

REFORMATION Notes

News for Partners of the Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection

Spring/Summer 1993

No. 2

Religious Pamphlets Document Reformation History

Ruminations from the desk of Fred A. Grater, Rare Book Bibliographer

Religious pamphlets (in German, *Flugschriften*, flying words) are by their very nature ephemeral. They are not designed to last forever; most are not designed to last past next week. Yet the history of the Reformation could not be written without pamphlets. The court documents, certificates, and reviews (opinions) which make up the bulk of the manuscript documentation of European archives would be meaningless apart from these pamphlet sources. The historian needs the documents to give the pamphlets background and needs the pamphlets to give the documents their substance and atmosphere.

But where do these pamphlets come from? How and why were they preserved? Two factors come into play here: 1. People hungered to practice the new mass art of reading. They wanted to read to show off the fact that they could do so. 2. The new humanist learning unleashed a flood of ideas and thought such as had never happened before. Men and women whose ancestors had hardly ever even seen a pen and paper began to feel a need for the expression of new ideas. A little learning was truly a dangerous and even explosive thing.

People wrote as never before the sixteenth century. The "information explosion" was truly a new phenomenon whose like had never been seen before the Reformation period. And

all these writers were being read, discussed, argued about, and responded to. Writing begat more writing. Objects worthy of collection begat collectors who tried to find as much as they could of what their heroes (idols) had penned. People were excited and moved by what was happening and took steps to remember it by collecting the evidence of the past.

These collectors were not primarily scholars or antiquarians. These would come later. But the first collectors were inspired by what they were reading and wanted to preserve it for later use. So they gathered stray leaves together into collected volumes, usually grouped around common themes or individuals. The aim was to aid the memory to retain the ideas or to find them again as needed. These volumes grew in bulk as the pamphlets got longer and as they became more numerous.

The collectors' aim was to protect the individual pieces by bringing them into one volume. Thus these little pieces held each other up and protected each other (for there is strength in numbers) so that more might be preserved. Those that were not so gathered had a much rougher time of it to survive. Some did, but many more did not. It was, after all, too expensive to bind into sturdy oak boards and bleached pigskin a single quire of printed paper. A large group of such items could justify such an expense. This is why so many pamphlets have tabs on the right hand margin of the title page--so the reader could find them in the large volumes into which they had been bound.

We tend to take this whole thing for granted, but if it had not been for interested amateurs (from the French, and means "lovers") who collected together the things they loved into volumes of mutual protection and similar content, the record of the Reformation would be less complete--and personal--than it is.

The Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection of Pitts Theology Library holds in excess of one thousand pamphlets documenting the history of the Reformation.

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Back Library Celebrates Collection Growth

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Recent Purchases by Partners of the Reformation Collection

Mr. and Mrs. Carl F. Lettow, Jr.
Savannah, Georgia

Spalatinus, Georgius (1484-1545). [Autographed letter in the handwriting of the author addressed to Heinrich von Einsiedel.] One leaf with address and mark of seal. [Altenburg] October 7, 1528.

Heinrich von Einsiedel was a Protestant and count of Grandstein-Grimma (near Leipzig) in the Duchy of Saxony whose duke was George "the Bearded." Duke George was a Catholic and a staunch opponent of Luther. When a problem arose in Heinrich's territory regarding the pregnancy of a maid servant, Katharina Gockritz, in the household of Matthias Berger, Berger's son, Brosius, was accused, and this raised a problem for Heinrich: how did one proceed in such cases? He wrote to his good friend Georg Spalatin (then pastor in Altenburg and former counselor to Frederick the Wise of Electoral Saxony). Spalatin referred the matter to Luther. Einsiedel also reported to both Duke George and to the Elector, who both asked to be kept informed of developments.

This letter from Spalatin to Einsiedel is dated October 7, 1528, and reports the progress of the case to that date. It is especially interesting to note that although Duke George and Luther were bitter theological opponents, the former was nevertheless interested in Luther's opinion in the matter and asked especially to be kept informed of developments.

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Mr. and Mrs. Russell W. Crick
Marietta, Georgia

Luther, Martin (1483-1546). *Adversus execrabilem Antichristi bullam.* Wittenberg, [Melchior Lotter the Younger] 1520.

This is Luther's initial response to the Bull, "Exsurge Domine," which threatened him with excommunication. This is a copy of the first edition.

Luther, Martin (1483-1546). *OB MAN FUR STERBEN FLIEHEN MUGE.* [Zwickau: Gabriel Kantz] MDXXVII.

A Breslau, Silesia, pastor, Dr. Johann Hess, asked Luther in 1527 whether it was permissible for a person to flee from plague-infested areas. Luther replied that it was and then added some public health advice for city government officials in plague-ravaged areas.

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Mr. Erwin G. Baumer
Atlanta, Georgia

Luther, Martin (1483-1546). *Die Sieben busspsalm mit deutscher ausslegung nach dem schriftlichen synnetzu Christi und gottes gnaden...* Leipzig, J. Thanner, 1519.

As a new professor of Bible at the University of Wittenberg, Luther offered a series of lectures on the Psalms. He lectured two to three hours a week and it took him two years to complete the series. In 1514, the midpoint of his lectures on the Psalms, he was also appointed preacher in the city church. It was in this dual context as scholar and preacher that Luther prepared his first work for publication, a translation into German of the seven penitential psalms (numbers 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143). To the text he added his exposition of the meaning. It was written for lay persons and appeared at the beginning of Lent, 1517 (six months before his posting of the Ninety-five Theses). It was meant to be used as a book of meditation. This work was printed eight times between 1517 and 1525, when Luther revised the text. Our copy is the fourth printing of the first edition.

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Judge Dorothy T. Beasley
Atlanta, Georgia

Melanchthon, Philipp (1497-1560). *Institutiones rhetoricae.* Wittembergae [M. Lotter, 1521].

The work consists of twenty-eight leaves and the binding is modern quarter vellum with the sides covered with a leaf from an early work printed in black and red. On the title page is a fine allegorical woodcut border created by Lucas Cranach, a resident of Wittenberg and an early supporter of the Lutheran cause. The woodcut shows signs of being touched up in contemporary red handcoloring, and there are occasional contemporary marginal annotations in the text in at least two hands. In all it is a well preserved, large copy of an extremely rare early edition of Melanchthon's influential early school book on rhetoric, dedicated to Johann Isleben. The text is in Latin, the language of the classroom.

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Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Yobs
Atlanta, Georgia

Melanchthon, Philipp (1497-1560). *EPISTOLAE PAULI SCRIPTAE AD ROMANOS...* WITTENBERG [V. KREUTZER] 1556.
bound with:
Melanchthon, Philipp (1497-1560).

The Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection is a repository of rare and valuable documents which form the core of the Protestant Reformation. The collection now contains more than 1,300 pieces written by Martin Luther, his colleagues and opponents, and printed during their lifetimes. Supported by the vision and resources of Lutheran laypeople Richard and Martha Kessler and partners throughout the Southeast, the collection is housed in Pitts Theology Library of Candler School of Theology. It provides a rich resource for scholars of the Reformation and for clergy and laity who seek to understand the history of our faith. For more information about the collection contact Dr. Channing Jeschke, Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia 30322, (404) 727-4166.

**PROPOSITIONES DE QUIBUS
DISPUTABIT MAGISTER PAULI
DE EIZEN HAMBURGENSIS.** Wittenberg, 1556.

The former represents the final stage of Melancthon's Commentary on Romans. It is an association copy with an inscription in Melancthon's handwriting on the title page to Christophoro Piscatori. The latter piece is a doctoral thesis defended by Johann von Eizen, Superintendent of the church in Hamburg, on the eighteenth of May, 1556.

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The Reverend and Mrs. Larry W.
Raudebaugh
Atlanta, Georgia

**Luther, Martin (1483-1546). SER-
MON AM PALMTAG...** Wittenberg
[Augsburg: Heinrich Steiner] 1522.

Luther preached this sermon on Palm Sunday, April 13, 1522. The text is from Matthew 21 on Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. At the end, Luther refers to the liberation of the Christian by faith only, without the obligation of performing good works.

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John Calhoun Wise, Jr., Roy Thomas
Wise, and Frank Easterlin Wise
Atlanta, Georgia

**Emser, Heironymus 1478-1527.
DE DISPUTATIONE LIPSICENSI,
QUANTUM AD BOEMOS...**
[Augsburg: Silvan Otmar, 1519].

This volume includes both H. Emser's letter on the Leipzig Disputation and Luther's sharp reply to it.

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Mr. Clair E. Strommen
St. Paul, Minnesota

**Spalatin, Georgius 1484-1545.
Autograph letter signed. [Altenburg]
January 9, 1536, to Heinrich von
Einsiedal (1497-1557).**

Spalatin had just received from the press his translation into German of an extract from Melancthon's *LOCI COMMUNES*, a sermon titled, "On the dear Angels." He dedicated this work to his friend and sent him a copy.

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Mrs. Velda Handrich Skagen
Roswell, Georgia

**Heinrich, von Zutphen (1489?-
1524). ETLICH PUNCTEN VN
NAMHAFFTIGE ARTICKEL...**
[Augsburg: Sigmund Grimm and
Simprecht Ruff, 1525].

Heinrich was one of the earliest martyrs of the Lutheran church. This piece is a statement of faith and Christian life presented as sixty-six brief articles arranged under four headings: "On Nature," "On the Law," "On the Gospel and Faith," and "On Love."

Partners

Current partners of the Richard C.
Kessler Reformation Collection are:

Mr. and Mrs. Neil Anderson
Mr. Erwin G. Baumer
Judge Dorothy T. Beasley
Mr. and Mrs. Russell W. Crick
Mr. and Mrs. Callie W. Kessler
Mr. and Mrs. Richard C. Kessler
Mr. and Mrs. Carl F. Lettow, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. John C. McCune
Mr. and Mrs. Jean A. Mori
The Reverend and Mrs. Larry W.
Raudebaugh
Mrs. Velda Handrich Skagen
The Memorial Fund of St. Johns
Evangelical Lutheran Church,
Bloomington, Illinois and Bishop
and Mrs. Harold Skillrud
Mr. Clair E. Strommen
Mr. Frank Easterlin Wise
Mr. John Calhoun Wise, Jr.
Mr. Roy Thomas Wise
Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph L. Yobs

Reformation "Orphans" Are In Need of Adoption

Individuals or groups may support the acquisition of specific pieces by becoming Partners of the Reformation Collection. A tax deductible membership contribution of \$1500 may be given at one time or over a period of up to three years. This contribution will be applied to the purchase of an artifact for the collection. The pieces listed below are among the artifacts available for sponsorship by individuals or groups.

**Amsdorff, Nicolaus von, 1483-1565.
Antwort, Glaub vnd Bekentnis auff
das schöne vnd liebliche INTERIM.**
[Magdeburg: Michael Lotter], Anno
M.D.XLVIII.

M. Flacius Illyricus and N. von Amsdorff worked in Magdeburg to try to defeat the Interim of Charles V that was imposed on the Protestant princes after their loss to him in the Schmalkald War. They produced a veritable blizzard of tracts attacking anything and anyone connected with the Interims or to adiaphora (neutral things) that those forced to accept the Interims tried to use in defense of their actions.

**Bulla Monitorii Apostolici contra
Tres Reuerendissimos dominos
Sancte Romane ecclesie Cardinales
ut redeant ad obedientiam Sanctissimi
domini nostri Pape ne scisma in
Eccl[es]ia s[an]c[t]a[m] dei oriatur.**
[Rome: Eucario and Marcello Silber,
after 7 August, 1511].

The calls for reform in the Catholic Church took many forms, including even schismatic councils, such as the Council of Pisa, which sought to depose Pope Julius II as a prelude for reform. That council failed and this bull of Julius II excommunicated the three cardinals who were the ringleaders. Leo X reinstated Briconnet to his former dignity, but the latter died shortly thereafter.

Pitts Library Celebrates Collection Growth

The Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection is housed in The Pitts Theology Library of Emory University's Candler School of Theology, the second-largest theological library in North America. On April 15, 1993, the library celebrated the publication of Dr. Luke Timothy Johnson's book, *The Acts of the Apostles*, as the library's 450,000th volume. Dr. Johnson serves as Woodruff Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins at Candler.

The second volume added as part of the celebration was *Wesley/Langshaw Correspondence: Charles Wesley, His Sons, and the Lancaster Organists*, written by Dr. Arthur W. Wainwright and Dr. Don E. Saliers. Dr. Wainwright is Professor of New Testament, and Dr. Saliers is Professor of Theology and Worship, both at Candler School of Theology.

The additions to the library's collections were also commemorated with the dedication of a new textile hanging by artist Ms. Sylvia Johnson Everett for the Durham Reading Room.

Dr. Channing R. Jeschke, Librarian and Margaret A. Pitts Professor of Theo-

logical Bibliography, presided at the celebration which was attended by many members of the Emory University community and other invited guests.

"A theological research library is the recorded memory of the church in all ages and in all places. Keeping traditions alive; sustaining scholarship, research, and study; and creating new col-

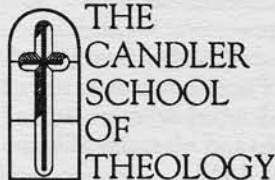
lections for future discovery and investigation demand continued growth," Dr. Jeschke noted. "The library staff could think of no better way to recognize the achievement of this new milestone than to celebrate two recent publications of the Candler faculty and to commission a new hanging for the Durham Reading Room to mark the occasion."

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW FOR TWO MAJOR MUSICAL EVENTS.

The sixth annual Kessler Reformation Concert is scheduled for October 20, 1993 at 8:15 p.m. in Cannon Chapel at Emory University. The Kessler Concert will feature Martin Luther's text and tune "Ein feste Burg," known to contemporary Christians as the hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God."

A Lutheran Vespers Service, planned as part of the Emory Bach Festival, will be held on Saturday, April 9, 1994 at 8:15 p.m. in Glenn Memorial Auditorium, also located on the Emory campus. The Lutheran Vespers Service and Emory Bach Festival will coincide with the national meeting of the American Bach Society, to be held at Emory on April 8 through 10, 1994. The service will include a performance of Bach's Ascension Oratorio, performed by the Emory Concert Choir.

Additional information about these events will be included in the fall edition of Reformation Notes.



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