

**THE GLASGOW UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY: NOTES ON ITS
HISTORY, ARRANGEMENTS,
AND AIMS**

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The Glasgow University Library: Notes on Its History, Arrangements, and Aims by William P. Dickson

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WILLIAM P. DICKSON

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THE GLASGOW
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY:

NOTES ON ITS HISTORY, ARRANGEMENTS,
AND AIMS,

Printed BY
WILLIAM P. DICKSON, D.D., LL.D.,
CURATOR OF THE LIBRARY.

NOTICE OF THE EUING COLLECTION OF BIBLES,

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JAMES LYMBURN,
LIBRARIAN.



GLASGOW:
JAMES MACLEHOSE & SONS,
Publishers to the University.
1888.

THE GLASGOW UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.

THE foundation of the University of Glasgow on the model of that of Bologna in 1451 was almost coincident with the invention of the art of printing, which has furnished the chief helps of that "assiduous study" whereby, in the words of the Papal Bull creating the institution, "the *sciencie margarita* was to be attained." But it was long, probably, before the fruits of the press reached Scotland at all, and long, at any rate, before they were collected in any such number as to form the nucleus of a library.

The first works given to the young institution were manuscript; and only three such donations stand recorded during the earliest stage of its existence. On Nov. 3rd, 1475, John Laing, Bishop of Glasgow gave *Pedagogio Glasguensi* two books for the use of the Regents, viz., one volume (*in pergamino*) containing a text of the Physics and various other treatises of Aristotle, and another (*papirio*) containing *Quaestiones* on most of the treatises embraced in the preceding MS. These are followed by the entry of seven volumes given by Duncan Bunch, formerly principal Regent, containing treatises of Aristotle and his commentators; "item una Biblia in pergamino in parvo volumine litera optima complete

scripta"—no doubt a MS. of the Vulgate, whatever may have been meant by the description of character and size. In 1483, John Brown, formerly a Regent, presented thirteen volumes of essentially the same scholastic and Aristotelian complexion with the preceding. One of these described as *volumen antiquum* raises curiosity as to the age of what was then so designated; but unhappily none of these earlier manuscript donations have survived. Probably they perished during the long period of decay, or rather of practical abeyance, into which the University soon after fell.

It is not till 1577, the date of the *Nova Erectio* by King James VI. which brought new life to the University under the energetic guidance of Andrew Melville, that we meet with the first constituent elements of the library as it now exists; and thenceforward the records supply information, however scanty and imperfect, as to the successive stages of its slow and desultory growth. Its history falls into three periods:—

I. That of donations and small payments on matriculation and graduation, 1577-1709.

II. That of privilege under the Copyright Act, 1709-1836.

III. That of the purchase of selected books by means of the Compensation Fund, 1837-1888.

I. The "Catalogus librorum communis Bibliothecae Collegii Glasguensis, 1578," begins with what was apparently the first printed book received—the gift of the Rector, Andrew Hay: "Biblia sacra Interprete Castalione magno folio excusa Basileae, 1556, per Joannem Oporinum." This is followed by a memorable list of 20 volumes all given by George Buchanan,

“D.N. Regis magister,” including “Eustathii Commentarii in Homerum Graece, in fol., Romae, 1549 (4 voll.), Plutarchi Opera Graece, fol., Basileae, Frobenius, 1542 (2 voll.), Platonis Opera Graece, fol., Basileae, Valderus, 1534,” as well as editions of Demosthenes, Aristophanes, Athanasius, Apollonius Rhodius (1496), Strabo, Euclid, Suidas, and others, eminently reflecting the humanistic culture of their donor. With this “parcell of good Greek books noted with his hand” (as Baillie has expressed it) Buchanan may be said to be the founder of the library on its classical side. The first entry of books bought (*publicis sumtibus empti*) by the Quaestor is dated 1577, and includes the “Opera” of Augustine (8 voll., fol., Paris, 1544), Cicero, and Aristotle, “the hail Actes of Parliament,” and “the Bible of Govan and College,” the latter probably bought for the service of the Church of Govan, the revenues of which were given to the College on condition of Andrew Melville serving the cure. Under the same date, apparently, “Ambrosii Opera” and “Gregorii Romani Opera” are entered as the gift *virii boni Thomae Jakaei* [Jack?]. But the most important donation supplementing that of Buchanan was given by James Boyd, Bishop of Glasgow, who in 1581 bequeathed 48 volumes, chiefly Patristic, along with “Biblia Graece, Venetiis, 1518,” “Erasmi Annotationes in Novum Testamentum,” and one or two works of Melancthon. Five other books are noted as bequeathed but *nondum redditi* by the executors.

In 1582, Peter Blackburn, one of the Regents, “at his departing to Aberdeen,” gave “Ane New General Cart stentit upon buirdes sett out be Gerardus Jode, Antverpiae, 1575,” the “Tabulae Vessalii,”

Paris. 1565, and several others. Next to this occurs a second entry of books purchased, embracing, with two treatises on Aristotelian logic, Pagnini "Thesaurus Linguae Sanctae magnus folio magno deauratus," "Stephani Thesaurus," 4 voll. (bought from the heirs of "Andrew Polwart"), and "Sleidanus de Statu Religionis." In 1586 Archibald Crawford, rector of the University, "in monumentum τῆς φιλομουσίας," presented Sebastian Munster's "Biblia Hebraica," 2 vols. large folio, and "Platonis Opera omnia Latina;" and in 1590 Mark Jameson, vicar of Kilspendy, gave the following volumes on Medicine and Materia Medica, forming, with Vesalius, the beginning of the library on its medical side:—"Practica Jo. Michaelis Savonarolae et Chirurgia M. Petri de Largelata; Mesuae cum Expositione Mondini super Canones Universales; Jo. Mesuae Damasceni de Re Medica; D. Vitalis de Furno pro conservanda Sanitate; Commentarii Stirpium Fuchsio medico auctore; Antonii Musae Brasavoli Examen omnium Simplicium."

The next thirty years show a number of small gifts left by young men at laureation in token of gratitude, and exhibiting considerable variety of tastes and pursuits. Some of these have an entry of the prices which had been paid for them (in Scots money). These include "Mercatoris Atlas Major, emptus 42 libr., * Magini Geographia Vetus et Nova, Cambdeni Britannia postremae editionis, Biblia magna Hebraica et Chaldaica editionis Buxtorfianæ emptus 60 lib.; Mahometis Alcoranum cum Refutat.; Laurentii Anatomia; Gesneri volum. 3^{ia} de Animalibus (empt. 30 lib.); Thuani Histor. lib. 80

* One pound Scots = 1/8.

(empt. 18 lib.);” and “Arithmeticae diversorum Vesticii, Salignaci, Record, etc.,” while Archibald Johnston, “laurea donandus,” presents 19 volumes, chiefly of scholastic logic and metaphysics.

In 1619 the Rev. John Howeson (Huesonus), minister of Cambuslang, bequeathed his books characterized as “ipsa vetustate notabiles,” whether this be meant as a compliment or not. There are 116 volumes, consisting almost wholly of exegetical and controversial theology, but including the “Regiam Majestatem, Plinii Natur. Histor. cura Dallechamp,” marked “liber novi pretii 12 lib., Johan Wieri de Praestigiis Daemonum, Pet. Thyraei de Daemoniacis, Historia Magica, Historia Tragica de Divinis Judiciis in Impios, Theatre of God’s Judgements by Thos. Baird, Barachs [*sic*] Methode of Physique, Wigon’s Chirurgie, Havin of Health, 4to.” The list concludes with the curious addition: “cum librorum ab ipso scriptorum et praelo destinatorum numerosa farragine.” Posterity has not been allowed to judge how far this somewhat contemptuous description of the donor’s own writings was deserved.

In the same year Alexander Boyd, “collega noster,” bequeathed 60 volumes of theological books chiefly exegetical and polemic, “exceeding,” it is gratefully added, “the value of 500 merks.”* A few years later James Law, Bishop of Glasgow, bequeathed—what was probably the most valuable gift thus far received—150 volumes, chiefly Patristic and polemical, along with “Biblia Regia Philippi Hispaniarum Regis cum Tractatibus in octo voluminibus” (the Antwerp Polyglot) and “the Old Testament in English translated by the College of

* The merk = 1/16.

Dowey, in two vols"; while William Struthers, minister at Edinburgh, bequeathed upwards of 40 volumes, mainly theological, all—it is significantly added—in folio; and in 1637 Zachary Boyd, minister of the Barony, one of the greatest benefactors of the University, "dotes and gives his books that he shall happen to have at his decease," naming a few of them (including "two English Bibles, one of Andrew Hart's impression, the other printed at London").

During the troubled times of the Civil War and the Commonwealth, there is hardly a trace of any further donations to the library; but an interesting record comes in in the form of "the Quaestor's Book," showing the receipts and expenditure of that official (the regents or professors taking the office in turn for a term of two or three years each) from 1632 to 1740, and containing in many cases lists of the books bought and of the sources from which they were obtained. Purchases are entered from widows disposing of their "umquwhile husbands'" books, others as bought at auctions, others as procured by Regents or merchants visiting Edinburgh or London; and in particular there is a long list of books bought by the Principal at London in 1654.* Many of the books bought from 1632 onward were acquired in Holland by a cousin of Robert Baillie, William Spang, who was minister at Campvere. They are

* Other curious entries occur at intervals. A fine is entered as from "Quintin Kennedy, delinquent." Under 1651 Quaestor John Young states that, his study door having been broken up, towards 340 merks were stolen. In Mr. Wodrow's account for 1700 appears the item: "by a calfe with two heads, £6 6s. [Scots];" and in 1703 "by bad or light money returned these five years, £16 1s." In 1707 there is a charge for 13 letters to and from Dr. Johnston concerning the *Scriptores Byzantini*; and there is an entry for the latter as costing £375 [Scots].