TWO RARE INCUNABULA IN MILWAUKEE

Alan D. Corré*

Alverno College in Milwaukee owns two rare incunabula which apparently have not previously been noticed outside the walls of the College, since they are not included in Stillwell’s 1940 census of American incunabula.

The first is an edition of the works of Horace with a commentary: Christophei Landini Florentini in qu. Horatii Flacci libros omnes ad illuuisimvm Gvidonem Feltrivm magni Frederici dvcis filivm interpretationes. It was printed in 1486 at Venice by Bernardinus, and contains 178 numbered leaves.

The text is printed 20 lines to 110 mm., and the commentary 20 lines to 80 mm. There are 57 lines to a page. The work is bound in boards with clasps. The bottoms of the first and last few pages are worm-eaten.

The colophon reads: Impssū Uenetiis p māgistrū Bernadinu de tridino ex mōteferrato Anno salutis. Mcccc.lxxvii | a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p q r s t u v y. Vna q q lra de andictis p qternum unum se extendit dempta y. que qternū signat.


I am informed that Father Michels was chaplain to the School Sisters of St. Francis in Milwaukee, who operate Alverno College. He apparently used to purchase books on his trips to Europe, and on his death they were added to the College library.

The last page bears a very faint Latin inscription in ink, including the date 1507 in medieval numerals.

Pieces of a parchment manuscript, apparently liturgical in nature, were used in the binding of the book. Only parts are visible, but phrases such as Deus qui dedisti legem moysi in sumitate montis synai et in eadem loco paratos. are clearly readable. The blue and red inks used are not faded.

On the basis of the above details, we may identify this text with no. 8884 in Ludwig Hain’s Repertorium Bibliographicum and H386 in Stillwell’s 1940 census. According to Stillwell, only Harvard,

---

*The author is Associate Professor and Chairman, Department of Hebrew Studies, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee.
Princeton and the Library of Congress, among libraries in the U.S. possess copies, and as of 1940 there were five more copies in private hands.

The other incunabulum, scarcely less rare, is the 1493 edition of Augustine's *Epistolarum*, printed at Basel by Johannes Amerbach: *Liber Epistolarum beati Augustini episcopi hipponensis ecclesiae*. The pages are not numbered. The book consists of 4 blank pages / 394 leaves / 32 leaves of an *annotatio* / 4 blank pages.

The text is printed 20 lines to 85 mm. There are 52 lines to a page. The work is bound in boards (some leather remains) with clasps.


The work was apparently closely studied as there are frequent Latin marginal notes in ink.

The title page is inscribed: *Biblotheca conventis S. Lucij Frum Minorum. . prope Heckingam. There are some other faint provenance notes.

This volume may be identified with Hain 1989 and Stillwell A 1127. These copies have been reported to the Bibliographical society, and will be listed in the forthcoming new census of incunabula in the U.S.