The object of this work is to give students of analytical and descriptive bibliography a basic knowledge of the layout and formula construction required for a recognisable bibliographical description of a printed book, whether it be an incunable or a book from a later period of printing. The author, who teaches the subject at Leeds school of librarianship (UK), has produced an easily understood set of basic rules, with examples and exercises at the end of each step in the progression of the description.

Though not presented in the form of a programmed text, this work is in a similar way a self-teaching aid, which can be used in class or individual study. It is, literally, a workbook for a student to work with and in, and to retain thereafter for reference and revision. As such, it is something of an innovation in library education materials, but one which is likely to gain swift acceptance.

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DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIANSHIP, LEEDS POLYTECHNIC

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I must acknowledge the help given to me by the Scolar Press, and Mr John Turner in the choice of title pages from its collection of facsimiles, and the permission given to me to use the title page illustrations on pages 45 and 47 which are from books belonging to the Scolar Press. I also acknowledge permission from the Council of the Bibliographical Society to use illustrations and descriptions from its publications as follows:

from McKerrow and Ferguson Title page borders in England and Scotland 1485-1640: illus no 99, 112, 158, 179, 200, and description of no 99, on pages 28, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 29 of this book respectively.

from McKerrow Printers' and publishers' devices 1485-1640: illus no 174 and its description on pages 35 and 36 respectively of this book.

from Johnson Catalogue of engraved and etched English title pages to 1691: illus no Elstrack 23 and its description on pages 37 and 38 respectively of this book; from André Deutsch to use the following:

from Plomer English printers' ornaments: illus no 11 and its description on pages 34 and 35 respectively of this book; from the following libraries for permission to use illustrations of title pages from books which belong to them—the Bodleian Library, page 26; the British Museum, pages 24, 30, 41 and 43; the Edinburgh University Library page 49. The illustration on page 25 is from the collection of my own department. I should also like to thank Mr John Horden of the University of Leeds for his interest and encouragement, and A H Smith and R N Lock of the Birmingham school of librarianship for imperative corrections to the proof; also Dr Fredson Bowers for permission to use his work as a basis for my own.

MJP
introduction

The object of this work is to give students of analytical and descriptive bibliography a basic knowledge of the layout and formula construction required for a recognisable bibliographical description of a printed book, whether it be an incunable, or a book from a later period of printing.

An attempt has been made to reduce the comprehensive and detailed work done by Fredson Bowers and demonstrated in his *Principles of bibliographical description* (Princeton University Press 1949) to an easily understood basic set of rules, with examples, and exercises which occur at the end of each step in the progression of the description.

It should be emphasised here that this work is aimed at the beginner who needs a set of basic rules on which to build later knowledge with its inevitable modifications and exceptions. Thus certain points are laboured, there are generalisations, such as the implicit suggestion that all printers over the centuries worked in exactly the same way, there are statements which are apparently *ex cathedra*, such as on the order of printing of forme(s), which further knowledge on the part of the student will qualify, and there are some omissions. It is essential, however, not to cloud basic issues, so that the student is not confused at the beginning. For this reason, it has not been considered desirable in this work to define edition, impression, etc, although it has been suggested where in the description a statement of such should occur. The rules given here are still not rigid, and it is most unlikely that all teachers are going to agree with everything stated. Given the limitations of this book as a foundation for students to obtain a basic dexterity in the mechanics of bibliographical description, it is hoped that teachers will substitute their own variations where they consider it necessary to do so. To facilitate consultation back to the *Principles of bibliographical description*, reference has been made to it where it has been considered necessary. This book contains the minimum of explanation, but a select number of terms have been listed and defined.

The main thing for the student to remember is that when he is in doubt concerning the inclusion or exclusion of details, the answer
is to include, somewhere. The rules given here, it is reemphasised, are not rigid. They are there to help produce a basic pattern of bibliographical description, using the work of Fredson Bowers as a continuous reference.

A chronological approach has been used in this book. Book production falls naturally into three chronological periods: incunabula, 1501-1800, and 1801+. The period 1501-1800 has, in this work, been taken as the norm, largely because it encompasses the main period of interest for most students. Any differences which are noticeable between the printing techniques of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries are not enough to make any difference in the method of bibliographical description for books produced during the period. However, where the periods of incunabula and 1801+ books differ from the norm, the differences in treatment are demonstrated.

M J PEARCE

Leeds
September 1969

some terms defined

ampersand
the sign &

cancel
the upper portion of a lower case letter above the main body of the type

blind stamping, blind tooling
the impression of a design on a book cover using an engraved tool or block, but not using leaf, foil, or ink

cancellandum
a leaf which has been cut out of a gathering, usually at the binding stage, because it contains matter which is in some way at fault, or the leaf which is printed to replace the cancelled leaf. Sometimes the two are found together in the book

a more precise term for the leaf which is cancelled

cancellans
a more precise term for the leaf which is printed to replace the cancellandum

catchword
the word printed at the bottom of the page underneath the last line of text, which is also the first word of the first line of the next page

chain lines
the heavier lines on laid paper (qv) about one inch apart and running between the two longer sides of a sheet of paper

chase
a frame, of cast iron or steel, into which type and blocks are locked ready for printing

cloth boards
stiff cloth binding

colophon
inscription at the end of a book giving title, printer’s name, place and date of printing

compositor
the man in the printing office who sets up the type from the manuscript
conjugate
said of leaves in a gathering which are joined together. Thus in a gathering of four leaves, made from a single sheet, leaves one and four are conjugate, as are leaves two and three

descenders
the part of lower case letters below the main body of type

director
another name for guide letter (qv)
disjunct
said of leaves which are not joined together in a gathering. Thus in a gathering of four leaves made from a single sheet, if an extra leaf three is added to take the place of the true leaf three which has been cut out (or cancelled), the cancellans leaf is in a disjunct relationship with leaf two; it is not joined to it as was the true (or cancellandum) leaf three

explicit
last words of text of an early printed book giving title, printer's name etc. in much the same way as does the colophon

fleurons, flowers
type ornaments, generally used to build up patterns for borders, title pages etc

folioation
the numbering of books by leaves

format
the size of a book, based on the number of times the printed sheets have been folded and the position of the watermark in the gathering

forme
type matter and blocks in page form locked into the chase and ready for printing. Forme is the name given to the whole. See also inner forme, outer forme

french rule
rule divided in the middle by a diamond shaped ornament

galley
metal tray open at one end, in which set up type matter is placed for making up into pages

galley proof
proof taken from the type matter while it is still in the galley

guide letter
the lower case letter printed as a guide where a decorated initial is to be inserted

half title
the title of a book, usually in shortened form as printed on the page preceding the title page, hence the name for this page

headline
the title of a book printed at the top of the pages of text

illuminated
used to refer to initials painted in gold, silver, or colours

imposition
the placing of the type pages in the formes so that when they are printed, the resulting printed sheet can be folded to achieve a correctly paged gathering

incipit
the beginning of a text in an incunable without a title page. The words 'hic incipit' and the first words of the text

incunable
incunabulum (pl incunabula)

incunabula
a book printed before 1500. Derived from the Latin 'cunæ', meaning 'cradle'

inferior figures
small letters or figures printed at the foot of ordinary letters or figures

initial letters
large capital letters printed, rubricated, illuminated, engraved, woodcut, placed at the beginning of a portion of text, often added after the sheet had been printed, the letter to be added being indicated by the lower case guide letter or director

inner forme
the second of the two formes from which the sheet is printed, the one containing the next to lowest page number. See also forme, outer forme

laid paper
paper, normally hand made, which when held up to the light shows a series of lines about one inch apart which are the chain lines (qv), and, running in the opposite direction, wire lines (qv) which are much closer together and thinner

leaf
the unit of paper on each side of which is a page (qv)
ligature, ligatured letters
outer forme
two or more letters formed together, often cast on one body; also called tied letters
the forme which is the first from which the sheet is printed, the one containing the lowest page number. See also forme, inner forme
page
one side of a leaf
pagination
the numbering of books by pages, which superseded foliation (qv)
paper boards
stiff paper binding
paper covers, paper wrappers
a binding of paper not using boards
perfecting
the process of printing the second side of a sheet, thus completing its printing
platemark
the line which is depressed into paper by the edges of an engraved plate during the printing process
press figures, press numbers
names for the identification marks found in some books of the period roughly 1680-1820. They are still the subject of research, and neither of these names has been universally accepted as the correct one. See the section in the text
quasi facsimile
the transcription of a title page or text from a book to give as exact a picture as possible of the title page or text but without the use of the actual type or blocks. See the section on the title page
recto
generally the side of the leaf with the odd number
rubrication
the insertion of letters or text in a colour different to that in which the body of the text is printed
rule
a strip of brass or type metal cast type high and used to print continuous lines on the page
running heads, running title
the title of a book, or chapter printed at the top of the pages of text; as headline (qv)
signature
a book section to which a signature mark (qv) has been given
signature mark
the letter or number printed in the bottom margin of leaves indicating correct gathering and folding of signatures; found only on the recto of leaves, and not to be confused with the catchword (qv)
superior figures
small letters or figures printed at the top of ordinary letters or figures
swash letters
ornamental italic capitals with decorative tails and flourishes
swelled rules
ornamental rules thin at each end and thick in the middle
tied letters
two or more letters joined together, often cast on one body; also called ligatured letters

tipped in
pasted into the text. Used for separately printed plates, maps, etc
top edge gilt
the top edge of the pages of a book gilded. Abbreviated to teg
type page
that part of the page covered by type from the top of the ascenders of the headline to the bottom of the descenders of the catchword
uncut
where the binder has not tidied the edges of a book with a guillotine when he has sewn the gatherings together
unopened
where the leaves of the gathering have not been separated after folding and sewing together of the gatherings
gerennially the side of the leaf with the even number
watermark
the design which is the papermaker's mark, incorporated during manufacture, and visible when the paper is held up to the light
wire lines
the narrow mesh lines on laid paper which run between the two shorter sides of the sheet of paper
wove paper
paper which when held up to the light shows an even mesh of lines, unlike the distinctive mesh of lines on laid paper
wrong fount

a compositor's mistake where a letter of wrong size or face is set; abbreviated to wf

An excellent reference work for terms not found here is: G A Glaister *Glossary of the book* (Allen and Unwin 1960)

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**physical description — the divisions**

The physical description of a book can be divided into four distinct parts. These are:

a) the heading and title page

b) the collation and colophon

c) the contents

d) the binding

The description of a book is given in the order above, and will be dealt with in that order in this book.
heading and title page

1501 - 1800  Bowers chapter four
1801+ Bowers chapter twelve

THE HEADING
For these periods the heading need only be a short identification of the book being dealt with. Thus:

Webster, John  The tragedy of the Duchess of Malfi.  1623.

Johnson, Samuel  A journey to the Western Islands of Scotland.  1775.

This form of heading may also be used for incunables which do have a title page.

THE TITLE PAGE
For these periods and for incunables which do have a title page, the title page must be described and transcribed as fully and as accurately as possible. This is done by making a quasi facsimile transcription in the way indicated in the following pages.

A Borders
The first thing on the title page which must be dealt with is the border, if there is one. Borders must be described, and can be of three sorts:

a) compartments
b) frames
c) rules

These will now be dealt with separately.

a) compartments: these are carved, engraved, or cast pieces forming the basis of the title page, having compartments inside in which letterpress is set.

There are four types of compartment:

THE POETICALL ESSAYES OF Sam. Danyel.

Newly corrected and augmented. Actes prima canat veneres, postrematamulam.

AT LONDON Printed by P. Short for Simon Waterforn. 1599.
3 separate pieces, carved, engraved or cast separately but designed as a whole

4 four pieces of type cast with obliquely cut ends indicating a specific casting for a border

THE whole volume of statues at large, which at anie time heretofore haue beene extant in print, fuse Magna Charra, possile the sefix. yeeres of the reigne of our most gracious souereigne Ladis Elizabeth by the grace of God, Queene of England, France and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c.

With marginall notes, and a table of necessaries of newlie added heretofore.

AT LONDON
Printed for Christopher Barker, Printer to the Queene most excell.
Knt Maiestete.
1583.

Cum privilegio Regis Maximae.
b) frames: these are of two types:

1 borders made of separate cuts or ornaments not showing evidence of having been specifically cut to be used together as a border

2 separate cast type ornaments which have been built up to form a border

ROMES MASTER-PEACE

OR,
The Grand Conspiracy of the Pope and his Iesuit Instruments, to extirpate the Protestant Religion, re-establish Popery, subvert Laws, Liberties, Peace, Parliaments, by kindling a Civil War in Scotland, and all his Majesties Realms, and to prey on the King himself in case he comply not with them in their

evenable Designs.

Revealed out of Conscience to Andreas de Haberfeld, by an Agent first from Rome into England, by Cardinal Barberini; as in Affidavit to him the Pope's Nuncio, to procure this most Execrable Plot, (in which he perfited a principal Actor several years) who discovered it to Sir William Byersell his Majesty's Agent at the Hague, Sept. 1649. He, under an Oath of Secreci, to the Arch-bishop of Canterbury (among whose Papers it was casually found by Master Byersell, Aug. 31st 1649), who communicated it to the King. At the greatest danger that ever was

Published by Authority of Parliament.

By William Prynne, of Lincolnes Inn, Esquire.

1 Cor. 6. The Lord will bring to light the hidden things of Darkness, and will unfold the counsels of hearts, and shall every man have praise of God.

It is Ordered by the Committee of the House of Commons in Parliament concerning Printing this first day of August, 1643. that this Book, intituled, Romes Master-

Pece, be forthwith Printed by Michael Spark, Senior. John White.

The second Edition.

Printed at London for Michael Spark, Senior, 1644.
c) rules: these are purely printers' rules used to form a border either singly or with more than one together

Borders should be described at the beginning of the title page description in the following manner:

Title page: [within a compartment, 250 × 200mm, an archway on a pediment]

Title page: [within a frame of fleur de lys ornaments 250 × 150mm]

Title page: [within triple rules]

Measurement of borders may also be in inches, but always, whether the measurement is of title pages or any other part of the book, it must be given as height × width.

There are a number of works which act as standard works of reference to title page border description. The following are extremely useful:

A F Johnson *German Renaissance title borders* (Bibliographical Society 1929)
A F Johnson *100 title pages 1500–1800* (John Lane 1928)
R B McKerrow and F S Ferguson *Title page borders used in England and Scotland 1485–1640* (Bibliographical Society 1932)
A Nesbitt (ed) *200 decorative title pages* (Dover 1964)

When a border is identified in a reference work, it is acceptable to quote this as a reference in the following way:

[McKerrow & Ferguson 99]

If this is not possible, the border must be described as fully as possible. Following is an illustration of McKerrow & Ferguson 99, accompanied by two descriptions, one a personal one, and the other taken from McKerrow & Ferguson itself:
personal description:
[within a compartment, 260 × 173mm, with, around centre rectangle eleven named mythical figures, with on top of the rectangle a globe supported by two of the figures, and underneath it a scroll bearing the words 'Virescit vulnere veritas'. The frame has a semicircular projection at the top on each side of which there is a figure, representing the sun on the left, and the moon on the right.]

description from McKerrow & Ferguson pp 92-3:
[260 × 173mm, enclosing 77 × 55mm. An elaborate compartment with, at top, Time bringing Truth and Antiquity to light. Figures of Prolomeus, Marinus etc. At foot, Mercurius as bearded man (possibly intended as a portrait of John Day).]
B. The letterpress
A quasi facsimile transcription of the letterpress must be made, giving
an exact transcript of the title page and imprint. A simple example
is given here:

THE

DEFENCE OF

Poesie.

By Sir Phillip Sidney,

Knight.

LONDON
Printed for William Ponsonby.
1595.

which transcribes as:

THE | DEFENCE OF | Poesie. | By Sir Phillip Sidney, | Knight. |
[publisher’s device] | LONDON | Printed for William Ponsonby. | 1595.

There are various points which must be remembered while making a
transcription of a title page. They are:
a) spelling: the printer must be followed exactly in all spelling.
Thus:

\textit{transcribe} jugge as jugge not jug

b) capitalisation: capitals must be transcribed as capitals, lower
case as lower case, and where large and small capitals occur \textit{in the}
same line, they must be clearly differentiated. Thus:

\textit{transcribe} City of London

\textit{CITY OF LONDON}

\textit{CITY OF LONDON}

c) misprints: transcribe misprints as they stand, even though you
think you may know what the correct version should be. Thus:

\textit{transcribe} priuting as priuting not printing

However, a note should be given at the end of the transcription in
the following way:

note-line x: ‘priuting’ stet.

d) contractions: these should be transcribed as they appear. Thus:

\textit{transcribe} DS as DS not DEUS

DNS as DNS not DOMINUS

op a as opa not opera

e) kinds of type: these must be transcribed to show the basic dif-
ference so that roman looks like roman, italic like italic, gothic like
gothic. Thus:

\textit{roman italic gothic}

There is no need to make any further differentiation, such as old
face from modern face, Caslon from Baskerville.

f) special marks or type signs: these must be transcribed as they
appear on the title page. Thus:

\textasteriskcentered \textdagger

\textdagger \textdaggercentered

g) swash italic capitals: these must be noted, \textit{either} by carefully
transcribing them, or by noticing them at the end of the transcription. Thus:

transcribe Mainie as Mainie

or as Mainie with Note-line x: M in Mainie is swash.

If in doubt transcribe and note.

h) double V and W: where two V's are used instead of a W, they must be transcribed as two V's. Thus:

transcribe VWorld as VWorld not as World

but where a W has been constructed from two V's with a limb of one of them filed down to fit, the transcription must be a W, with a note at the end of the transcription. Thus:

transcribe \Wassail as Wassail with Note-line x: Wassail, the W made from two V's with the right hand limb of the left V filed to fit.

i) digraphs: these must be transcribed as they are. Thus:

transcribe ae as ae not as aeoe

but where a digraph has been intended but not achieved, the transcription should follow the original as closely as possible. Thus:

transcribe COMOEDIE as COMOEDIE not as COMOEDIE

j) long 'a': this should be transcribed as it is. Thus:

transcribe designe as designe not as designe

k) dates: these should be transcribed as they are. Arabic numerals should not be turned into roman or vice versa.

l) wrong fount: this should be transcribed as such, but with a note at the end of the transcription. Thus:

transcribe Bath as Bath not as Bath

but add Note-line x: w.f. the 't' in Bath

m) ligatures: these must be ignored. Thus:

transcribe hostilities as hostilities

not as hostilities

not as conjecture

n) broken letters: These must be transcribed as if they were not broken, but with a note at the end of the transcription. Thus:

transcribe rush as rush

with Note-line x: 's' in rush broken at bottom.

o) mutilated copy: a conjectural reading can be made if possible. Thus:

transcribe Knight of the Bat as Knight of the Bat\>

or as Knight of the Bat(h)

p) tailed letters: these are generally italic at the end of a sentence, and are a letter and full stop combined. They should be transcribed as shown. Thus:

transcribe \ as m[.] n[.]

q) line endings: these must be indicated by the use of an upright line. Thus:

Journey | to the | Western Isles

r) rules between lines of the letterpress: these are transcribed thus:

Journey [rule] to [rule] the [rule] Western Isles

variations are, for example:

double rule] [ornamental rule] [short rule] [vertical rule]

s) ornaments: when these occur within a title page which is itself not an ornamental title page, they must be described as clearly as possible, if at all distinctive. Thus:

[row of crown type ornaments]

double row of fleur de lys ornaments 8 over 10

If there is no distinctive element in the ornament the description may be thus:

type ornament

If the ornament is elaborate, it must be measured, using the smallest rectangle measurement, height x width, which can contain it.

Thus:

type ornament. 66 × 22mm

Particularly distinctive type ornaments may be traced in a work of reference, and quoted thus:

[Plomer 11]

This work of reference is:

H R Plomer English printers' ornaments (Grafton 1924).
Following are descriptions of the ornaments quoted and shown above:

work of reference:
[A border made up of small ornaments representing the heraldic tincture 'ermine'.]

personal description:
[Ornaments forming a border, an outside border of flat narrow ornaments enclosing a border of triangular ornaments on the right and left only. On the left a further border of flat ornaments.]

1) printers' and publishers' devices: these must be described as fully as possible. Thus:
[device 69 × 53mm, a barrel or tun on its side, with a plant growing from it. On the barrel the letters 'nor', and under it the letter 'w'.]

Particular devices may be traced in a work of reference. One is:

This is the device described:

If a device is recognised in a work of reference it may be described as previously demonstrated. Thus:
[Mckerrow 174]