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Marghab Rare Book Collection

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MARGHAB RARE BOOK COLLECTION

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Vera Way Marghab

Vera Way Marghab was co-founder and president of Emile Marghab Inc., New York, and Marghab, Ltd., Madeira. This business produced linens designed by Mrs. Marghab and embroidered by skilled artisans in Madeira.

Marghab linens, unsurpassed in quality, became world-famous. Many of the designs were used in palaces and embassies. Several are in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. A complete collection, 1918 pieces and 282 designs, is in the South Dakota Art Museum in Brookings, S.D.

Begun in 1934 by Mrs. Marghab and her husband, Emile, a British subject and native of Cyprus, the business sold linens exclusively in fine shops in New York; Los Angeles; Dallas; Minneapolis; and Melbourne and Sydney, Australia.

After Mr. Marghab's death in 1947, Mrs. Marghab managed the business alone until the political situation in Madeira forced her to close in 1984. Shortly thereafter she returned to Watertown where she expanded her childhood home "Wayland" on Lake Kampeska, and settled into the community.

In 1984 Mrs. Marghab was awarded the prestigious Estrelicia Dourage Award by the government of Madeira for her service to that island. She was also awarded an engraved silver bowl by Georg Jensen's, one of New York's most exclusive stores. Georg Jensen's is a firm with which she was closely associated and for which many of her designs were created.

Mrs. Marghab was nominated for the Spirit of Dakota Award in 1994 and for the South Dakota State University Alumni Association Distinguished Service Award in 1995. She was a member of the South



Dakota Art Museum Board and the Watertown Drama Club.

At Mrs. Marghab's death in 1995, gifts to the South Dakota Art Museum included all remaining Marghab linens in her personal collection (valued at approximately \$500,000) and a cash bequest of \$110,000. The Art Museum has decided to use \$100,000 of the bequest to publish a book of her life and the history of Marghab Linens.

During her lifetime Mrs. Marghab also contributed generously to organizations and individuals supporting environmental, population and ethical issues. She provided financial help to young people for educational purposes and supported programs of local, statewide

and national interest. She left more than \$140,000 to these causes at her death.

A program which she established during her lifetime to provide *The Christian Science Monitor* to selected high schools in South Dakota will continue permanently. The interest from a \$35,000 fund will provide annual subscriptions for the schools.

A second program in the form of a writing competition for graduate students enrolled in South Dakota universities will be conducted in 1997, 1998 and 1999. Students who compete will submit papers on three different topics which are based on ethical, environmental or social issues. A \$3,000 prize will be awarded each year.

To her hometown Mrs. Marghab bequeathed \$700,000. The Watertown Community Foundation will administer the bequest, using interest from the fund to support Watertown community projects. The Foundation will select projects to be funded including some specific activities suggested through Mrs. Marghab's trust.

These include the Watertown Community Concert Association; the Mellette House; Lake Kampeska; Codington County Historical Society; Habitat for Humanity, Watertown Chapter; and the performing arts and projects associated with the arts. Her lakeside Watertown home and her furniture and artifacts of historical value were left to The First Church of Christ Scientist in Boston. Her home has been sold to a Watertown resident.

Mrs. Marghab's trust allowed \$41,000 for South Dakota Public Broadcasting to complete a documentary, and it provided the possibility of a fund for a lecture or series of lectures based on topics which were of lifetime interest and concern to her.

The rare books given to the South Dakota State University Hilton M. Briggs Library during Mrs. Marghab's lifetime are in a class by themselves. She spent several years contemplating and arranging for a suitable disposition of the books. Many of the volumes were from a collection given to her by her brother-in-law, Theo Marghab, a Cyprus native.

The books were lovingly preserved in Mrs. Marghab's library at her home. They were never shelved with other books that lined the walls of the library but were carefully wrapped in fine linen and boxed in protective containers. She was especially delighted when Dean Leon Raney of Hilton M. Briggs Library provided her with containers sized to the different books. The books were carefully transferred to the containers, and in line with her penchant for clear identification of any item she filed or stored, she marked each as to content. One of her joys was to unwrap the books and carefully display them to interested friends. She was meticulous about handling the books carefully. On occasion when she was alone or with a trusted friend, she would go to her library to look at the collection and exclaim about their beauty, importance and the pleasure they had given her through the years. They were a precious gift and she recognized their significance.

Mrs. Marghab's decision to give the rare books to the Hilton M. Briggs Library was made after long deliberation. She considered a

number of libraries as the final resting place for the books, including the Library of Congress; libraries in New York City where she maintained an office and apartment for many years; and other libraries of prominence and excellent reputation. In the end, however, it was her decision that they be placed in the Hilton M. Briggs Library. In this decision she was influenced by her long-standing friendship with and respect for Dr. Hilton Briggs and by her later friendship with Dr. Leon Raney for whom she had high regard. She gave Dr. Briggs credit for promoting the South Dakota Art Museum as an ideal place to house and display the only complete collection of Marghab linens. And she recognized in Dr. Raney a bibliophile who appreciated the rare books in the way she did. She felt also that her gift would be more significant to the SDSU library than to other libraries and that she could trust the University to respect her desire that the books be accessible to students and scholars and not locked away from public view.

Mrs. Marghab's brother, Kenneth Way of Watertown, and his family are pleased with her choice of the Hilton M. Briggs Library as a repository for this collection of rare books. They know that she had planned to be present for the formal acceptance of the books and would have taken great pleasure in sharing these treasures with others who appreciate them.

Mrs. Marghab often spoke of her parents' role in instilling in her the moral values that were reflected throughout her personal and professional life. She attributed her strength of character and spiritual values to her parents. Her deep commitment to and affection for South Dakota were a part of her heritage from them, Kenneth Way said. Her many gifts to the state, including the rare books to the Hilton M. Briggs Library, are a partial repayment of her debt to her family and the state.

D. J. Cline, Associate Professor Emerita, Journalism and Mass Communications, South Dakota State University, and friend of Vera Marghab.

The Vera Way Marghab Rare Book Collection at South Dakota State University

When my good friend Vera Way Marghab first showed me her collection of rare books, I remember commenting to a colleague how astonished I was that such a collection should exist in South Dakota. Upon further reflection, the nearby presence of the collection did not seem so unusual. After all, many distinguished book collections of all kinds are now found in numerous places around the globe.

Richard Altick, in his fascinating book, *The Scholar Adventurers*, relates a maxim of Professor Thomas O. Mabbott concerning rare manuscripts: "If you are searching for something, the first place to look is where it should be . . . If it isn't there, the next place to look is somewhere it 'shouldn't' be." Guessing where something "shouldn't be" is of course the real challenge.

It would be easy to conclude offhandedly that Mrs. Marghab's treasured collection came to South Dakota State University quite by accident. But anyone who knew Mrs. Marghab would surely say that not many events within her sphere of influence happened by chance.

The books originally were part of a large collection of antiquarian editions first acquired by Theo Marghab, brother of Mrs. Marghab's late husband Emile, when the couple lived on Madeira where they operated the famous Marghab linen business. "Theo was a great lover of books," she explained to me, "and he delighted in showing his treasures one-by-one as they were acquired on business trips in Europe."

When the Marghab linen business was closed due to political instability on Madeira, Mrs. Marghab was forced to decide the fate of the rare book collection. By this time, both her husband and brother-in-law were deceased. She was left to manage the shipment of both business and personal possessions back to New York, where she

would live for a time before returning to "Wayland," her childhood home on Lake Kampeska, near Watertown, South Dakota.

Unable to provide adequate space and care for the bulk of the collection, Mrs. Marghab ultimately was persuaded to dispose of several hundred of the volumes through public auction at Schwann Galleries of New York. But, fortunately for us, she retained some of the most interesting and valuable books for her own personal library.

It was in the early 1990s when our mutual friend D. J. Cline asked if I might be willing to advise Mrs. Marghab on the care and preservation of the remaining collection. In time, Mrs. Marghab asked my opinion about a more permanent repository for the collection. My initial suggestion was that similar materials belong together. Scholarship generally is best served by aggregating such collections in the great rare book archives of the country. I suggested the Library of Congress and perhaps a half dozen other national archives which welcome such gifts.

I also assured her that, of course, South Dakota State University would be proud to add these rare and valuable works to the Hilton M. Briggs Library. I explained that with the availability of inexpensive photocopying, the scholar can often be served rather well from great distances. And, it is true that donors seldom find much personal satisfaction in giving to a distant institution with which they have little or no previous contact.

During our visits on several fall afternoons in 1991, I came to realize that Mrs. Marghab's real desire was to donate the remaining collection to the people of South Dakota, for whom she held great respect. How fortunate for SDSU that she chose Hilton M. Briggs Library to be the caretaker for this gift.

Certainly, the Marghab collection is the rarest and most unique book collection acquired in the 116-year history of South Dakota State University.

The collection is valuable not because of the number of books it contains but because of their characteristics and rarity. Only fourteen volumes are included. But each is unusual in some way. Some are of interest because of the subjects they cover, some because of the illustrations they contain, some because of their binding, some because of the importance of their publishers, and still others because of the historical significance of their authors.

Most of the titles have not been sold publicly in the United States for decades, so their value is difficult to establish. However, an outside appraisal by rare book specialists has confirmed that the books would have significant commercial value if sold in the antiquarian book market.

One of the titles, a three-volume set by Italian traveler Pietro della Valle, was published in 1672 and is the only complete set of this edition known to exist in the U.S. Another work by the same author is one of seven known copies in the country.

Mrs. Marghab was especially fond of the 1803 edition of *Views in the Ottoman Empire*, a work beautifully illustrated by Luigi Mayer, the famous eighteenth-century Italian draftsman and watercolorist.

One of the most curious of the volumes, a tiny two-by-four-inch book entitled *Itinerarium Benjaminis*, is a 1633 edition of the twelfth-century travelogue written by Spanish Rabbi Benjamin ben Jonah (also known as Benjamin of Tudela), a contemporary of Marco Polo. This work has been the subject of much scholarly interest throughout the centuries because of the information it contains about medieval Jewish communities.

The most spectacular of the books is an oversized 1830 folio edition of the engravings of William Hogarth, the towering figure among eighteenth-century engravers. So large is this book that an earlier



Vera Way Marghab, Dr. Leon Raney, and Dr. Robert T. Wagner display several of the books from the Marghab Rare Book Collection.

owner encased it in a custom-made wooden box. Only three copies of the work are known to exist in other U.S. libraries.

The oldest book in the collection is Pandolfo Collenuccio's *Compendio delle historie del regno di Napoli*, a history of Naples, published in 1543. In 1996, this work will become the oldest book in Hilton M. Briggs Library, and one of the oldest in South Dakota, when it is officially cataloged as the 500,000th addition to the library's permanent collections.

It is our good fortune that Mrs. Marghab knew the significance of these books and that she treasured and cared for them for nearly a half-century. Works of this kind are a priceless part of our cultural heritage. They record first-hand accounts of the daily lives of our ancestors and they help to preserve our link to the past.

We also are indebted to Mrs. Marghab for placing these materials in the public domain where they can be properly cared for, viewed, and admired by future generations. In doing so, she has enriched the educational experience of many generations of students at South Dakota State University, and made a lasting gift to the people of South Dakota.

Dr. Leon Raney, Dean of Libraries, South Dakota State University

William Hogarth

The works of William Hogarth: from the original plates, restored by James Heath; with the addition of many subjects not before collected; to which are prefixed, A biographical essay on the genius and productions of Hogarth, and explanations of the subjects of the plates by John Nichols

London: Printed for Baldwin and Cradock by G. Woodfall, [1830]

William Hogarth was a major figure among eighteenth-century engravers and painters. He pursued his art in London, where he was born in 1697 and died in 1764. Upon the completion of an apprenticeship to a silver engraver, Hogarth made a precarious living engraving arms, shop bills, and, eventually, book illustrations. In 1726, he attained some success with his plates for Samuel Butler's seventeenth-century satire on Puritanism, *Hudibras*. Inclined toward original composition, Hogarth turned to oil painting, studying under Sir James Thornhill, whose daughter Jane he eloped with in 1729. By 1730, he had established himself as an independent artist, excelling in portrait painting and displaying a satiric style. Notable among Hogarth's works are *Captain Coram* (1740), *The shrimp girl* (ca. 1740), *The marriage-à-la-mode* series (1743), and a number of self portraits. In his later years, Hogarth wrote *The analysis of beauty*, a treatise on aesthetic beauty, published in 1753.

This edition of *The works of William Hogarth* is 19³/₄ inches in width and 26 inches in height. It contains 42 pages of text, and 115 plates of engraved illustrations. Three plates are missing from the back cover. The endpapers are printed with red, blue, and yellow swirl designs. The book has been kept in a specially-constructed wooden case.

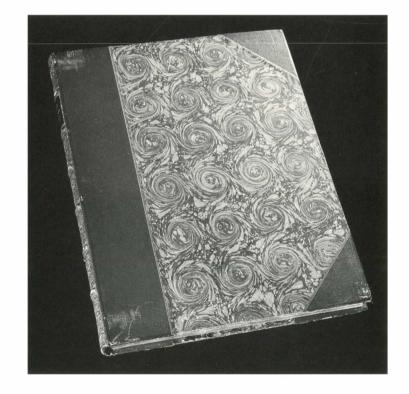




Plate I from The marriage-à-la-mode series, The works of William Hogarth (engraving)

Luigi Mayer

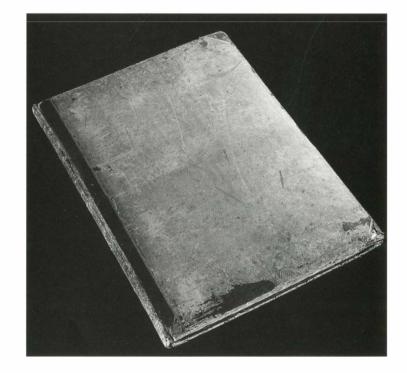
Views in the Ottoman Empire, chiefly in Caramania, a part of Asia Minor hitherto unexplored; with some curious selections from the islands of Rhodes and Cyprus, and the celebrated cities of Corinth, Carthage, and Tripoli

London: R. Bowyer, 1803

Luigi Mayer was a watercolorist and draftsman of Italian origin. His employment as view painter for Sir Robert Ainslie, British ambassador to Constantinople from 1776 to 1792, provided the basis for this collection of plates. Mayer's sketches have been cited as the most accurate representations of the Middle East prior to the drawings of David Roberts, a nineteenth-century British painter noted for his landscapes and architectural paintings. Mayer later engaged in making watercolors for aquatints. It is likely that his wife Clara assisted him in some of his art work.

Views in the Ottoman Empire features prints "from the original drawings in the possession of Sir R. Ainslie, taken during his embassy to Constantinople." (Title page)

The work is in English and French, with an added title page in French. It is 13¹/4 inches in width and 18³/8 inches in height, and contains 40 pages of text and 24 plates with engraved and hand-colored illustrations. The covers are green cloth bound with a red leather spine.



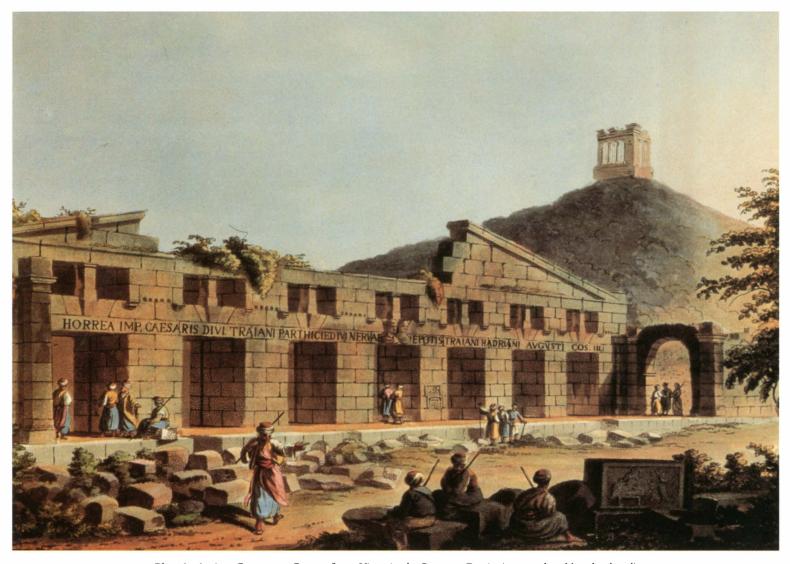


Plate 3, Ancient Granary at Cacamo from Views in the Ottoman Empire (engraved and hand-colored)

Thomas Templeman

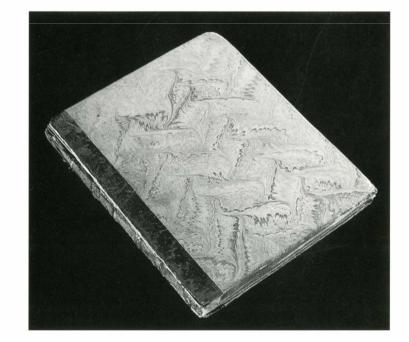
A new survey of the globe;

or, An accurate mensuration of all the empires, kingdoms, countries, states, principal provinces, counties, & islands in the world . . . A collection of all the noted sea-ports in the world . . . also the settlements & factories, belonging to the English, Dutch . . . &c. in the East and West-Indies, Africa and other parts

London: Printed for J. Bowles, engraved by T. Cole, [ca. 1765]

Thomas Templeman, writing master at St. Edmund's Bury, Suffolk, England, died in 1729. The first edition of *A new survey of the globe* was published in London that same year.

This later edition contains plates referring to the 1763 Treaty of Paris and was probably published around 1765.



The volume is 7³/4 inches in width and 9⁵/8 inches in height. It is hard-bound in red and blue marbled paper. There are 35 double-page engraved plates, primarily charts.

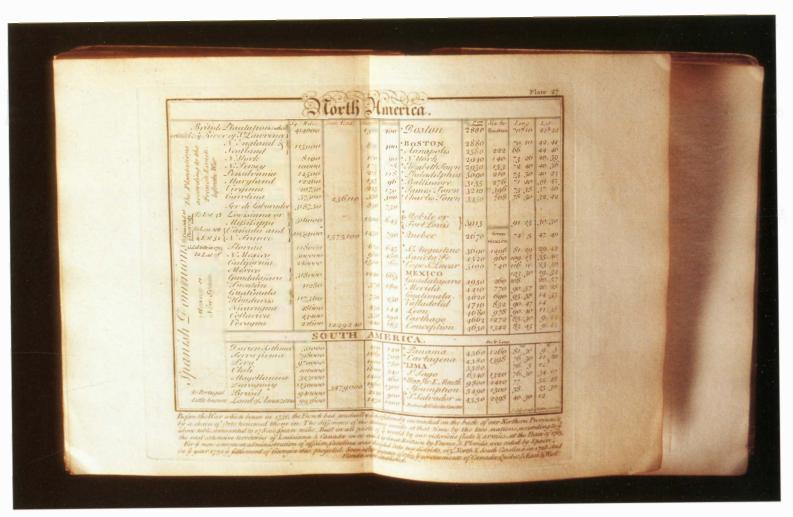


Plate 27 from A new survey of the globe (hand engraving)

Numbers 4 & 5

Humphrey Prideaux

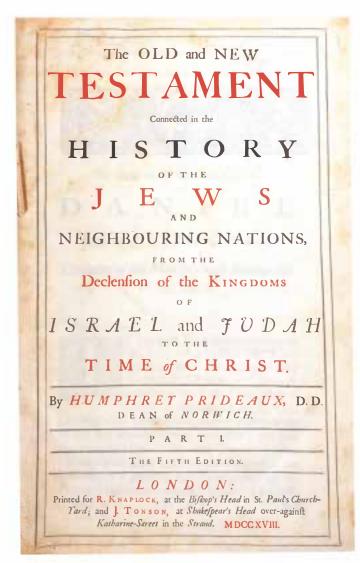
The Old and New Testament connected in the history of the Jews and neighbouring nations, from the declension of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah to the time of Christ

London: Printed for R. Knaplock and J. Tonson, 1718

Humphrey Prideaux was born in Padstow, Cornwall, England in 1648. He was educated at Christ Church College, Oxford, where he subsequently served as a lecturer in Hebrew and as unsalaried librarian. Prideaux married Bridget Bokenham in 1686. In 1702, he was installed as dean of Norwich, where he remained until his death in 1724. Prideaux wrote a number of theological works, prominent among which are his *Life of Mahomet* (1697) and his *The Old and New Testament* . . . (1716-1718).

This fifth edition of *The Old and New Testament* . . . is in two volumes, each of which measures 9 inches in width and 13⁵/8 inches in height. The first volume contains eight books (453 pages plus chronological tables), and the second volume contains nine books (518 pages plus chronological tables and an index). The title is printed in red and black. The books are hard-bound in leather with hand-tooled embellishments and gilding.





Title page from The Old and New Testament . . . (two-color letterpress printing)

Benjamin ben Jonah

Itinerarium Benjaminis

Lvgd. Batavorum [Leiden]: officina Elziviriana, [1633]

Benjamin ben Jonah, or Benjamin of Tudela, was a medieval Spanish rabbi who journeyed throughout the Mediterranean and Middle East in the second half of the twelfth century. *Itinerarivm Benjaminis*, his journal of these travels, provides valuable information about the Jewish communities in the lands he visited.

Rabbi Benjamin embarked on his journeys around the year 1159, traveling to France, Italy, and Greece; the city of Constantinople; the islands of the Aegean and Cyprus; Syria and Lebanon; the Holy Land; the cities of Baghdad and Babylon; the western parts of Persia; and finally Egypt. Fourteen years passed before he returned to his hometown of Tudela in Spain in 1173.

Throughout his travels, Benjamin observed the conditions and practices of the Jewish communities he encountered. In Thebes, he admired the great learning of the rabbis. In Constantinople, he deplored the segregation and ridicule suffered by the Jewish population. In Damascus, he discovered a strong and learned Jewish culture.

The treasures and sacred sites of the Holy Land provided fertile source material for Benjamin. He recounted fabulous tales of the discovery of the tomb of David with its pillars of marble encrusted with gold and silver. In the same speculative vein, he specified the spots where Noah's Ark landed and where the Tower of Babel once stood.

In Baghdad, probably the world's largest city at that time, Benjamin described the magnificent palace from which the caliph ruled the Islamic world. Benjamin appreciated the respectful treatment accorded that city's Jewish population. He traveled as far north as the Caspian Sea and then headed westward to Egypt, arriving in 1171 and visiting Alexandria and the Sinai Desert. From Egypt, he journeyed homeward, passing through Sicily en route to Spain. Upon his return, Benjamin promptly published the narrative of his travels. A Latin translation of his Hebrew text was made as early as 1575.

The publication date of this copy is uncertain. However, its binding and other physical characteristics suggest it is the widely-known 1633 edition.

The book is 2 inches in width and 3 3/4 inches in height. It contains 233 pages, plus a 7-page index and is soft-bound in white leather.



Itinerarivm Benjaminis, shown here in almost actual size.

Numbers 7, 8, & 9

Pietro della Valle

Viaggi di Pietro della Valle il Pellegrino . . . descritti da lui medesimo in 54. lettere familiari . . . all'erudito . . . suo amico Mario Schipano, diuissi in tre parti, cio'e la Tvrchia, la Persia, e l'India

Bologna: G. Longhi, 1672-1677

Italian author, poet, and composer, Pietro della Valle was born in Rome in 1586 and died there in 1652. Of noble birth and highly educated, he played a significant role in the cultural and social life of Rome. In March of 1614, he set off on a lengthy journey to the East, visiting Turkey, Egypt, Palestine, Persia, and India. Nicknamed "The Wanderer," della Valle did not return to Rome until 1626. Upon his homecoming, he recorded the story of his travels and resumed his musical and artistic interests, becoming well-known for his compositions and for his discourses on music.



Viaggi di Pietro della Valle il Pellegrino consists of three volumes, each of which diffiers slightly in size, ranging from 3 ½ to 3 ½ inches in width and from 6 ½ to 6 ½ inches in height. The first volume, *La Turchia* (1672), has 571 pages; the second volume, *La Persia* (1677), has 683 pages; and the third volume, *L'India* (1677), has 632 pages. The books are soft-bound in white leather.

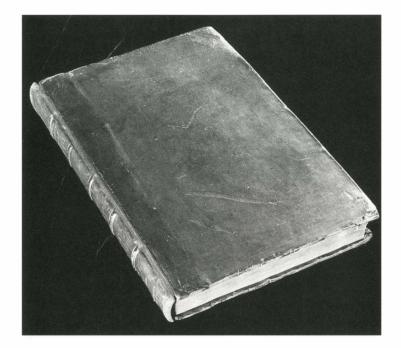
Pietro della Valle

The travels of Sig. Pietro della Valle, a noble Roman, into East-India and Arabia Deserta. In which, the several countries, . . . are faithfully described; in familiar letters to his friend Signior Mario Schipano. Whereunto is added a relation of Sir Thomas Roe's Voyage into the East-Indies

London: Printed by J. Macock, for H. Herringman, 1665

This is the English translation of the third volume of the author's *Viaggi*. Della Valle's account of his travels, first published in Italian in 1650-63, was reprinted many times and subsequently translated into English, French, German, and Dutch. The translator of this English edition was George Havers.

The travels of Sig. Pietro della Valle is 7 ³/₄ inches in width and 11 ¹/₂ inches in height. It has 480 pages and is hard-bound in leather. The illustrative plates are missing, and pages 34, 295, 313, and 323 are misnumbered 36, 294, 213, and 233 respectively.



Pandolfo Collenuccio

Compendio delle historie del regno di Napoli composto da messer Pandolfo Collenucio iurisconsulto in Pesaro

Venitia: [Michele Tramezino], 1543

Italian humanist Pandolfo Collenuccio was born in Pesaro in 1444 and died there in 1504. A true Renaissance man, he was a literary scholar, historian, geographer, collector of rare plants and animals, and diplomat. He held offices at the courts of Giovanni Sforza, Lorenzo il Magnifico, and Ercole d'Este. His works include this history of Naples and poems and dialogues in Latin and Italian.

This volume consists of two parts. The first part contains "de re di Franca" (3 books), "de re d'Ispagna" (3 books), "de re di Gierusalem" (1 book), "de re di Napoli & di Sicilia" (4 books), and "de re di Ungaria" (2 books). The second part is Collenuccio's *Compendio*.

The book is 4½ inches in width and 6¾ inches in height. The first section of the book contains 90 pages (plus an index), and the *Compendio* contains 215 pages. The covers are parchment, and the book is tied with two leather laces.



Richard Pococke

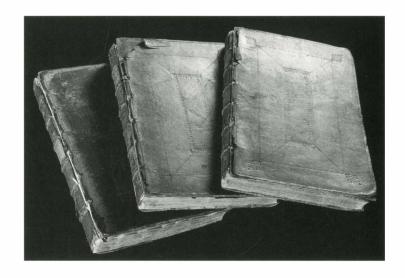
A description of the East, and some other countries

London: Printed for the author, by W. Bowyer, 1743-1745

Richard Pococke was born in Southampton, England, in 1704 and was educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. An inveterate traveler, he made extensive trips to the Middle East, Egypt, and Europe in the 1730s, 40s, and 50s, visiting many relatively unknown regions. He published detailed narrative accounts of his journeys which were highly regarded by contemporaries, as well as by later generations. In 1756, Pococke was appointed bishop of Ossory in Ireland, where he oversaw the restoration of the cathedral church of St. Canice and established a factory in Kilkenny for the instruction of boys in the art of weaving. In 1765, he became the bishop of Meath, a position he held for only a short time before his death in September of that year.

A description of the East is in three volumes: Volume 1 is titled Observations on Egypt (1743); Volume 2, Part 1 is titled Observations on Palestine or the Holy Land, Syria, Mesopotamia, Cyprus, and Candia (1745); and Volume 2, Part 2 is titled Observations on the islands of the Archipelago, Asia Minor, Thrace, Greece, and some other parts of Europe (1745).

Each volume is 10¹/₂ inches in width and 16 inches in height. The first volume has 308 pages; Volume 2, Part 1 has 268 pages; and Volume 2, Part 2 has 308 pages. The books are hard-bound in brown leather with hand-tooled embellishments.



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