark depicts Pegasus in flight (the family traded at the sign of the Flying Horse) above a caduceus with horns of plenty extending from each side.



**10. Erhard Ratdolt (1447-1527 or 1528)
Venice & Augsburg, active from 1486**

Represented by: Euclid. *Elementa geometricae*. Venice: Ratdolt, 25 May 1482.

Best known as one of the most innovative printers of his generation, Erhard Ratdolt experimented with color printing, illustration techniques, and movable parts in his works. He focused on classical and religious texts, as well as astrology and Arabic astronomy. Ratdolt was the first printer to include a title-page at the beginning of a book. His device, first used in 1496, is sometimes referred to as the “Infant Hercules,” but the figure more likely represents Mercury, the god of commerce, holding his caduceus. The strategically placed star represents the god’s planet.



11. Aldus Manutius (1449 or 1450-1515)

Venice, active from 1495

Represented by: Francesco Colonna. *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Venice: Manutius, December 1499.

One of the most innovative printers of his generation, Aldus published pocket editions of Greek, Latin, and Italian classics and introduced italic typefaces into print. He was also among the first to employ the semicolon and comma. A dedicated humanist, he established the “New Academy” in Venice to promote study of the Greek language. Inspired by ancient Roman coins, the Aldine device shows a dolphin wrapped around an anchor—symbols of rapidity and solidity entwined (suggesting his motto: “Festina lente”). The “R” in Aldus M. R. stands for “Romanus,” to indicate his Roman birth. Publishers through the centuries have adopted the Aldine anchor and dolphin as their own, and some modern firms, such as Doubleday, continue to employ it.



13. William Caxton (ca. 1422-ca. 1491)

Bruges & Westminster, active from 1471

Represented by: *The myrrour of the world*. Westminster: Caxton, 1490.

Caxton was an English merchant in Bruges, who learned the new art of printing and, in 1473, produced the first book in English. He soon returned to London and set up his press near Westminster Abbey. Popular fiction and chivalric romance were his specialties, and he translated many of the works himself. Caxton’s window occupies a central location in the room, befitting his role as father of English printing. Caxton’s device is a subject of much discussion. The initials “WC” are clear enough, but the mark in between is thought by some scholars to represent “47” or “74,” perhaps alluding to a significant event in Caxton’s life occurring in 1447 or 1474. The elaborate frame, with its winged serpents and cherubs, was added by Williams in his window design.



12. Johannes Gutenberg, Johann Fust, and Peter Schöffer

Represented by: Bible. Latin. Vulgate. Mainz: Gutenberg, ca. 1454-1455; Saint Thomas Aquinas. *Summa theologica pars secunda, prima pars*. Mainz: Schöffer, 8 November 1471.

Goldsmith and mirror maker, Gutenberg introduced the technology of movable metal type in the West with his famous Bible. His creditor, Fust, and his successor, Schöffer, continued the press’ work. In 1457, they printed the so-called *Mainz Psalter*. Only the second major book to be printed, it introduced several “firsts,” including the earliest printed colophon with a date of publication, decorative initials, two sizes of type, and three-color printing. Placed directly opposite the entrance to the Reading Room, this window is often the first to be seen, though it is mainly a fabrication, as Gutenberg did not actually employ a mark. The device below the portraits—a pair of shields hanging from a cut branch—comes from several works printed by Fust and Schöffer. Some scholars argue that compositor’s sticks (tools of the printing trade) are included in the shields, and there is debate about the whether the device represents just one or both of the partners.



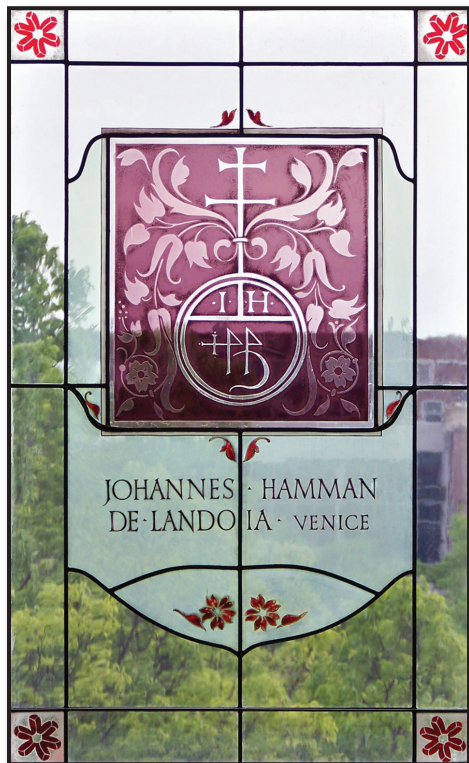
14. Jehan Frellon (1517-1568)

Lyon, active from 1536

Represented by: Cicero. *Rhetorica*. Lyon: Frellon, 1560.

Jehan (or Jean) Frellon, with his brother François, published notable humanists and reformers and operated a theological bookshop. Frellon played a role in reformation history when he harbored the controversial Michael Servetus during his altercation with Jean Calvin. The Frellons worked with Hans Holbein, who designed woodcut borders and entrusted them to print his *Images from the Old Testament* and an edition of his *Dance of Death*. A crab grasps the wings of a moth in its pincers in the Frellon device, accompanied by the Latin motto, “Matura,” meaning, “Make haste.” The lower part of the frame—the invention of the artist J. Scott Williams—incorporates the heads of two very sinister looking roosters, in stark contrast to the tranquil cherubs posed above with their cornucopias.





15. Johannes Hamman de Landoia
Venice, active 1482-ca. 1509

Represented by: Ptolemy. *Almagestum*.
 Venice: Hamman de Landoia for Kaspar
 Grossch and Stephan Roemer, 1496.

Not much is known about Hamman, a German working in Venice, though he claims, in the colophon, to have had a scholarly hand in the making of this book on Greek astronomy. He often worked in collaboration, especially with his fellow countrymen. Hamman's device is an orb and cross, signifying Christ's reign over the earth. The printer's initials are included within part of the tripartite circle, with his merchant's mark taking up the rest. Floral decoration fills out the remaining space in this lavender and red pane.



16. Henric Petri (1508-1579)
Basel, active from ca. 1536

Represented by: Nicolaus Copernicus.
De revolutionibus orbium coelestium. Basel:
 Officina Henricpetrina, 1566.

Petri, along with his son Sebastian, ran a printing shop in Basel that they called the Officina Henricpetrina, which the latter ran until his death in 1627. They published numerous works on subjects such as medicine and astronomy. In 1566, they produced the second edition of Copernicus' groundbreaking work *De revolutionibus orbium* (*On the Revolutions of the Spheres*), outlining the heliocentric theory. The distinctive device depicts a celestial hand wielding a hammer and smashing a rock (*petrus* in Latin,) aided by fire emitted from a face in the heavens. This is an allusion to Jeremiah 23:29, which reads, "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and

like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" The entire device is framed in an elaborate and busy border designed by J. Scott Williams.

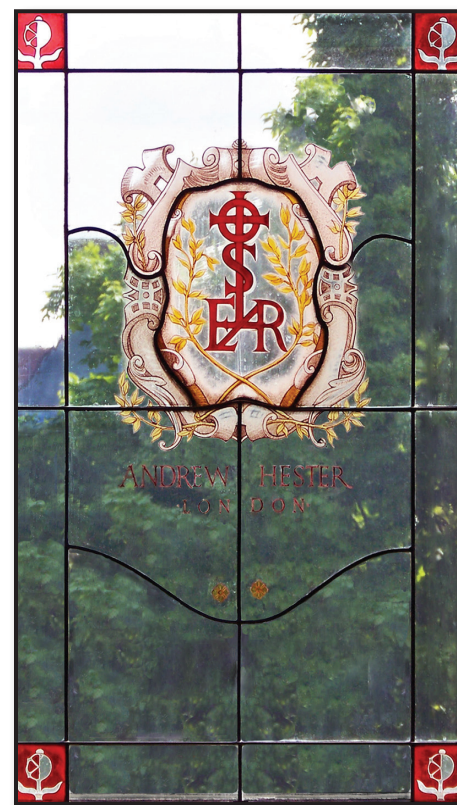


17. Thomas Anshelm (ca. 1470-1524)
Strassburg, Pforzheim, Tübingen & Hagenau, active from 1487-1522

Represented by: Johann Reuchlin.
De rudimentis Hebraicis liber primus.
 Pforzheim: Anshelm, April 1506.

Setting up presses in at least four cities in southwest Germany at different times, Thomas Anshelm was a key player in the contemporary humanist movement. Among other genres, he printed poetical, theological, and philosophical works. He is most famous, however, for his close collaboration with Christian Hebraist Johannes Reuchlin. From Anshelm's press came Reuchlin's important Hebrew lexicon and grammar, as well as many pamphlets of the Jewish Book Controversy. Anshelm's device is in the traditional form of the orb and cross, with the latter folded over

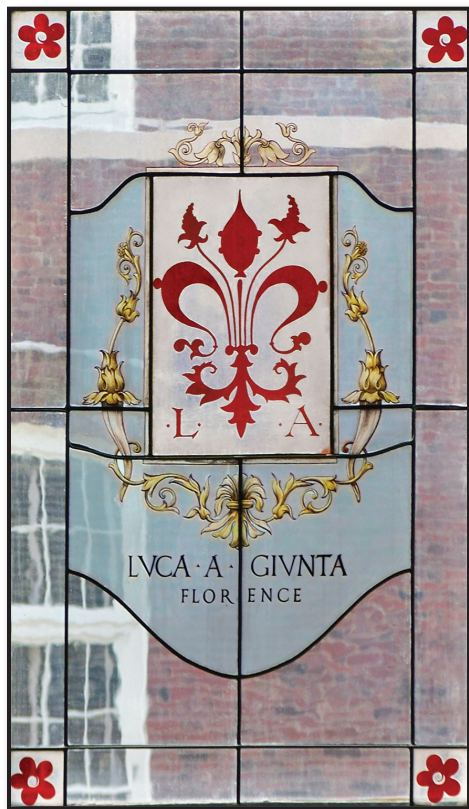
into the typical merchant's "four." The initials "TAB" indicate "Thomas Anshelm of Baden," his birthplace. The scroll contains Reuchlin's reworking of the tetragrammaton for Yaweh into a pentagrammaton representing Jesus.



18. Andrew Hester (d. 1557)
London, active ca. 1539-ca. 1551


Andrew Hester was a bookseller, not a printer. As far as we know, this device never appeared in a book, although the design can be traced to his nephew John—an author, not a printer—who used a version of it in 1575. The mark consists of a jumbled series of letters, which, when read in a roundabout way, spell out "A HESTER." Our research indicates that the device is a fossil from an 1893 book by W. Roberts on printers' marks. Unfortunately, several libraries in America (including Vassar and the Library of Congress) cribbed from Roberts for their own printers' marks decorations. Thus, our Reading Room windows also contain an amusing example of the dangers of trusting secondary sources!





19. Luca Antonio Giunta (1457-1538)
Florence, active from 1482


Represented by: Nicholas of Lyra. *Postilla seu expositio litteralis et moralis*. Venice: Johann Emerich for Giunta, 25 May 1494.

Luca Antonio (or Lucantonio) Giunta founded a printing firm that would be run by his descendants until 1657, with established shops in Florence, Venice, Lyon, London, and several other locations. The printers specialized in editions of the Greek and Roman classics, as well as music and liturgical works. The Giunta device is derived from the lily, symbol of the city of Florence. Lucantonio's initials are placed on either side. 



20. Ottaviano Scotto (ca. 1444-ca. 1499)
Venice, active from 1479


Represented by: Giuniano Maggio. *De priscorum proprietate verborum*. [Venice]: Scotto, 3 June 1482.

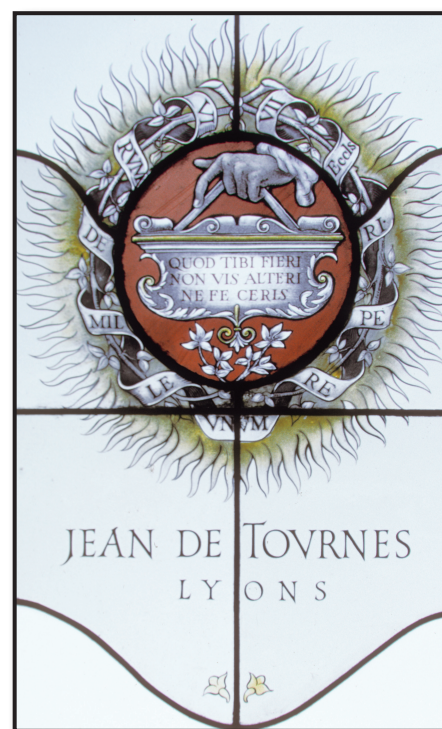
Scotto's printed output consists mainly of devotional works and the writings of saints. In 1484, he turned over control of his press to Bonetus Locatellus and a group of his heirs, dedicating the rest of his life to being an editor and publisher. A circle topped with a patriarchal cross (one with two horizontal bars)—symbolizing the reign of Christianity over the world—makes up the kernel of Scotto's device. His initials fill the circle, with the letter "M" included to represent the city of his birth, Monza. 

21. Jean de Tournes (1504-1564)

Lyon, active from 1542

Represented by: Andrea Alciato. *Emblematum liber secundus*. Lyon: De Tournes & Guillaume Gazeau, 1556.


Before setting up his own printing shop in 1542, Jean de Tournes worked for Sebastian Gryphius. A dedicated humanist, he printed many well-respected editions of the classics, but also such authors as Dante and Petrarch, as well as emblem books like the one shown here. In 1559, he became official printer to the King of France. De Tournes used several devices, but the one in the window at Illinois shows a hand holding a ribbon attached to a decorative shield bearing a Latin motto translated as, "What you do not want done to you, do not do to others." Another ribbon or scroll threads around a wreath surrounding the middle of the device, this time with a verse taken from Ecclesiastes 7:28: "One man among a thousand have I found." 



22. Louis Elzevir (ca. 1540-1617)

Leiden, active from 1583

Represented by: Horace. *Opera*. Leiden: Elzevir, 1612.

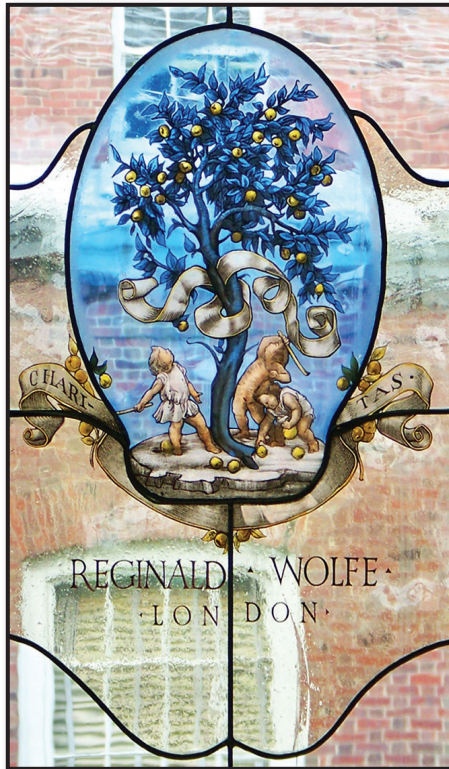
Louis (or Lodewijk) Elzevir founded a printing business in Leiden that continues, in name at least, to this day. The famous "Non Solus" device (though not used until after the death of Louis) depicts a bearded scholar or hermit standing under a tree entwined with a grape vine. The motto, meaning "Not alone," has been interpreted by scholars in several ways. Some see it as a nod to the collaboration between two brothers who were descendants of Louis, while others take it as a reference to the fact that a scholar tends to prefer solitude but is never truly alone in the presence of his or her books. The RBML blog takes its name from the Elzevir motto. 

23. Reginald Wolfe (d. 1573)

London, active from 1542

Represented by: John Dee. *Propaedeumata aphoristica*. London: Wolfe, 1568.

Reginald (or Reyner) Wolfe was born in the Netherlands, settling in England as a bookseller and later a printer. Under King Edward VI, he became Royal Printer in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and was also held in high regard by both Mary I and Elizabeth I. His attractive device shows two boys striking a tree with sticks, while a third picks up the fallen fruit. Below in a scroll is the Latin word for charity, probably taken from I Corinthians 13:4-7: “Charity seeketh not her own, is patient, envieth not, suffereth all.”



24. Arnold Birckmann (d. 1541)

Antwerp, Cologne, and London, active from ca. 1532

Represented by: Peter Apian. *Cosmographicus liber*. Antwerp: Birckmann, February 1533.

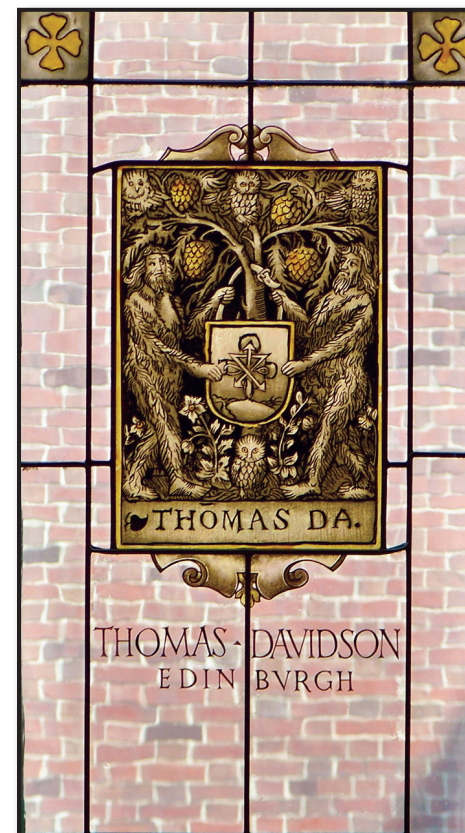
A native of Cologne, Birckmann was an international publishing figure operating in London and on the continent, often as a trader rather than a printer. The firm did not have the best reputation; Erasmus and others mention an Arnold Birckmann as slow and untrustworthy. Nonetheless, the firm had branches in France, England, and the Netherlands and continued to flourish for well over two centuries. Birckmann traded at the sign of the Fatted Hen, which appears in front of a tree in his device. Around it is a Latin motto, translated as, “I am always bringing forth useful and often new things.”



25. Jodocus Badius Ascensius (1462-1535)
Paris, active from 1503

Represented by: Angelo Poliziano. *Opera*. Paris: Ascensius, 1512.

Ascensius operated one of the most prolific presses in Paris in the first half of the sixteenth century. A scholar-printer, he was an early teacher of Greek in Lyon, where he also worked as an editor before setting up shop in Paris. The bustle of the print shop is the focus of the device used by Badius: on the right, a compositor sets type, and on the left, another man pulls the press, while an inker looks on, ready to re-apply before the next impression. The press itself bears the legend, “Prelum Ascensianum,” meaning “The Ascensian Press.” Below is the monogram “IVAB” which stands for “Iodocus van Asche Badius.” This mark represents the earliest surviving image of a printing press.

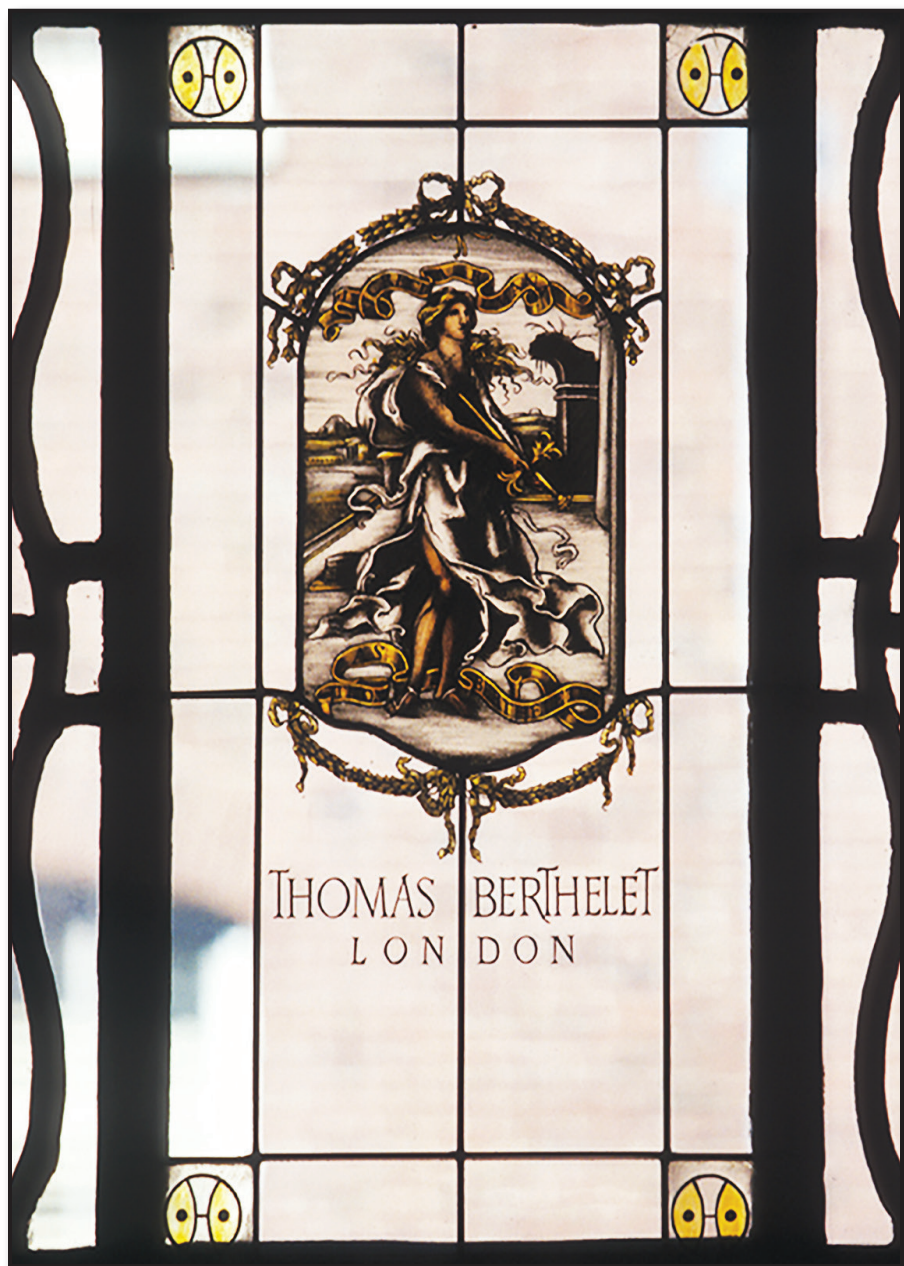


26. Thomas Davidson
Edinburgh, active from ca. 1528-ca. 1542

Represented by: Hector Boece. *The history and croniklis of Scotland*. Edinburgh: Davidson, [1540?].

Davidson was printer to James V of Scotland, producing works on Scottish law, history, and poetry, including this rare chronicle of Scotland. Few copies of his works survive today. Davidson’s eccentric device includes two hairy “wildmen of the woods” supporting a shield with an enigmatic symbol. The shield hangs from a tree, perhaps a pine, in which three wise owls perch, while a fourth sits at the base of the tree amidst blooming flowers. Interestingly, the wildman motif is found in the devices of at least three other printers.





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Designed by Chloe Ottenhoff.
Printed in November
MMXIV
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27. Thomas Berthelet (d. 1555)

London, active from 1528-1548

Represented by: *The institution of a Christen man*. London: Berthelet, 1537.

Like many early English printers, Thomas Berthelet was not English. A native of France, he served as an apprentice to Richard Pynson before opening his own print shop in the 1520s. From 1530 to 1547, Berthelet served as royal printer to Henry VIII. He traded at the sign of Lucretia, a semi-legendary character in early Roman history. Berthelet's device shows Lucretia piercing her own breast with a sword. One scroll bears her name, "Lucretia Romana," the other, the printer's.



