

**THE FIRST FOUR VOYAGES OF
AMERIGO VESPUCCI:
TRANSLATED FROM THE RARE
ORIGINAL EDITION (FLORENCE
1505-6)**

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The First Four Voyages of Amerigo Vespucci: Translated from the Rare Original Edition
(Florence 1505-6) by M. K.

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(FLORENCE 1505-6)**

Quaritch's Translations of Rare Books.

I. VESPUCCI (AMERIGO) LETTER CONCERNING
THE ISLES NEWLY DISCOVERED IN
HIS FOUR VOYAGES.
[*Florence*, 1505.]

LONDON: BERNARD QUARITCH,
15 PICCADILLY.
1885.

THE FIRST FOUR
VOYAGES
OF
AMERIGO VESPUCCI.

TRANSLATED

*From the rare original edition (Florence, 1505-6);
with some Preliminary Notices,*

By M. K.



LONDON:
BERNARD QUARITCH,
15 PICCADILLY.
1885.



Quels.
Ann. d. Clemente 6.
16. 27 58

Vespucci's Works.

LE QUATTRO GIORNATE. Diary and Common-place Book, written during the course of his first four voyages, and containing astronomical diagrams and drawings of remarkable objects.

Now lost, and only known by his references to it in the *Lettera*.

EPISTLES TO LORENZO DI PIER FRANCESCO DE MEDICI.

All now lost. The one usually considered to be an account of his third voyage (but which also contains a short summary of various observations made in his first three voyages), written probably about the end of 1502, was saved from the complete destruction which has been the fate of the others, by being translated into Latin by "Jocundus interpres ut latini omnes intelligant." This translator was the celebrated Fra Giovanni del Giocondo, of Verona, then resident in Paris. The original was presumably in bastard-Italian, like the *Lettera* to Soderini, but it cannot have been ever printed, since the Italian or Venetian form of it, which appeared (for the first time) in the *Poesi* of 1507, is merely a retranslation from the Latin. The Latin translation and the Italian retranslation were printed several times between 1503 or 1504 and 1521; and were substantially reproduced in the compilations of Grynaeus and Ramusio.

LETTERA DELLE ISOLE NUOUAMENTE TROUATE. Written at Lisbon in 1504, and printed at Florence probably in 1505, for Pietro Pacini, of Pescia.

This is the work now produced in facsimile, and is apparently the only narrative by Vespucci of which the original text has survived. (The other three Letters attributed to him, and printed in the last and the present century, are decidedly supposititious.) It was translated into French, probably in 1505 or 1506, we know not by whom, and from this lost French translation, a Latin version (generally

a

accurate enough, but comprising several significant errors and mistranslations) was made, and printed for the first time in 1507 as a supplement to Waldseemüller's *Cosmographia Introductio*, and frequently afterwards. It is said in the *Speculi orbis declaratio* of Gualterius Ludd (printed, like the *Cosmographia*, at St. Dié, in Lorraine, 1507) that the Latin translation was made by Jean Basin de Sendacour. It might seem more likely that he made the French version, and that Waldseemüller was responsible for the Latin one; but to whomsoever we may ascribe the latter text, it is from this that Europe for more than three centuries derived its knowledge of Vespucci's voyages, and to this that we may trace the origin of the name America, bestowed by Waldseemüller, and sanctioned by many other scholars of France and Germany.

In the various editions of the *Novus Orbis* which is known under the name of Grynæus, the account of the four voyages was reproduced in Latin from the *Cosmographia*; and Ramusio has given an abridgment in Italian of the third and fourth voyages only (his attention being chiefly directed to the results of southern and African explorations).

NOTE.—Pietro Pacini, of Pescia, was not a printer, but a publisher at Florence. Varnhagen has erroneously supposed that he printed the *Lettera* of Vespucci, because he was able to identify the type in which it is set up with that which was used in certain books published in 1505 for Pacini. Many books were printed *ad instantiam* or *alle spese* of Pietro Pacini, some with dates and some without them. The earliest dated book on which his name thus appears was printed for him by Lorenzo Morgiani et Giovanni di Magansa, in 1495 [BERNARDO (S.), *Sermoni*, 4to.]; the second by Franciscus Bonaccursius, in 1496 [LILIO (Zach.), *De origine et laudibus scientiarum*, &c., 4to.]; and the latest by Gian Stefano di Carlo di Pavia, in 1513 [POLIZIANO, *La Giostra di Giuliano dei Medici*, 4to.]. In 1505 he produced three books [D. LAHERTIO (*Id.*, *Diogenes Laertius*), *Vita di Philosophi*, 4to.; AUGUSTINO (S.), *Sermoni*, 4to.; GERSONE, *Imitazione di Cristo*, 4to.] in which only his own name appears, that of the actual printer not being given. The type in these three books, in the *Lettera* now reprinted, and in the *Lettera di CORSALI* printed by Gian Stefano di Carlo di Pavia, in 1516, has been ascertained to be identical; and we may therefore assume that Gian Stefano was working for Pacini in 1505, but only as a new printer of small standing, and therefore ignored in the colophons of Pacini's publications. By 1513, Gian Stefano had acquired sufficient importance to be mentioned in connexion with Pacini, and in 1516 he was printer and publisher on his own account [CORSALI]. It is probable consequently that Pacini died between 1513 and 1516, and that the unsold copies of his books remained in the hands of Gian Stefano. This would account for the circumstance that in two instances the Corsali letter was found bound in a single volume with the Vespucci *Lettera*,—a combination which has misled Brunet and other bibliographers, leading to the supposition that the latter was printed in the same year as the former. From the foregoing facts, it might be thought

unnecessary to couple Pacini's name with Vespucci, since we know who was the actual printer, and there is nothing in the book to show that it was produced for Pacini, rather than some other publisher. This would hardly be correct, as the LILIUS volume produced in 1496 for him contains a slight reference to the recent discoveries in the West, which seems to have initiated a connexion between Pacini and the literature of navigation. He published the *Sfera* of Gregorio Dati in 1513,—a cosmographical poem, the mention of which brings the *Lettera dell'Isola* of Giuliano Dati immediately to mind. The latter piece—a reduction to verse of Columbus's first letter—was perhaps printed for Pietro Pacini in 1493, when it first appeared. The design which is seen in the woodcut on the first leaf of Giuliano Dati's *Lettera* is identical with that on the title-page of Vespucci's *Lettera*, save that the figures are reversed in the latter, as though the old block had been worn out and a new one engraved from it. Pacini published opuscles of Lorenzo dei Medici, Luca Pulci, and Polizian; none of his books printed during Soderini's rule in Florence make any reference to the Gonfaloniere, as was frequently done in the books published by the Giunti: we may therefore safely conclude that he was a Medici partisan, and so discover the reason why the name of Soderini is entirely omitted in Vespucci's *Lettera*. This omission led to a misconception on the part of the French and of the Latin translator (*Cosmogr. Introd.*, 1507) who imagined that *Vostra Mag.* meant *Your Majesty*, and referred to René, Duke of Lorraine, King of Jerusalem. The blunder was all the more ludicrous as the very opening sentences of the *Lettera* show that the person to whom it was addressed had been an old schoolfellow of Vespucci, a fact so far as Soderini was concerned, but which no one could have supposed to be true with regard to King René. This is not the only blunder in the Latin translation (there being many other errors in its various editions which have tended to discredit Vespucci), but it is useful now as showing, to any one who needed such proof, that the text of the *Lettera* was printed in Florence *before*, not after, the second-hand Latin translation which was published in 1507 at St. Dié.

