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Author: Henry G. Bohn

Author: William Andrew Chatto

Author: John Jackson

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A TREATISE ON WOOD ENGRAVING, HISTORICAL AND PRACTICAL ***

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Footnotes have been numbered continuously within each chapter. Text printed in blackletter ("gothic") type is shown in the e-text as **sans-serif**.

There is no table of contents, but the List of Illustrations gives the same information. The nine chapters of the printed book are distributed among separate files: Chapters I-III, Chapters IV-V, and then a separate file for each of Chapters VI-IX. Note that pages 561*-600* (most of Chapter VIII) come *before* pages 561-600 (Chapter IX).

In the printed book, lines were about this long:

Among the more remarkable single subjects engraved on wood from Durer's designs, the following are most frequently referred to: God the Father bearing up into heaven the dead body of Christ, with the date

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Notice to the Second Edition (by Henry Bohn)

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Mr. Chatto's Preface

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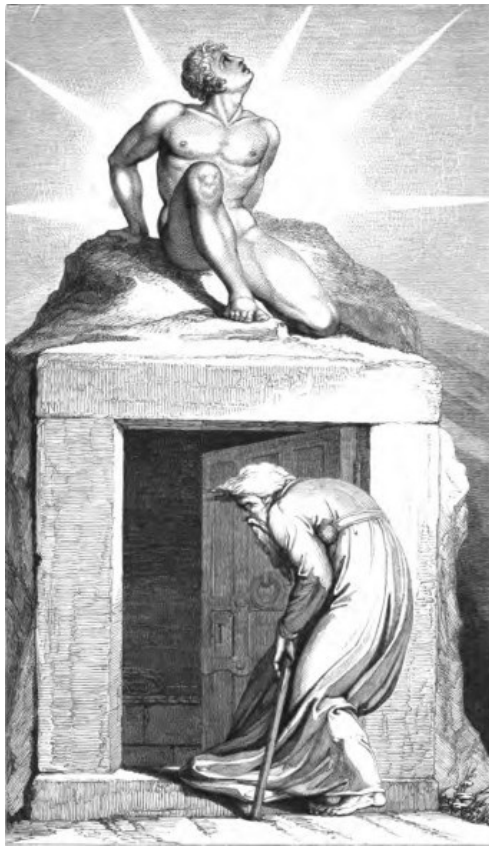
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DEATH'S DOOR.

A TREATISE
ON
WOOD ENGRAVING

Historical and Practical

WITH UPWARDS OF THREE HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS
ENGRAVED ON WOOD

BY JOHN JACKSON.

THE HISTORICAL PORTION BY W. A. CHATTO.

Second Edition

WITH A NEW CHAPTER ON THE ARTISTS OF THE PRESENT DAY

BY HENRY G. BOHN

AND 145 ADDITIONAL WOOD ENGRAVINGS.

LONDON
HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
M.DCCC.LXI.



NOTICE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE former edition of this History of Wood Engraving having become extremely scarce and commercially valuable, the publisher was glad to obtain the copyright and wood-blocks from Mr. Mason Jackson, son of the late Mr. Jackson, original proprietor of the work, with the view of reprinting it.

It will be seen by the two distinct prefaces which accompanied the former edition, and are here reprinted, that there was some existing schism between the joint producers at the time of first publication. Mr. Jackson, the engraver, paymaster, and proprietor, conceived that he had a right to do what he liked with his own; while Mr. Chatto, his literary coadjutor, very naturally felt that he was entitled to some recognition on the title-page of what he had so successfully performed. On the book making its appearance without Mr. Chatto's name on the title-page, and with certain suppressions in his preface to which he had not given consent, a virulent controversy ensued, which was embodied in a pamphlet termed "a third preface," and afterwards carried on in the *Athenæum* of August and September, 1839. As this preface has nothing in it but the outpourings of a quarrel which can now interest no one, I do not republish any part of it; and looking back on the controversy after the lapse of twenty years, I cannot help feeling that Mr. Chatto had reasonable ground for complaining that his name was omitted, although I think Mr. Jackson had full right to determine what the book should be called, seeing that it was his own exclusive speculation. It is not for me to change a title now so firmly established, but I will do Mr. Chatto the civility to introduce his name on it, without concerning myself with the question of what he did or did not do, or what Mr. Jackson contributed beyond his practical remarks and anxious superintendence.

Although I have the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with Mr. Chatto, and communicated to him my intention of republishing the work, I declined letting him see it through the press; resolving to stand wholly responsible for any alterations or improvements I might choose to make. On the other hand, I have been quite as chary of letting even the shade of Mr. Jackson raise a new commotion—I say the shade, because, having his own copy full of manuscript remarks, it was at my option to use them; but I have adopted nothing from this source save a few palpable amendments. What additions have been made are entirely my own, and have arisen from a desire to increase the number of illustrations where I thought them previously deficient and had the means of supplying them. With the insertion of these additional illustrations, which it appears amount to seventy-five, it became necessary to describe them, and this has occasioned the introduction of perhaps a hundred or two lines, which are distributed in the form of notes or paragraphs throughout the volume. For the chief of these additions the critical examiner is referred to the following pages: 321, 322, 340, 352, 374, 428, 468, 477, 480, 493, 530, 531, 532, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 545, 546, 547, 548, 617, 639. The chapter on the artists of the present day is entirely new, and was not contemplated, as may be gathered from the remarks at pages 549 and 597, until the book was on the eve of publication. It contains upwards of seventy high class wood engravings, and gives a fair specimen of the talents of some of our most distinguished artists. Getting that supplementary matter together and into shape, was not so light and sudden a task as I meant it to be; but now it is done I feel that it was right to do it, and I can only hope that my unpretending labours will be deemed a step in the right direction. Should I retain my health, strength, and means, I purpose, at no very distant period, to follow up the present volume with one perhaps as large, giving a more complete series of Examples of the artists of the day, as well those of France and Germany as of England.

In conclusion, I think it due to Mr. Clay to acknowledge the attention and skill which he has exercised in "bringing up" the numerous and somewhat difficult cuts to the agreeable face they now present. A good engraving without good printing is like a diamond without its polish.

HENRY G. BOHN.

January 4th, 1861.

MR. JACKSON'S PREFACE.

I FEEL it my duty to submit to the public a few remarks, introductory to the Preface, which bears the signature of Mr. Chatto.

As my attention has been more readily directed to matters connected with my own profession than any other, it is not surprising that I should find almost a total absence of practical knowledge in all English authors who have written the early history of wood engraving. From the first occasion on which my attention was directed to the subject, to the present time, I have had frequent occasion to regret, that the early history and practice of the art were not to be found in any book in the English language. In the most expensive works of this description the process itself is not even correctly described, so that the reader—supposing him to be unacquainted with the subject—is obliged to follow the author in comparative darkness. It has not been without reason I have come to the conclusion, that, if the *practice*, as well as the *history* of wood engraving, were *better understood*, we should not have so many speculative opinions put forth by almost all writers on the subject, taking on trust what has been previously written, without giving themselves the trouble to examine and form an opinion of their own. Both with a view to amuse and improve myself as a wood engraver, I had long been in the habit of studying such productions of the old masters as came within my reach, and could not help noting the simple mistakes that many authors made in consequence of their knowing nothing of the practice. The farther I prosecuted the inquiry, the more interesting it became; every additional piece of information strengthening my first opinion, that, "if the *practice*, as well as the *history* of wood engraving, were *better understood*," we should not have so many erroneous statements respecting both the history and capabilities of the art. At length, I determined upon engraving at my leisure hours a fac-simile of anything I thought worth preserving. For some time I continued to pursue this course, reading such English authors as have written on the origin and early history of wood engraving, and making memoranda, without proposing to myself any particular plan. It was not until I had proceeded thus far that I stopped to consider whether the information I had gleaned could not be applied to some specific purpose. My plan, at this time, was to give a short introductory history to precede the practice of the art, which I proposed

should form the principal feature in the Work. At this period, I was fortunate in procuring the able assistance of Mr. W. A. Chatto, with whom I have examined every work that called for the exercise of practical knowledge. This naturally anticipated much that had been reserved for the practice, and has, in some degree, extended the historical portion beyond what I had originally contemplated; although, I trust, the reader will have no occasion to regret such a deviation from the original plan, or that it has not been *written* by myself. The number and variety of the subjects it has been found necessary to introduce, rendered it a task of some difficulty to preserve the characteristics of each individual master, varying as they do in the style of execution. It only remains for me to add, that, although I had the hardihood to venture upon such an undertaking, it was not without a hope that the history of the art, with an account of the practice, illustrated with numerous wood engravings, would be looked upon with indulgence from one who only professed to give a fac-simile of whatever appeared worthy of notice, with opinions founded on a practical knowledge of the art.

JOHN JACKSON.

LONDON, *December 15th, 1838.*

MR. CHATTO'S PREFACE.

THOUGH several English authors have, in modern times, written on the origin and early history of wood engraving, yet no one has hitherto given, in a distinct work, a connected account of its progress from the earliest period to the present time; and no one, however confidently he may have expressed his opinion on the subject, appears to have thought it necessary to make himself acquainted with the practice of the art. The antiquity and early history of wood engraving appear to have been considered as themes which allowed of great scope for speculation, and required no practical knowledge of the art. It is from this cause that we find so many erroneous statements in almost every modern dissertation on wood engraving. Had the writers ever thought of appealing to a person practically acquainted with the art, whose early productions they professed to give some account of, their conjectures might, in many instances, have been spared; and had they, in matters requiring research, taken the pains to examine and judge for themselves, instead of adopting the opinions of others, they would have discovered that a considerable portion of what they thus took on trust, was not in accordance with facts.

As the antiquity and early history of wood engraving form a considerable portion of two expensive works which profess to give some account of the art, it has been thought that such a work as the present, combining the history with the practice of the art, and with numerous cuts illustrative of its progress, decline, and revival, might not be unfavourably received.

In the first chapter an attempt is made to trace the principle of wood engraving from the earliest authentic period; and to prove, by a continuous series of facts, that the art, when first applied to the impression of pictorial subjects on paper, about the beginning of the fifteenth century, was not so much an original invention, as the extension of a principle which had long been known and practically applied.

The second chapter contains an account of the progress of the art as exemplified in the earliest known single cuts, and in the block-books which preceded the invention of typography. In this chapter there is also an account of the *Speculum Salvationis*, which has been ascribed to Laurence Coster by Hadrian Junius, Scriverius, Meerman, and others, and which has frequently been described as an early block-book executed previous to 1440. A close examination of two Latin editions of the book has, however, convinced me, that in the earliest the text is entirely printed from movable types, and that in the other—supposed by Meerman to be the earliest, and to afford proofs of the progress of Coster's invention—those portions of the text which are printed from wood-blocks have been copied from the corresponding portions of the earlier edition with the text printed entirely from movable types. Fournier was the first who discovered that one of the Latin editions was printed partly from types, and partly from wood-blocks; and the credit of showing, from certain imperfections in the cuts, that this edition was subsequent to the other with the text printed entirely from types, is due to the late Mr. Ottley.

As typography, or printing from movable types, was unquestionably suggested by the earliest block-books with the text engraved on wood, the third chapter is devoted to an examination of the claims of Gutemberg and Coster to the honour of this invention. In the investigation of the evidence which has been produced in the behalf of each, the writer has endeavoured to divest his mind of all bias, and to decide according to facts, without reference to the opinions of either party. He has had no theory to support; and has neither a partiality for Mentz, nor a dislike to Harlem. It perhaps may not be unnecessary to mention here, that the cuts of arms from the History of the Virgin, given at pages 75, 76, and 77, were engraved before the writer had seen Koning's work on the Invention of Printing, Harlem, 1816, where they are also copied, and several of them assigned to Hannau, Burgundy, Brabant, Utrecht, and Leyden, and to certain Flemish noblemen, whose names are not mentioned. It is not improbable that, like the two rash Knights in the fable, we may have seen the shields on opposite sides;—the bearings may be common to states and families, both of Germany and the Netherlands.

The fourth chapter contains an account of wood engraving in connexion with the press, from the establishment of typography to the latter end of the fifteenth century. The fifth chapter comprehends the period in which Albert Durer flourished,—that is, from about 1498 to 1528. The sixth contains a notice of the principal wood-cuts designed by Holbein, with an account of the extension and improvement of the art in the sixteenth century, and of its subsequent decline. In the seventh chapter the history of the art is brought down from the commencement of the eighteenth century to the present time.

The eighth chapter contains an account of the practice of the art, with remarks on metallic relief engraving, and the best mode of printing wood-cuts. As no detailed account of the practice of wood engraving has hitherto been published in England, it is presumed that the information afforded by this part of the Work will not only be interesting to amateurs of the art, but useful to those who are professionally connected with it.

It is but justice to Mr. Jackson to add, that the Work was commenced by him at his sole risk; that most of the subjects are of his selection; and that nearly all of them were engraved, and that a great part of the Work was written, before he thought of applying to a publisher. The credit of commencing the Work, and of illustrating it so profusely, regardless of expense, is unquestionably due to him.

W. A. CHATTO.

LONDON, *December 5th, 1838.*

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Erratum

life of St. Birinus, of the twelfth century
twelfth

ON WOOD ENGRAVING.

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THE END.

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Errors and Inconsistencies (noted by transcriber)

Inconsistent spellings were only regularized when there was a strong preponderance; changes are individually noted. The various spellings of the name now written "Shakespeare" are unchanged, as are the forms "Albert Durer" and "Gutemberg". German citations consistently omit the period (full stop) in references such as "2 Theil". Other unchanged forms include:

cross line : cross-line
figuersnider : figursnider
fore-/back-ground : fore/background
type-founder : typefounder
wood-cut : woodcut
wood-engraver : wood engraver
Schaufflein : Schäuufflein

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