

Printers' Marks

Shortly after the invention of the printing press during the 15th century, printers began the custom of using a cut displaying a personal emblem or device called "Printers' Marks". This mark used by the printer as a kind of "trade mark" on the work he had printed was placed at the end of the book following the colophon (a written paragraph prepared by the printer indicating the title and author of the book, usually the printer's name, place and date of publication and often the editor and the patron who made possible the publication of the book). Today the colophon has been replaced by the title page.

The symbolisms of the emblems found in the Printers' Marks are numerous and varied. Many are imitations of coats of arms and heraldic devices, some are pictorial representations of the printer's name, others were "punning" devices based on the printer's name. The orb and cross design were very popular as were various forms of shields and marks which depicted the printing press or printing implements. Animals, birds, fish, trees and flowers were other sources of symbolism often used with repeated geometric designs. Most of the devices were accompanied by the printer's initials either obvious or concealed in the design.

Although there are some 1,500 fifteenth and sixteenth century Printers' Marks, Mr. Clarence Donath, architect for the Aurora Town Public Library, selected 13 to be used in the top panels of the windows of the Reading Room and Meeting Room of the library.

Images of printers' Marks reproduced from *A Study of Rare Books* by Nolie Mumey (Clason Press, 1930)

Window # 1

Printer: Mace Panthoul

Date: 1501



Window #2

Printer: Valentin Schumann

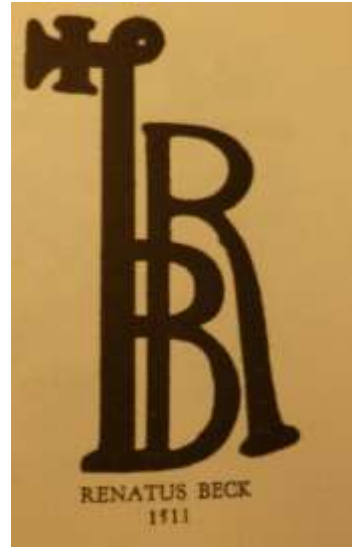
Date: 1502



Window #3

Printer: Renatus Beck

Date: 1511



Window #4

Printer: De Liesveldt

Date: 1528



Window # 5

Printer: Richard Grafton

Date: 1537



Window # 6

Printer: Erhart Oglin

Date: 1505



Window # 7

**Printer: Gian Giacomo
Di Legnano**

Date: 1503



Window # 8

Printer: Hugh Singleton

Date: 1548



Window # 9

Printer: Jannot De Campis

Date: 1505



Window # 10

Printer: John Delot

Date: 1495



Window # 11

Printer: John Guyart

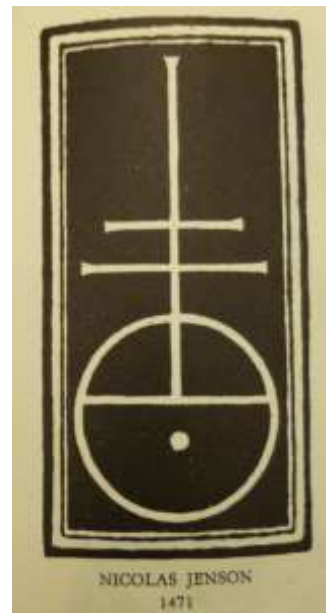
Date: 1528



Window # 12

Printer: Nicolas Jenson

Date: 1528



Window # 13

Printer: Wygand Kohn

Date: 1523

