

## Icilio Federico Joni forged bookbinding

It is believed that this is an example of one of Icilio Federico Joni's forged bookbindings. Joni was an Italian painter and counterfeiter, a highly celebrated self-professed forger who's speciality was as a counterfeiter of ancient paintings. Based in Siena, his birthplace, he was the head of a 'school of forgers' who specialized in reproducing imitations of old masters on bookbindings.



The detail on the Leeds binding has been taken from *Guidoriccio da Fogliano at the siege of Montemassi*, painted by Simone Martini in 1330. It is not yet known with absolute certainty if the Leeds copy seen here is an actual Joni or if it is a copy of his work by one of his followers. This, of course, would then make it 'a fake of a fake'!

Joni published his autobiography in 1932, *Le memorie di un pittore di quadri antichi—Affairs of a painter*, despite great opposition from a number of art experts who were embarrassed at having been taken in by the forgeries believing them to be genuine.



**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.**

PW 2025

### Opening times

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Weds – 9.00am – 8.00pm

Thursday 9.00am – 5.00pm

Friday – 9.00 – 5.00pm

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### For more information:

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## Treasures of the Library

Learn more about some of the oldest and rarest items held in the archives of the Leeds Central Library.

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## A short history of our collections.

Leeds Central Library's special collections comprise of over 17,000 items. These we have collected in various ways since the 1870's. Many have been donated or bequeathed to us. These might include individual items, sets, or complete collections such as the Gott Bequest and the Gascoigne Collection to name just two. Other items we have purchased, often from auction, because they have a specific and interesting link to Leeds and the surrounding locality. We also possess one of the largest and finest collections of Yorkshire material to be found anywhere in the country.

In the early decades of the Leeds Public Library the archives were all kept here but later, in the 1960's, moved to their own premises in Sheepscar. At which point many items of historic importance went to these new premises. Eventually, they would amalgamate with archives from other local areas, Wakefield, Leeds, Bradford, Calderdale and Kirkstall to form what is today known as the West Yorkshire Archive Service.

The items that were not removed to the archives and remain here in our collections comprise of a hugely eclectic mix of manuscripts, printed works, ephemera, broadsides and even works of art. Our oldest items date to the middle of the fifteenth century although we do possess a pair of what we call 'fragments' which have been dated at either eleventh or twelfth century! Some of our items are unique and, being irreplaceable objects pertaining to the history of Leeds, must be considered priceless. The William Boyne History of Leeds falls into that category.

On the following pages we have selected some, but by no means all, of the most interesting pieces in our special collections.



Leeds Pottery design, drawing & pattern books. Enamell'd Tea Ware 1819

## 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.



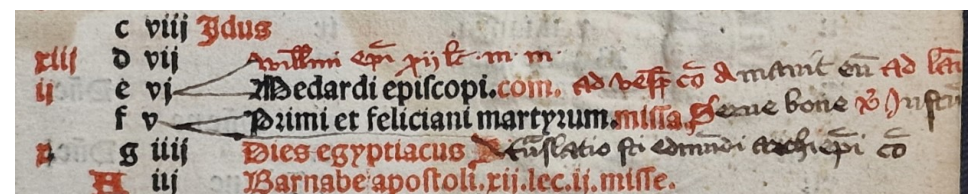
At over 500 years old the book has an extraordinary history. According to Thomas Wilson, (the same Wilson who owned and annotated our *Ducatus Leodiensis*) the book had 'probably been preserved by William Cooke of Beeston when Kirkstall Abbey was dissolved'.

William Cooke was the father of Alexander Cooke who became vicar of Leeds from 1615 until his death in 1632 and, the book contains the signature of Alex Cooke

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

Signature of Alex Cooke

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

## 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, 1750-61. 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.

After the death of Ralph Thoresby in 1725 his 'Museum of Rarities' became neglected and much of it fell into ruin and decay. Wilson records that 'All the stones, minerals salts we threw away, they having lain in a Garret like a heap of Rubbish from 1726 to 1743.'



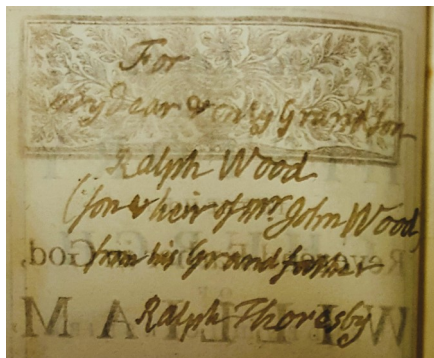
Ralph Thoresby

According to notes he made in the *Ducatus Leodiensis*, Thomas Wilson 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 where many remain to this day.

## Vicaria Leodiensis. Ralph Thoresby, 1724

Subtitled *A History of the Church of Leedes in Yorkshire*, the *Vicaria* has a wealth of biographical information on all who were associated with the Parish Church of St Peters, Leeds, now Leeds Minster. Also included are the lives of many of the benefactors to the parish and others related to the church in Yorkshire. Leeds Central Library has a number of copies of the 1724 edition one of which deserves special mention in that it was dedicated in Thoresby's handwriting to Ralph, his grandson, son of his daughter, Grace.

Here it says, 'For my Dear & only Grandson Ralph Wood (son and heir of Mr. John Wood) from his Grandfather Ralph Thoresby.'



## Horae beatae Mariae virginis. A 'Book of Hours'. c.1480-1500.

Given to the library in 1929 by Alderman Beryl Gott. A Book of Hours was a devotional prayer book for the layman and consisted of all the prayers necessary for its owner to be able to recite at the appointed hours throughout the day. Hence the title, Book of Hours.

Our copy is a beautiful manuscript, probably produced in Tours, France, about 1480-1500. It is on 177 leaves of vellum, with forty-six beautifully painted miniatures, twenty being within the borders of the calendar, and representing the signs of the zodiac and the agricultural and other duties of the months. There are thirteen full page and thirteen smaller, of the Saints, etc. The volume has enriched floral borders on every page, and the capital letters are executed in colours and burnished gold. Shell gold paint and gold leaf is used throughout.



St John on Patmos

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

The Leeds copy of Saxton's atlas was acquired in 1951 after an earlier attempt to obtain it in 1947 had been unsuccessful.

Although little is known of the early years and personal life of Saxton it is believed that he was Yorkshire born and lived for a time in Dunningley, a tiny - now non-existent - hamlet near to Morley and Middleton in South Leeds.

After serving an apprenticeship in the art of cartography he was later authorised by Queen Elizabeth I to conduct a survey that would eventually become the first comprehensive atlas of the counties of England and Wales. Beginning his survey in 1574 he completed the atlas in 1578. It contains 35 hand coloured maps engraved on copper plates and was used as a basis for all other maps of England and Wales for over 200 years until the Ordnance Survey began publication of maps in 1801.



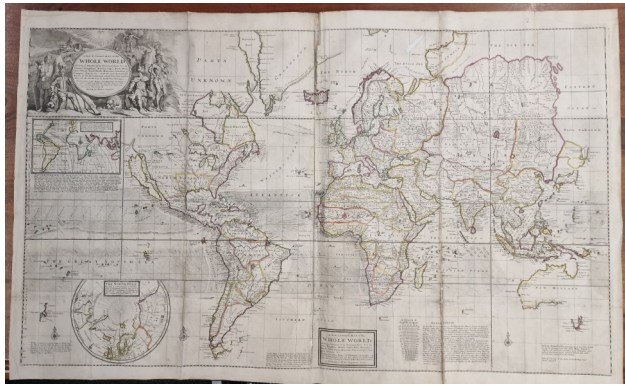
Ledes and Bradforthe in 1577



## The World Described. 1708-1720. Herman Moll.

Herman Moll's important World Atlas consists of 30 large two-sheet maps covering the whole world: two world maps, four covering the British Isles, 14 of

Europe, one of Africa, three of Asia, and six of the Americas. The atlas contains some important maps of North America: "A New and Exact Map of the Dominions of the King of Great Britain on ye Continent of North America," also known as the "Beaver" map on account of its attractive vignette showing a beaver colony



near Niagara Falls (see insert) and "A New Map of the North Parts of America Claimed by France. Also, another map, that of North America, is often referred to as 'The Codfish map on account of an illustration of the Newfoundland cod fishery. At the time, the British operated the largest cod fishing fleet in the Grand Banks. Sadly, the Leeds collection is missing map number one, The World in two Hemispheres.



## Autographs collected by Francis Dighton for his cousin Anna Leighton née Dighton

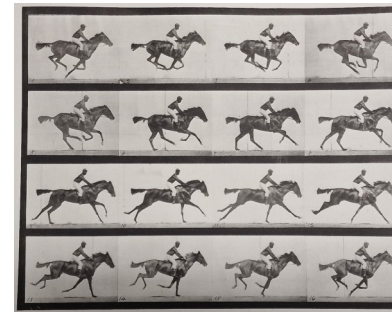
Francis Dighton was the Private Secretary of Prince Frederick, Duke of York and second son of King George III. The book is a collection of autographs, letters, fragments etc. This includes letters and fragments of letters from such as

George III, George IV, Prince Edward, Charlotte, wife of George III, Queen Victoria, The Duke and Duchess of Wellington, Sir Colin Campbell later Lord Clyde, William Pitt, Sir Walter Scott and many other literary, military and political figures of the period. There is also a scrap of manuscript written by Lord Byron. From his epic poem, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. This is verse LXXXVIII of his Canto the Second. A beautiful verse beginning with the line ... 'Where'er we



tread 'tis haunted, holy ground, No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould, ...'

## Animal Locomotion : an Electro-Photographic investigation of consecutive phases of animal movements. 1872-1885. Eadweard Muybridge



The photographs here show the very famous sequence, *The Horse in Motion*. Muybridge was commissioned to do this sequence of photographs in order to settle a bet which was to prove beyond doubt that a horse when galloping did have all four hooves off the ground at the same time. This was to be the beginning of Muybridge's change in career from landscape photography to doing the first scientific study of motion -

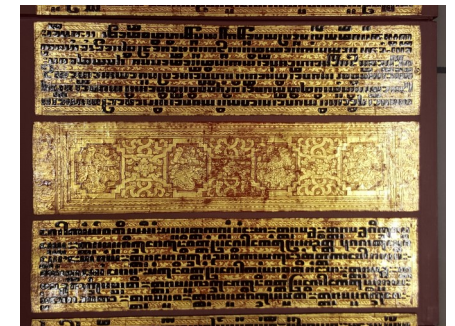
animal and human - using photography.

The library is extremely fortunate to possess a very rare complete edition. It consists of eleven volumes in oversize folio with a full set of 781 plates. Over 20,000 images in total. The work was published exclusively by subscription at a price of one hundred dollars for each copy. One hundred plates constituted a copy of the work. Subscribers chose their selection from the 781 plates available in the prospectus and catalogue. As a result, the sets differ depending on the interests of the individual subscribers.



## Kammavāchā: the ritual of the Buddhist priesthood. c19th?

This is a Burmese "book" of 16 lacquered board "pages" with covers, containing the prescribed ceremonial for the ordaining of Buddhist monks. Claimed to be "made out of the putsoes or dresses of the Kings of Burmah". Presented to the library by Mr George H. Colbeck, S.P.G. missionary to Upper Burma, 1887. The item comes with a letter from Colbeck gifting it to the library.





## The Birds of Great Britain. 1862-1873. John Gould.

Often described as "the most sumptuous and costly of the British bird books" (Mullens & Swann), our first edition set has five volumes which contain 376 coloured plates. The work was issued in 25 parts and Gould's illustrations were all painstakingly coloured by hand.



His wife, Elizabeth Gould, was his favoured artist and did the drawings for many of his earlier publications including what is often referred to as Goulds' seminal work, *The Birds of Australia*. John was devastated when, in 1841, having done at least 650 works Elizabeth died of a fever aged 37. Although she did not produce any of the works for *The Birds of Britain* it is accepted that the artists who did followed her style so closely as to be almost indistinguishable.

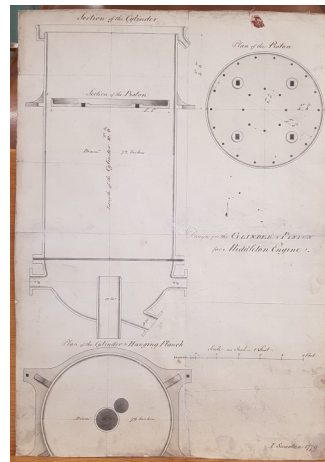


Leeds Libraries also has Goulds' six volume set; *A monograph of the Trochilidae, or family of humming-birds*, published 1861-1887.

## Plans for the Middleton engine and engine house. 1779-1780. John Smeaton.

John Smeaton was the first to use the term 'civil engineer'. He founded the Smeatonian Club which was later merged into the Institution of Civil Engineers. It is not yet known how we acquired these plans but it is believed they were given to us in the 1930's. There are five plans by Smeaton in total. One other plan in the collection is thought to be by John Marshall, the English industrial pioneer and owner of Marshall's Mill in Holbeck, Leeds.

The Royal Society are of 'the opinion that they are fair copies'. Initially Smeaton made all his drawings himself and he later employed a draughtsman although he continued to draw the lines of all his drawings to the proper scale in pencil lines. His daughters frequently helped in the shadowing and finishing in indian ink.



**Design for the cylinder & piston for the Middleton Engine**

## Antarctic Expedition 1901-4 : "Morning" & Scott

An album of more than ninety photographs taken during the Antarctic expedition by the ship 'Morning' acting as a relief ship to Scott's 1901-4 expedition. The SY [Steam Yacht] *Morning* made two voyages to the Antarctic to resupply Captain Scott's expedition. The first of these is referred to as the *Voyage of the Morning*. Ernest Shackleton joined the crew of *Morning* as he was suffering from scurvy.



The "*Morning*" was captained by William Colbeck—seen here standing on the right—who was born at Hull in 1871, and educated at Hull Grammar School. *Morning* returned to the Antarctic a second time in the company of the *Terra Nova* later in 1903. The two ships were to evacuate the *Discovery* if she could not be freed from the ice. The ice broke, however, and all three ships returned together.

## Chart of the Arctic Regions from the Admiralty surveys 1847

An extremely rare map—only two other first edition copies are known to exist - which shows the most recent journey of the noted explorer John Rae who was commissioned to find the two lost ships of the Sir John Franklin expedition. At the lower right of the map are colour codes marking the exploration of the region and its explorers. A second and third edition of the map were subsequently published showing additional explorations. The map is dedicated by the publisher and geographer, James Wyld, to Lady Franklin.



## A selection of Hexandrian Plants, belonging to the natural orders Amaryllidæ and liliacæ



Mrs Priscilla Susan Bury was an enthusiastic botanist and flower painter and is probably most famous for her drawings of Hexandrian plants, plants with six stamens. The fifty-one plates are fine-grained aquatints, partly printed in colour and retouched by hand. They were engraved by Robert Havell who also did the engraving for John James Audubon. The work, published in 1831-1834 had only seventy nine subscribers (Audubon being one). It is thought that probably no more than this were produced hence it's rarity and high value.

## John Gerard, The Herball, or Generall Historie of Plantes (1597 and 1636)

First published in 1597 the Elizabethan botanist, John Gerard's illustrated Herbal became one of the foremost herbals of the period and was to remain so until the 1800's. His garden in London contained over a thousand herbs most of



which, if not all, are covered in his book. Although his herbal was not unique having been mainly derived from a copy written by Belgian Rembert Dodoens in 1586 (of which Leeds Central has two copies) it is regarded as one of the most famous herbals to this day. Our 1597 first edition has been fully coloured in by hand whereas our later, 1636 edition has only been partially coloured in.

### The Mandrake

It has been suggested that Shakespeare may have known Gerard as they lived for some time in the same area of London. Shakespeare made prolific use of herbs and plants in his plays. The poisons used in Romeo and Juliet, the magic potions of Macbeth and A Midsummer Night's Dream to name but a few.



### Corne-Rose or wilde Poppy

## The Holy Land, Syria, Idumea, Arabia, Egypt & Nubia. David Roberts.

A hugely important work by David Roberts who travelled Egypt, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Palestine, Lebanon and Baalbec making detailed drawings of many of the most significant sites in 1838 to 1839.

In six oversize folio volumes it contains 250 lithographs by Louis Haghe of Roberts' watercolour sketches.



### The Simoom in the desert



### The Temple of Edfou by David Roberts

It has been suggested that the architect of Temple Mill in Holbeck, Leeds, derived his ideas from the paintings of The Temple of Edfou in Egypt done by David Roberts in 1838-39.



### Temple Mill, Leeds, by W.R. Robinson 1849



## A Monograph on the Genus Camellia

Clara Maria Pope began her career as an artist's model but soon became a noted botanical illustrator. With many works for Samuel Curtis's *Botanical Magazine* she also contributed the five aquatints, hand-coloured in watercolor, in his *Monograph on the Genus Camellia* which was published to great acclaim in 1819.



## The Costume of Yorkshire. George Walker.

George Walker's drawings for the Costumes of Yorkshire was published in 1814. It contains forty coloured engravings depicting the many styles of clothing worn by the ordinary people of Yorkshire during the early part of the 19th-century. These illustrate such occupations as Farmers, whalebone scrapers, line swingers and activities such as sea bathing, rape threshing cloth makers and hawking. There are drawings of women spinning, the cranberry girl, the milk boy, the moor guide, the Grenadier, the premer boy and many others.



The plate of the Collier shown here is especially important as in the background it depicts the first printed representation of a steam engine locomotive. This was built by Murray & Blenkinsop at Leeds in 1812, about two years before Stephenson's engine. The collier, is shown against the backdrop of Middleton colliery near Leeds.

## Largest, smallest, oldest, heaviest, longest, Deadliest.

The **heaviest book** has to be: *The jewels of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation*, by Franz Johann Joseph Bock 1864. Weighing in at a backbreaking 24kg (53lbs).

The **largest** items we have are either the *Moll Maps, 1708-1720*, kept in a flat box measuring 117cm x 71cm or *The Pyramids of Gizeh*, a book by J.E. Perring 1839. Measuring 88cm x 60cm.

The **longest** item has to be the drawings of *The Battles of Sole Bay, 1672* and *The Battle of Texel 1673*. Placed end to end these drawings are just short of 8 metres in length. (See detail below).

The **thickest** book, *The City of Leeds Ward Rolls, 1899-1900*, has 2596 pages and is 20cm from front to back.

Our **oldest** items has to be a pair of 12th, possibly 11th century fragments used as pastedowns at either end of our 1490 book, *Opuscula* by Thomas Aquinas. We also have a deed related to Kirkstall Abbey written in 1460 and a handwritten and illuminated manuscript, a *Book of Hours*, dated c. 1480-1500.

Our most **poisonous** book is *My Own Garden: The Young Gardener's Yearbook* published in 1855. and owes its vivid green colour to a dye containing arsenic.

The **smallest** book is our *Miniature chained Bible*, not much bigger than a pound coin



Detail from The Battle of Sole Bay, 1672

## Incunabula.

This is the term used to describe any book that was printed before 1501 and literally translates as 'swaddling clothes' or 'cradle'. 1501 was a date that was arbitrarily chosen to describe books that were produced when the art of printing was still in its infancy. The earliest, and perhaps most famous, of these is the Gutenberg Bible, printed in around 1455. Unfortunately, Leeds Libraries do not possess one of the 48 Or 49 copies known to exist. However, we do have thirteen books that are classed as incunabula written by such notable writers of the medieval period as Aquinas, Boethius, Balbus and Biel, Celtis, Fenestella, Popes Gregorius the First and Ninth and our oldest printed book, *Sermones Discipuli*, by Johannes Herolt published in 1481, two years before King Richard III ascended the throne.

## The Nuremberg Chronicle 1497

The Nuremberg Chronicle is one of our incunabula. The original edition was written by Dr Hartmann Schedel and printed in Nuremberg by Anton Koberger in 1493. It had over 645 separate woodcuts and the text covered world history up until 1493. It is reputed to have been the most famous best-selling book of the fifteenth century. The Leeds Central Library copy is interesting in that it is essentially a "pirated" copy. Johann Schönsperger was a publisher who lived in Augsburg, near Nuremberg. Schönsperger specialised in "reprints" and saw the



Anglie provincia sen Britannia.  
England, the province of Britain.

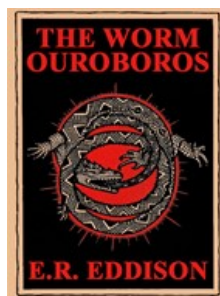


Sermones Discipuli - 1481

benefits of publishing a cheaper version of the Chronicle. It would be smaller, on cheaper paper and with inferior woodcut images. Initially he published it in German in 1496 but by 1497 he had published yet another edition, this time in Latin, which proved to be hugely successful. The image on the left, thought to be of London, is believed to be one of the earliest known printed views of an English city.

**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*.

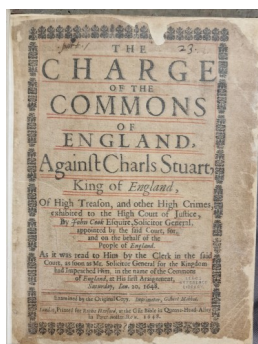
A lifelong friend of local author, Arthur Ransome, Eddison was described by J. R. R. Tolkien as "the greatest and most convincing writer of 'invented worlds' that I have read". In the 1960s Eddison's wife, Winifred, bequeathed many of his original manuscripts and notes to the Leeds Central Library.



**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 bookplate of 'Ricardi Gascoigni'.



**The case brought against King Charles I in 1648**

**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.

## 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, the 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. These include John and Joseph Rhodes, W. R. Robinson, W. Bowman, J. Greig and the engraver William Lodge.

The term 'grangerised', named after James Granger, who started the trend in 1769, refers to the process of producing books with blank leaves placed periodically throughout for the reader to insert whatever picture they liked.

## Willie Riley Collection.

Willie Riley (1866-1961), a successful Bradford businessman and Methodist preacher, at the age of forty five, "as an amusement, a distraction" for his wife, Clara, and two female friends of the family, wrote his first novel, 'Windyrigge'. Published in 1912 the book became a huge success and Riley went on to write a further thirty eight books, the last being published only a month before he died aged ninety five. In 1927 he presented the original handwritten manuscript of Windyrigge to the Leeds Central Library. In 2017 the widow of the late Dr John Riley of Aireborough, who was Willie's nephew, donated a complete set of Willie Riley's books to the Central library. Many of these have personal dedications by the author written inside to members of his family, mainly to his first wife, Clara and second wife, Edith.

