

William A. Kelly, *Low Countries Imprints in Scottish Research Libraries*. (Crossways, 6). Münster: Waxmann, 2007. 157 pp. ISBN 9783830918660. €34.90. pbk.

Researchers requiring detailed accounts of collections of early German imprints held in Scotland (and indeed Great Britain as a whole and Ireland too) are extremely well served in *A Guide to Collections of Books Printed in German-Speaking Countries before 1901* (Hildesheim: Olms-Weidmann, 2000), edited by Graham Jefcoate, William A. Kelly, and Karen Kloth, as volume ten of Bernard Fabian's authoritative *Handbuch deutscher historischer Buchbestände in Europa*. Kelly wrote most of the Scottish entries for that reference work. Working to a very similar model, he has here produced a carefully compiled and very readable survey for pre-1801 Netherlandish books held in publicly accessible Scottish research libraries, which is an invaluable guide for researchers needing to locate Low Countries printed, primary sources. It is published as part of the *Crossways* book series, which appears in parallel with *Dutch Crossing*, the journal of the Association for Low Countries Studies in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Fourteen Scottish research institutions are covered, which include the university libraries of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, St Andrews, and Strathclyde, as well as the National Library of Scotland, whose entry – the longest in the book – runs to 34 pages. Kelly describes for each of these, in short essays likely to be of wider use: the history of the various institutions and their libraries; the provenance, nature, and scope of their relevant, individual named and special collections; and the characteristics of the Low Countries holdings therein, giving extensive examples of significant and representative books held. In addition to ranging across standard subjects that one might expect to be recorded, these are holdings that also include some surprising caches, such as Amsterdam and Antwerp atlases in Aberdeen University Library, and early pamphlets about comets in the Crawford Collection of the Royal Observatory, Edinburgh, which constitute the most sizeable collection of pre-1801 publications in Dutch which Kelly has uncovered. Alongside publications from Amsterdam and Antwerp, he also lists throughout the guide examples of important titles published in Brussels, Delft, Franeker, Ghent, Groningen, The Hague, Leiden, Leuven, Maastricht, and Rotterdam, as well as others emanating from smaller towns and minor presses.

Other interesting features of this guide comprise details of secondary literature about the research institutions and their libraries, catalogues and finding aids for the collections described, and a short name and subject index. Whilst some of the helpful, practical information also given (contact details, library opening hours, travel directions) is liable to date and become inaccurate over time – for example, the web address listed for St Andrews University Library is already incorrect – it is useful still to have. In this respect, an online version of this book, at some point, might be yet more helpful, particularly if a revised version could include the one omission that Kelly acknowledges in his introduction – the absence of an entry for Dundee University Library.

As the Low Countries were, disproportionately to their size and population, such a major region for the production of early printed books, and Kelly's guide is otherwise so thorough and comprehensive, *Low Countries Imprints in Scottish Research Libraries* is an important new reference work, and it is attractively priced for library purchases.

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<http://www.cilip.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/DF113F4-B833-4F62-ABF8-30CFA253CB86/0/rarebooksnewsletter84final.pdf>