

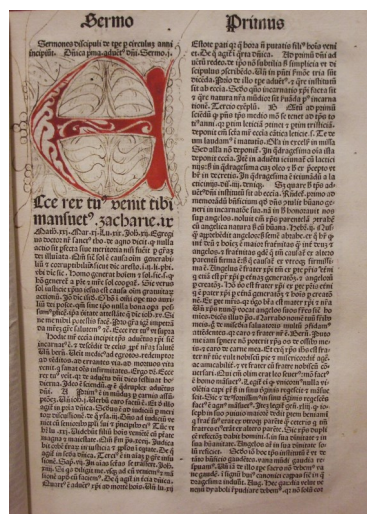
Incunabula.

The British Library 'Incunabula Short Title Catalogue' lists Leeds Public Library as having thirteen books of this category. Incunabula is the term given to any book that was printed before 31st December in the year 1500.

All our Incunabula are in Latin and were printed in European cities. These were Paris, Nuremberg, Venice, Basel, Cologne, Augsburg, Tübingen and Deventer.

They include books written by such notable writers of the medieval period as Aquinas, Boethius, Balbus and Biel, Celtis, Fenestella, Popes Gregorius the First and Ninth, Herolt and Shedel.

Shown on the right is a page from one of our incunabula. It is Johannes Herolt's *Sermones Discipuli de Tempore*, printed by Anton Koberger in Nuremberg in 1481, two years before King Richard III ascended the throne.



Sermones Discipuli - 1481

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Located in the Information and Research Library of Leeds Central Library, the Special Collections department boasts a wealth of rare books and items dating from the fifteenth century until the present day. The collection includes over 17,000 items. This brochure lists some of the most notable acquisitions in the Collections.

To access any of the special items at the Leeds Central Library we would generally require at least 24 hours notice, one form of identification and also proof of address, i.e. a bill, bank statement or an official letter.

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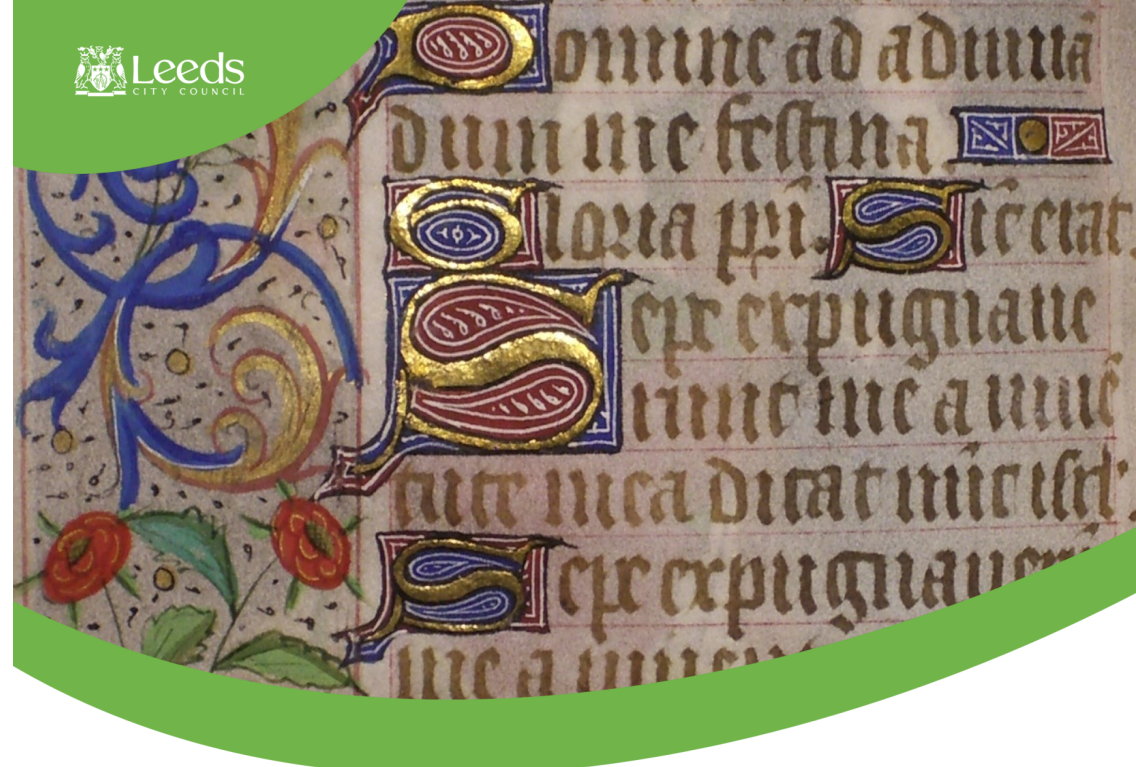
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An Atlas of the Counties of England and Wales, Christopher Saxton, 1579.

The Leeds copy of Saxton's Atlas was acquired for the library in 1951.

Often referred to as the 'father of English cartography', little is known about the personal life of Christopher Saxton. He was probably born in the Yorkshire parish of Dewsbury in the early 1540s. Later his family moved to Dunningley between Morley and Middleton in the South Leeds area. He began his survey of England in 1574 and of Wales in 1577. The first copper plates were engraved in 1574 and the atlas was completed in 1578. The atlas contains 35 hand coloured maps of the counties of England and Wales.



Elizabeth I frontispiece

The project was authorized by Queen Elizabeth I. Thomas Chubb, ('late of the map room, British Museum') in his 1927 book, *Printed Maps in the Atlases of GB & Ireland, 1579-1870*, says:

'[Saxton's] labours resulted in the fine atlas, dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, which is now one of the most desirable possessions to which the collector of English maps can aspire. If it be not too fanciful one may perhaps compare Saxton's Atlas in this respect with the position occupied by the first folio of Shakespeare in the eyes of the English book collector; in each case the volume would be the chief jewel and the crowning glory of the collection.'

This atlas formed the basis of all succeeding county maps for over one hundred years. David Fletcher in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* says:

'That Saxton's maps were not displaced as the master geographical representation of England and Wales until the Ordnance Survey began publication of one-inch maps in 1801 shows literally that they stood the test of time'.



Saxton's Ledes and Bradforthe—1577

Missale ad usum Cisterciensi A Cistercian Missal, Paris 1516.

Leeds Central Library acquired the Cistercian Missal from an auction at Sotheby's in December 1901 for the sum of £5.

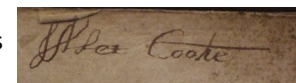
At over 500 years old the book has an extraordinary history. According to Thomas Wilson, (the same Wilson who owned and annotated our *Ducatus Leodiensis*) the book had 'probably been preserved by William Cooke of Beeston when Kirkstall Abbey was dissolved'.



William Cooke was the father of Alexander

Cooke who became vicar of Leeds from 1615 until his death in 1632. Indeed, the book contains the signature of Alex Cooke possibly written when he was a young boy c. 1570s.

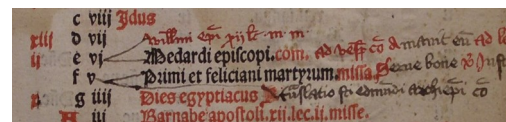
Again, according to Thomas Wilson, the library of Alexander Cooke contained 'printed books and manuscripts from Kirkstall Abbey.' Upon the death of Alexander



Signature of Alexander Cooke

Cooke his library was then acquired by the incoming vicar of Leeds, Henry Robinson, where it eventually passed to his son, also Henry Robinson, who was Minister of St John's Church in Leeds and the Founder of Holy Trinity on Boar Lane. This Henry Robinson lived until he was 90 and Thomas Wilson, being Master of the Leeds Charity School which was within the grounds of St John's, was, 'intimate with him for the last seven years of his life'. Undoubtedly he would have been familiar with Robinson's library and this would be how he came to hear the tale of how the Cooke's acquired the Kirkstall Abbey books.

The copy contains the Mass of St Gregory's Trental - popular in England towards the end of the Middle Ages - handwritten in Latin using red and black ink in the practiced pre-Dissolution hand of an accomplished scribe. This writer also makes references to St William, Patron Saint of York. The references to William and other English saints within the calendar and elsewhere are evidence that the book was undoubtedly in use in England. Along with the provenance of the book being mainly Leeds based, it is highly likely that the book was used by the Cistercian monks of Kirkstall Abbey.



Reference to St William of York in the Calendar
for June 8th



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Ducatus Leodiensis or *History of Leeds* by Ralph Thoresby, 1715.

Leeds Central Library is fortunate to own five copies of Ralph Thoresby's *Ducatus Leodiensis*. Published in 1715 the book is now over 300 years old.

One of our copies is regarded as being very special indeed. This copy was once owned by Thomas Wilson, antiquarian (like Thoresby) and Master of the Leeds Charity School, 1750-60. The book is heavily annotated by Wilson and offers some fascinating insights and additional information into Thoresby's work. It also has many highly amusing comments by Wilson which, although he had great respect for Ralph Thoresby, highlight the rivalries that antiquarians appeared to often indulge in against each other.



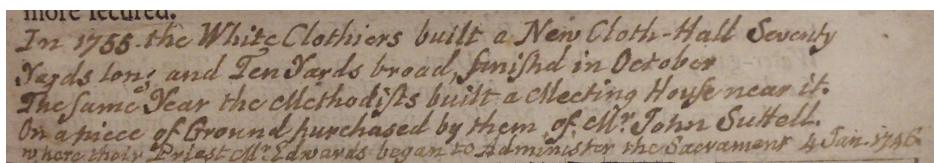
Ralph Thoresby

At one point Wilson writes; 'As to the Lance and Hone they were found, but they were modern and childish. An Antiquarian like Mr T, is a credulous Ape.'

After the death of Ralph Thoresby in 1725 his 'Museum of Rarities' became neglected and much of it fell into ruin

and decay.

Thomas Wilson, according to notes he made in the *Ducatus Leodiensis*, came into possession of many of the items and charters from the museum, purchased some years after the death of Ralph Thoresby. These he transcribed and then sent to Dr Richard Rawlinson at the Bodleian Library in Oxford.



Here he comments on the building of the second White Cloth Hall which was south of the river in Meadow Lane.

He says that 'In 1755 the White Clothiers built a New Cloth-Hall Seventy yards long and Ten Yards broad, finished in October.'

He also says that 'The same year the Methodists built a Meeting House near it. On a piece of ground purchased by them of Mr. John Suttell.'

Horae beatae Mariae virginis.

A 'Book of Hours'.



The Annunciation

Given to the library in 1929 by Beryl Gott. A cutting on the inside front cover no doubt from an auction catalogue states:

'A beautiful MS (manuscript) of the fifteenth century on 177 leaves of vellum, with forty-six beautiful miniatures, 20 being within the borders of the calendar, and representing the signs of the zodiac, and the agricultural and other duties of the months, 13 full-page size with elaborate borders, and 13 smaller, of the Saints, &c. The volume has enriched floral borders on every page, and the capital letters are executed in colours and burnished gold.'

The book of hours was a devotional book that began to appear in the 13th century. It became extremely popular with the wealthy classes as a way of continuing their devotions whilst in their own home. It contained prayers that were to be said at the canonical hours in honour of the Virgin Mary.



St Katherine - Suffrages

would do the miniatures and yet another would apply the gold leaf and so on.

At some point towards the end of the eighteenth century, before being acquired by the Gott family (the famous Leeds Industrialists), it belonged to a Mr Joseph Cator of Beckenham in Kent. The inside front cover of the book contains the armorial bookplate of him and his wife, Diana Bertie.

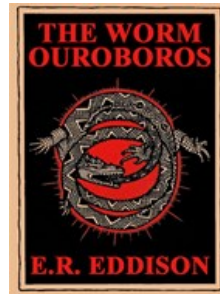


St Mark and his Lion

The E. R. Eddison Collection.

Born in Adel, Leeds, Eric Rucker Eddison became a leading civil servant and a writer of fantasy novels. Most notably *The Worm Ouroboros* and *The Zimiamvian Trilogy*. A lifelong friend of local author, Arthur Ransome, Eddison was described by J. R. R. Tolkien as 'The greatest and most convincing writer of 'invented worlds' that I have read'.

In the 1960s Eddison's wife, Winifred, bequeathed many of his original manuscripts and notes to the Leeds Central Library.



The Gott Bequest.

A collection of 600 early English gardening books and periodicals including works published in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, originally belonging to Alderman Beryl Gott, of the local textile manufacturing family and deposited in the Central Library on her death in 1941. Includes herbals, books on garden design, fine examples of hand coloured botanical illustrations, plus Curtis's Botanical Magazine dating from 1787.



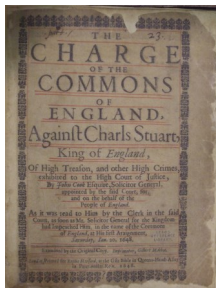
The Gascoigne Collection.

3,000+ books, pamphlets and periodicals, covering mainly military and naval history, donated in 1968 by Sir Alvary Gascoigne, in memory of his father, Colonel F.R.T. Gascoigne, of Lotherton Hall. Includes army and navy lists from the early nineteenth century, regimental histories and is a rich source for researchers of 19th century military history. On the right is shown the armorial book-plate of 'Ricardi Gascoigni'.



The Wing Collection.

The Wing Collection is named after Donald Wing, Associate Librarian at Yale University 1939-1970. who developed a method of classification that kept a collection together whereas the usual style of classifying books would have seen this collection dispersed throughout the library. It comprises of over 800 items printed between 1640 and 1700 mostly Civil War Tracts. These document the events, politics, religious debates and social life throughout the turbulent period of the English Civil Wars.



The case brought
against King Charles I
in 1648

Leeds Pottery Drawing Books & Pattern Books.

The manuscript volumes known as the Leeds Pottery Drawing Books were compiled and used in the Leeds factory as a guide and record of the products. They contain pen and ink drawings of high quality and where enamelled products are recorded they are in water-colour. The Drawing Books date from 1778 to 1779. Of the twelve known Drawing Books, nine are owned by Leeds Libraries and Information Services and the other three are in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The Pattern Books, dated between 1783 and 1814, form the printed trade catalogue of the factory. They contain a series of engraved plates of designs selected from the Drawing Books issued with a key, or index, in several languages.



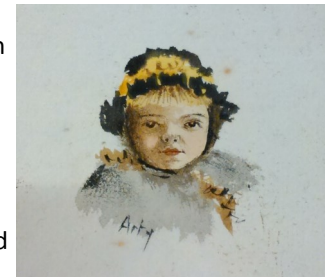
Boyne's History of Leeds.



William Boyne, Leeds antiquary, 1814 – 1893, used both T.D. Whitaker's 1816 edition of Thoresby's *Ducatus Leodiensis* and his *Leodis and Elmete* as the basis for his own collection of original material on Leeds. The grangerised set enlarges the original two volume version into seven volumes and includes many watercolours and drawings by local artists.

Arthur E. Grimshaw Collection.

Arthur Edmund Grimshaw was a Leeds born artist and musician. He was the son of the great Leeds artist John Atkinson Grimshaw. Although Arthur also painted he was better known as a composer. Leeds libraries have an original manuscript performance set of his 'two old English melodies'. We also hold a score he arranged for orchestra entitled 'Golden Wedding, a Yorkshire Idyll' which includes a collection of Yorkshire tunes and dances by Frank Kidson.



The Grimshaw Collection features a number of paintings by various members of the Grimshaw family, including an original piece of artwork by John Atkinson Grimshaw of his son, 'Arty', (shown above right).