A brief history of wood-engraving from its invention

Cundall Joseph
Title: A brief history of wood-engraving from its invention

Author: Cundall Joseph

This is an exact replica of a book. The book reprint was manually improved by a team of professionals, as opposed to automatic/OCR processes used by some companies. However, the book may still have imperfections such as missing pages, poor pictures, errant marks, etc. that were a part of the original text. We appreciate your understanding of the imperfections which can not be improved, and hope you will enjoy reading this book.
HENRY VIII. IN COUNCIL

(From Holinshed's 'Chronicles of England,' 1577)
A BRIEF HISTORY
OF
WOOD-ENGRAVING
FROM ITS INVENTION

BY
JOSEPH CUNDALL
AUTHOR OF 'HOLBEIN AND HIS WORKS' ETC.

LONDON
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, & COMPANY
LIMITED
St. Dunstan's House
FETTER LANE, FLEET STREET, E.C.
1895
CONTENTS

CHAPTER I
On Pictures of Saints—The print of *The Virgin with the Holy Child in her Lap* in the Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique—On the print of *St. Christopher* in the Spencer Library at Manchester—The *Annunciation* and the *St. Bridget* of Sweden ....... 1

CHAPTER II
On the Block Books of the Fifteenth Century—*Biblia Pauperum*; *Apocalypsis Sancti Johannis*, &c. ....... 11

CHAPTER III
The Block Books of the Fifteenth Century—*Ars Moriendi*—*Temptacio Diaboli*—*Canticum Canticorum*, and others ....... 20

CHAPTER IV
Block Book—*Sperulum Humanæ Salvationis*—*Casus Luciferi*—The Mentz Psalter of 1459—Book of Fables—The Cologne Bible—Nürnberg Chronicle—Breydenbach’s Travels ....... 28

CHAPTER V
On Wood-Engraving in Italy in the Fifteenth Century—The Venice *Kalendario* of 1476—The *Triumph of Petrarch*—The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*—Aldo Manuzio—Portrait of Aldus ....... 40
CHAPTER VI

On Wood-Engraving in France in the Fifteenth Century—
Engraving on Metal Blocks—‘Books of Hours’—Famous
French Publishers: Pierre Le Rouge, Simon Vostre,
Antoine Verard, Thielman Kerver, Guyot Marchant,
Philippe Pigouchet, Jean Dupré, and others . . . . 51

CHAPTER VII

Wood-Engraving in England in the Fifteenth Century—
William Caxton, Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye—
Dictes and Sayings of Philosophers—Game and Playe of
the Chesse, &c.—Wynkyn de Worde—Richard Pynson . 61

CHAPTER VIII

Wood-Engraving in Germany in the Sixteenth Century—
Albrecht Dürer—Coronation of the Virgin—The Apoca-
calypse—The Little Passion—His Engravings on Copper
—The Triumphs of Maximilian—The Triumphal Arch
—The Triumphal Car—The Triumphal Procession . . 69

CHAPTER IX

Hans Holbein—Dance of Death—Bible Cuts—Hans Lützel-
burger—Dance of Death Alphabet—The Little Masters—
Altdorfer—Beham—Brosamer—Aldegrever—Cranach . . 81

CHAPTER X

Wood-Engraving in Italy and France in the Sixteenth
Century—Giuseppe Porta of Venice—Geoffroy Tory and
Robert Estienne of Paris—Borluyt’s Figures from the
New Testament—Christophe Plantin of Antwerp . . . 89
CONTENTS

CHAPTER XI

CHAPTER XII
Thomas Bewick and his Pupils—Select Fables—History of Quadrupeds—History of British Birds—Æsop’s Fables—Prices at which these books were published—Death of Bewick . . . . . . . . . . . . . 108

CHAPTER XIII

INDEX . . . . . . . . . . . . . 129
THE WOOD-ENGRAVER

By Jost Amman (1568)
A BRIEF HISTORY

OF

WOOD-ENGRAVING

CHAPTER I

ON THE EARLY PICTURES OF SAINTS

Many volumes have been written on the subject of Wood-Engraving, especially in Germany, Holland, and Belgium, where the art first flourished; as well as in Italy, France, and England; and some of the best of these books have been published during the present century.

The most important of them are, Dr. Dibdin’s celebrated bibliographical works; ‘A Treatise on Wood-Engraving,’ by W. A. Chatto, of which a new edition has lately been issued; ‘Wood-Engraving in Italy in the 15th Century,’ by Dr. Lippmann; and, above all, ‘The Masters of Wood-Engraving,’ a magnificent folio volume written by Mr. W. J. Linton—himself a Master—who, besides giving us the benefit of his technical knowledge obtained by the practice of the art for fifty years, presents us with copies, from blocks engraved by himself, of the most celebrated woodcuts of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Many writers have asserted that the first wood-engravings are to be found on playing-cards; others maintain that
the very rough prints on the playing-cards of the early fifteenth century were taken from stencil-plates. It is impossible to decide the point, nor is it of much importance; there is no evidence whatever as to the method of their production. They appeared in Europe about the year 1350; they came from the East, but their positive history, according to Dr. Willshire, begins in the year 1392. ¹ It has been asserted that many prints of Images of Saints produced by means of wood-engraving preceded even playing-cards.

The first undoubted fact that we can arrive at in the history of wood-engraving is that early in the fifteenth century there were to be found, in many of the monasteries and convents in various parts of Europe, prints of the Virgin with the Holy Infant, the most popular Saints, and Subjects from the Bible, which were certainly taken from engravings on wood; and we have now to describe some typical examples of primitive devotional pictures, printed by the xylographic process. The earliest of these woodcuts may date from 1380, and there are many which are assigned to the first half of the fifteenth century; they were all intended to be coloured by hand, and are therefore simply in outline, without shading. The designs are usually good, but the execution is not always so meritorious.

In the Royal Library at Brussels there is a coloured print of The Virgin with the Holy Child in her lap, surrounded by four Saints in an inclosed garden. On the Virgin’s right hand sits St. Catherine, with a royal crown on her head, the sword in her left hand, and, leaning against her feet, a broken wheel. Beneath is St. Dorothea crowned with roses, with a branch of a rose-tree in her right hand and the handle of a basket of apples in her left; on the other side are St. Barbara holding her tower, and, under her, St. Margaret with a book.

¹ W. H. Willshire, Playing and other Cards in the British Museum, 1 vol. 8vo. (1878).