Bibliographical Notes

THE BIRTH-YEAR OF GILLIS VAN DIEST I, ANTWERP PRINTER OF ENGLISH BOOKS

In testimony given on 29 April 1566 concerning the printing of an unlicensed book, Gillis van Diest the elder gives his age as about 70 ('omtrent 70 Jarë'). Thus he was probably born in 1496.

Testimony in the same connexion and on the same date by two other Antwerp printers of English books confirms previous evidence of their years of birth. Jan Grapheus, affirming that he lived 'inde heylichgeestrate', gave his age as about 64 years, which accords with Duff that he was born in 1502. Hans de Lact's deposition that he lived 'op de lôbaered veste inden Saeye' out omtrent 41 Jaren also confirms McKerrow's statement that he was born c. 1525.

A Gillis van Diest, son of Henry, was made a burgher of the City of Antwerp on 13 September 1549: 'Gillis van diest Henriciss. geboren diest Boeckprintere'. This is doubtless the elder van Diest, who was made free of the St. Lucas Guild in 1533. The younger Gillis, his son, entered the guild in 1573, but did not receive the royal licence to set up as a printer till 5 February 1574/5. This fact, incidentally, supports McKerrow's belief that Sayle was wrong in assigning English books printed before 1565 to the younger Gillis.

Gillis I may have been in poverty during his last years. At any rate, Gillis van Diest's name appears in a list of 'Noms de compagnons lesquels se sont retrouvés besoignants en l'imprimerie de C. Plantin'. This list is found in a register which spans the years 1563–72.

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THE BIRTHPLACE OF STEPHEN MIERDMAN, FLEMISH PRINTER IN LONDON c. 1549–c. 1552

Oltshoff's conjecture that Mierdman was born in Hooge Mierde ('warschijnlijk geboortig van Hoog Meerde') is confirmed by the entry in the Antwerp Poortersboeken which records his admission as a freeman of the

2 E. G. Duff, A Century of the English Book Trade, 1905, p. 60.
4 Stadsarchieven van Antwerpen, v. 146 (Vierschaarboek, 1548–54).
5 Prosper Verheyden, 'Drukkersoctrooien in de 16e eeuw', Tijdschrift voor Boek- en Bibliotheekwetenschappen, 8 (1910), 223.
6 Archives du Musée Plantin-Morenus, No. 23.
7 Frans Oltshoff, De Boekdrukkers, Boekverkoopers en Uitgevers in Antwerpen sedert de Uitwinding der Boekdrukmanschap tot op onze Dagen, Antwerpen, 1891, pp. 69–70.
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city on 16 November 1543: ‘Steven mierdman boeckprinter geboren vana hooge mierde.’

The village of Hooge Mierde is situated in the province of North Brabant, Holland, about 2½ km. from the present Belgian frontier, roughly north-east of Turnhout, Belgium, and west-south-west of Eindhoven, Holland.

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JOHN WOLFE AND A SPANISH BOOK

The first edition of Bartolome Felippe’s Tractado del consejo y de los consejeros was printed at Coimbra by Antonio de Mariz in 1584. On 4 April 1589 John Wolfe, the London printer, ‘Entred for his copie vnder master Hartwelles hand and master Coldokes in Spanishe and Englysshe: Tractado del Conselo [sic] y de los consejeros de los Principes’ in the Register of the Stationers’ Company. The English translation, which was the work of John Thorius of Oxford, is well known as S.T.C. 10753. Foster (Alumni Oxonienses) tells us that Thorius was eighteen in October 1586, so that this translation was made when he was but twenty-one; quite possibly owing much of his livelihood to Wolfe. The later history of Thorius does not concern us here, except to remember that he was living with Wolfe at the same time as Harvey and that for a time he was a supporter of Harvey in the Gabriel Harvey–Thomas Nashe controversy, contributing commendatory matter to Harvey’s Pierces Supererogation which was published by Wolfe in 1593; though in Haue with you to Saffron Walden, Nashe says (McKerrow ed., iii. 105): ‘Of this Iohn Thorius more sparingly I wil speake, because hee hath made his peace with mee’, and later in the same book (McKerrow ed., iii. 135) quotes a rather abject letter of apology to him from Thorius. These facts serve to show the closeness of the earlier relationship of Thorius to Wolfe, and the way in which that relationship brought Nashe’s attention to bear upon him.

Though Wolfe entered Felippe’s work in the Stationers’ Company Register to be printed in Spanish and English, no Spanish edition with his imprint is known; and indeed, the only sixteenth-century Spanish edition other than that of 1584 which Palau mentions is one with the imprint Turino | Impresso en casa de Gio. vincenzo del Peretto | Con licencia de los

1 Stadsarchieven van Antwerpen, v. 144 (Vierschaarboek, 1541–4). I am indebted to Dr. Frans Blockmans, Archivist of the City of Antwerp, for permission to inspect these records. The Poortersboeken, it may be explained, occupy the same registers which contain the proceedings of the municipal court called the Vierschaar, but they begin at the back of each volume and run in a reverse direction, the pages not being numbered. For the most part, these entries of admission to the freedom of the city are in chronological order.

2 Nashe, Haue with you to Saffron Walden (McKerrow, iii. 102): ‘A Summarie or breife Analysis of such matters as are handled in the Doctors Booke.

‘Inprinmis, one Epistle, of a sheete and more of paper, to his gentle & liberall frends, Master Barnabé Barnes, Master Iohn Thorius . . . .

‘. . . It is to thanke them for their curteous Letters and commendatorie Sonnets, wrt to him from a faire, as namely, out of the hall into the kitchin at Wolfe’s, where altogether at one time they lodged and boorded.’

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