

Printed in the XVth Century, and that the entry in Goff's *Incunabula in American Libraries* (the most recent of such catalogues) which now reads, under BOCCACCIO, Giovanni:

B-750 Genealogie deorum. [Cologne: Printer of the 'Flores Sancti Augustini', about 1473.] f°. probably should read:

B-750 Genealogie deorum. [Louvain: Johan Veldener, about 1473.] f°.

To be sure, the typographical scholars may not accept this revolutionary reassignment until they have found further typographical reasons. But it should be evident to any fairminded scholar that paper evidence in the hands of an imaginative and knowledgeable student occasionally can perform such near-miracles as the one just described. And Briquet provides the high road to such solutions of ancient problems—along with typographical and other evidence.

It will have been noticed that this illustrated discussion of Places of Manufacture and of Use has not depended overmuch on mould-identity but much on similarity of species or style. When and if we can add to the Boccaccio story precise identification of the various marks, we may the better date the book. Yet we began with the Valentine y which apparently belongs to 1473. As the twin marks in the Boccaccio have deteriorated and lost their crosses (cf. *Br.* 9201, where the mark is new), we can judge that the book belongs to late 1473 or possibly early 1474. That is just as it should be.

There is much more to say on 'the Rôle of the Rivers' in bringing paper to printers; but now the Reader Detective has been shown the way.

#### 6. THE FIFTY YEAR OLD FALLACY: A LESSON IN IDENTITY AND DATING

This is mainly a true story. It concerns one of the fundamental features of Briquet's *Les Filigranes*. And it has to do with one or two 'vulgar errors' or fallacies that beset the life of the scholar who would use watermarks.

One day in a well known research library a dozen years ago a scholar friend pointed out to me a watermark in Briquet's encyclopedic work. It was *Br.* 15093: a simple inoffensive Bull's head with X above.

'See this fellow?' he said a bit sternly. 'He's in the Gutenberg Bible. But the same mark had already been in use for fifty years. Briquet shows that. How *can* you say the things you do about watermarks?'

He meant of course that they are of little use for dating books. Since that time I have solved problems concerning the *Missale speciale* (the so-called Constance Missal), the Netherlandish Blockbooks, the Vinland Map, and early English books printed by Caxton. I begin to be able to answer my friend. In these several adventures I have found much help in Briquet's tracings, interpreting them critically; and always I have had to go beyond them.

It is a mistake to suppose that watermarks are keys to precise dates; and yet more often than has been supposed they offer clues to approximate ones. Normally, typographical evidence is more useful. But typographical evidence can be ambiguous, even more ambiguous than paper evidence; and thus paper evidence will find more and more opportunities as we learn more about identity and how to compare watermarks offered by the various sources. These pages have to do especially with Briquet and identity.

This is Briquet's note to the Bull's head that my scholar friend was pointing at:

15093. 38,5 × 58 r. Lyon, 1400-09?. A. RHÔNE, G. 6 et 7: *Actes capit. de l'Église cathédrale de St-Jean*. Var. ident.: Angers, 1447; Genève, 1447/49; Grammont, 1449; Mayence, 1451-53; Soleure, 1455.—Voy. Heitz (n° 58), Strasbourg, 1<sup>re</sup> moitié du XV<sup>e</sup> s.

This is a typical Briquet entry. Briquet gives fuller information than most filigranists who have succeeded him. He gives the size of the sheet in centimetres: large paper with trimmed edge (r. = *rogné*). The basic example,