

**Bibliographical Description and Bindings of the Princeton copies of the Kelmscott *Chaucer* prepared by Robert Milevski, Preservation Librarian (November 2005)**

Bibliographical Description. The following description of the printed text and collation applies to each copy of the Kelmscott *Chaucer* at Princeton. This description is synthesized from several sale and library catalog entries for it. Any variations are listed in the binding descriptions.

Royal folio. Perch paper. Leaf size: 425 x 292 mm. Of an edition of 438 copies, 425 were printed on paper and 13 on vellum. 87 woodcut illustrations after Sir Edward Burne-Jones, redrawn by Robert Catterson-Smith and cut by W. H. Hooper, woodcut title-page, 14 variously repeated full-page woodcut borders on 117 pages, 18 variously repeated woodcut frames around illustrations, 26 19-line woodcut initial words, numerous three-, six-, and ten-line and smaller woodcut initial letters, and woodcut printer's device, all designed by William Morris and cut by C. E. Keates, W. H. Hooper, and W. Spielmeyer. Printed in black and red in Chaucer type, the titles of longer poems printed in Troy type. Double columns. Edited by F. S. Ellis. Printing completed: 8 May 1896. Published: 20 June 1896.

Collation: 2°: a<sup>4</sup> b-c<sup>4</sup> d<sup>8</sup> (±d.4.5) e-l<sup>8</sup> [m]<sup>8</sup> n-2m<sup>8</sup> 2n<sup>6</sup>. 282 leaves, pp. [4] [i] ii [2] [=8] [1] 2-554 [2] [=556].<sup>1</sup>

Colophon (page 554).

HERE ENDS the Book of the Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, edited by F. S. Ellis; ornamented with pictures designed by Sir Edward Burne-Jones, and engraved on wood by W. H. Hooper. Printed by me William Morris at the Kelmscott Press, Upper Mall, Hammersmith, in the County of Middlesex, finished on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of May, 1896.

The hearty thanks of the Editor and Printer are due to the Reverend Professor Skeat for kindly allowing the use of his emendations to the Ellesmere MS. of the Canterbury Tales, and also of his emended texts of Chaucer's other writings. The like thanks also the Editor and Printer give to the Delegates of the Oxford University Press for allowing them to avail themselves of Professor Skeat's permission.

Description of Bindings.

**Graphic Arts copy. (GAX) PR1850.1896f**

SIGNED      Unsigned

BINDING MATERIAL AND TYPE	Standard J. & J. Leighton binding of linen spine (1/4 cloth) and blue paper-covered boards; tight back binding (cloth glued to spine of textblock)
SEWING AND ENDBANDS	Sewn on 5 linen tapes; no headbands
EDGES	Untouched
TOOLING	None
TITLING	Paper label, top spine panel, printed in black in enlarged version of Morris's Golden type: "CHAUCER'S / WORKS"
BOX	In felt-lined Solander box of dark blue morocco; curved spine with 5 fake raised cords; panel two stamped in gold: "THE / KELMSCOTT / CHAUCER"; bottom panel stamped in gold with date "1896"; unsigned
PROVENANCE	Inscription: "E. Maude Parry / and / C Hubert H Parry / from / R. H and Evelyn Benson. July / 97" [1897]; afterwards, unknown provenance until copy passes into possession of Princeton University Library in 1952, although Elmer Adler may have owned it
CONDITION	Binding worn; paper spine label worn; front and rear endleaves loose

**Hagar copy. (Ex) 3674.1896f copy 1 (acquired 1952)**

The Hagar *Chaucer* is a magnificent, elegantly gold tooled, white pigskin binding designed by the famous bookbinder, printer and designer T. J. (Thomas James) Cobden-Sanderson and executed at his Doves Bindery in 1903. Cobden-Sanderson was a contemporary of William Morris. The Hagar binding appears to duplicate in every detail the design Cobden-Sanderson had created for his personal copy of the *Chaucer*, which was bound in 1900 and is now part of the collection of Sir Paul Getty, KBE, at The Wormsley Library. The noted bookbinding historian and Cobden-Sanderson scholar Marianne Tidcombe speculates that a wealthy collector may have seen Cobden-Sanderson's copy of the *Chaucer* and paid to have it replicated on his copy of the book. A variation of this design is on a copy of the *Works* at the Huntington Library (San Marino, California). The Hagar *Chaucer* has been on display at Princeton at least twice since its acquisition, most recently in the exhibition entitled "Hand Bookbindings, Plain and Simple to Grand and Glorious" (10 November 2002 through 20 April 2003), curated by Scott Husby, the Library's rare books conservator.

SIGNED	"THE DOVES BINDERY / 19 C-S 03" (signed in gold on the back board turn-in, lower left hand corner)
BINDING MATERIAL AND TYPE	White pigskin on wood boards; tight back binding; hammer and anvil watermarked endleaves
SEWING AND ENDBANDS	Sewn on 6 raised bands; double headbands in gold and khaki

EDGES	All edges gilded but untrimmed
GOLD TOOLING	<p>“The [front cover] outer border is lettered with the opening words of the Canterbury Tales: WHAN THAT APRILLE WITH HIS SHOURES / SOOTE THE DROGHTE OF MARCH HATH PERCED TO THE / ROOTE AND BATHED EVERY VEYNE IN SWICH LICOUR / OF WHICH VERTU ENGENDRED IS THE FLOUR, with five dots at each corner; there are ten narrow border panels, tooled with lines, round the large panel which is tooled all-over in an arabesque of gougework convolvulus flowers and heart-shaped leaves with a lens-shaped area in the centre tooled similarly, but with a dotted background. The large back [cover] panels are tooled with straight lines, gougework, dots and overlapping leaves, the two narrow panels top and bottom have no leaves; the title is lettered in the top large [spine] panel. The turn-ins are tooled with some of the tools used on the covers.”<sup>2</sup></p>
TITLING	Gold-stamped title in top spine panel: “THE WORKS / OF / GEOFFREY / CHAUCER”
BOX	<p>“Cobden-Sanderson had special niger covered boxes made for both the vellum and paper copies of the Chaucer...His specifications for making the boxes...states that [they] are made of 3/8" mahogany, and the inside dimensions are 17¾" X 13¼". The depth of the base is...2 ¾" for the paper copies, and the lid is 1" deep...The boxes are fitted with ‘piano stop butts’ (hinges), and a brass lock and key. They are...covered and lined with brick-red native-dyed niger goatskin. Neither the back nor the foreedge drops down, but a chamois-lined niger wrapper with a stiff base, enables the book to be easily lifted from its box.”<sup>3</sup> The Hagar <i>Chaucer</i> box (figure 9) is signed “THE DOVES BINDERY 1903” (on the lower rim of the base) and the lettering on the lid of the box repeats that on the front cover of the 48 pigskin bindings executed by the Doves Bindery: “GEOFFREY CHAUCER / KELMSCOTT” (figure 7).</p>
PROVENANCE	Property of Mrs. H. Howard Hagar; given to Princeton University Library on 9 April 1952 “in memory of her grandfather, James Laughlin, Jr. ’68, and of her mother, Martha Page Laughlin Seeler”; date acquired by Hagar is unknown, as are prior owners

CONDITION Book in very fine condition; box scuffed

**Reed copy. Ex 3674.1896f copy 2 (acquired 1953)**

SIGNED	Unsigned, although binding is attributed to J. & J. Leighton and probably executed after June 1896 4
BINDING MATERIAL	Quarter pigskin and oak boards; tight back binding
SEWING AND ENDBANDS	Sewn on 5 double raised cords; single core coffee-colored endbands
EDGES	Untouched
GOLD TOOLING	None
BLIND TOOLING	The binding is tooled on the sides with a decorative roll, a headed outline tool, a lozenge tool, and a small leaf tool (where endcaps and raised cords meet the boards); the spine is tooled with the same decorative roll and headed outline tool
TITLING	Blind tooled title in second spine panel: "CHAUCER'S / WORKS"
BOX	None
PROVENANCE	Presentation copy from the <i>Chaucer's</i> editor to his wife, with undated inscription attributed to her on recto of front flyleaf, upper right hand corner: "Caroline A. F. Ellis / from her beloved husband / F. S. Ellis / & bequeathed by her to her friend / Ernest H. Coleridge & / his heirs"; sale, Sotheby, 13 November 1929, lot 461, purchased by Maggs Bros. for £ 440; the book was offered for sale once more (probably to Reed) at an unknown date for an unknown price by an unknown bookseller or auction house after the Maggs purchase, as per laid in clipping in binding; bookplate, front pastedown: "Princeton University Library / from the collection of David Aiken Reed / Class of 1900 / Presented in his memory by Mrs. Reed" (in August 1953).
CONDITION	Very good

**Scheide copy. WHS (on deposit at Princeton University Library as of November 2005)**

SIGNED	Unsigned
BINDING MATERIAL AND TYPE	Standard J. & J. Leighton binding of linen spine (1/4 cloth) and blue paper-covered boards; tight back binding (cloth glued to spine of textblock)
SEWING AND ENDBANDS	Sewn on 5 linen tapes; no headbands

EDGES	Untouched
TOOLING	None
TITLING	Paper label, top spine panel, printed in black in enlarged version of Morris's Golden type: "CHAUCER'S / WORKS"; label damaged, half is missing
BOX	Slipcase with four-flap folding wrapper; curved, leather spine with 6 fake raised bands; gold-tooled title in second spine panel: "CHAUCER'S / WORKS"; at foot of bottom spine panel is the gold-tooled legend: "KELMSCOTT PRESS / 1896"; slipcase gold-tooled on bottom with name "GRABAU" <sup>5</sup>
PROVENANCE	Ex libris of William Crampton (first owner); ex libris of James Cowan (second owner); Scheide ex libris (current owner); purchased by Scheide in 1911 from London bookseller Frank Hollings) (figures 6 & 8); booksellers ticket: "Williams & Norgate. / Foreign Booksellers, / 20 South Frederick Street, / Edinburgh."
CONDITION	Binding worn; paper spine label worn; front and rear endleaves loose

1. William S. Peterson. A Bibliography of the Kelmscott Press (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985 [reprinted 2002]), p. 104.
2. Marianne Tidcombe. The Doves Bindery (London: The British Library & New Castle, Delaware: Oak Knoll Books, 1991), p. 218.
3. Ibid., p. 58.
4. "It is possible that all these [quarter pigskin] bindings were made by [J. & J. Leighton] under instructions from Sydney Cockerell, when [William] Morris was very ill or after his death." A note for this sentence then reads: "Sydney Cockerell, in the interview published in the *Daily Chronicle*, 8 August 1896, mentions'...another copy we have bound in half pigskin with oak boards...', which suggests that he may have had something to do with these bindings. If they were produced about that time, Morris was probably too ill to have been consulted." Tidcombe, Doves, p. 60.
5. John F. Grabau (1878-1948) worked at Elbert Hubbard's Roycroft Bindery in East Aurora, NY, from 1902-1905. He then moved back to his hometown, Buffalo, NY, and established the Derome Bindery. Grabau won a silver medal for bookbinding at the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. A small number of books in the Graphic Arts Reference Collection at Princeton belonging to Elmer Adler's were bound and signed in blind by Grabau. More information about Grabau, including images of a number of his bindings, is available at the following websites. [HTTP://www.roycroftbooks.org/john\\_grabau\\_links.htm](http://www.roycroftbooks.org/john_grabau_links.htm) (last visited: 5 September 2005). [HTTP://www.archivaria.com/BusDbios/BusDbios42.html](http://www.archivaria.com/BusDbios/BusDbios42.html) (last visited: 5 September 2005).