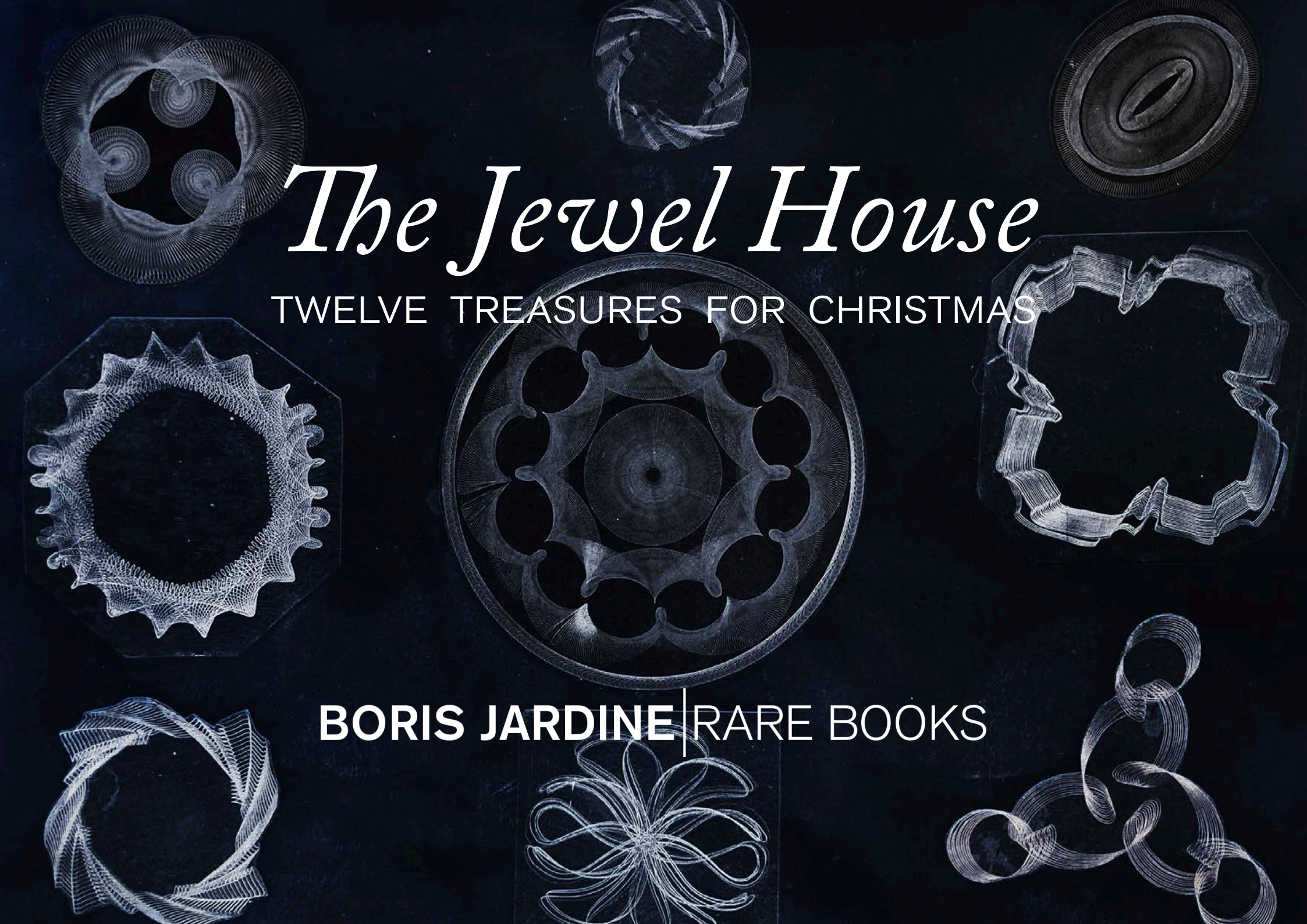

The Jewel House
TWELVE TREASURES FOR CHRISTMAS
BORIS JARDINE | RARE BOOKS

Sir hugh plat must go down as one of the most fortunate men in history: it fell to him to use his inherited wealth to pursue a life of empirical inquiry, at a time when London teemed with ingenuity, wit and wisdom. His 1594 book *The Jewell House of Art and Nature* is utterly characteristic of the age – a celebration of the goldsmiths, cooks, weavers, drapers, brewers, gardeners, and all of the capital's artisans.

We are proud to offer a manuscript commonplace (item no. 1) taken from Plat's work, compiled by someone evidently concerned with household management, soon after Plat's book was published. For all that has been made of *The Jewell House* – for example in Deborah Harkness' marvellous book of that name – the reception of Plat's work is poorly documented; this manuscript may be the best surviving record of how this remarkable work was actually read and used in the period.

Inspired by this, we have taken Plat's conceit, of a printed (now digital) treasury, and applied it to our own recent acquisitions. The result is a kind of bibliographic *Wunderkammer*, ranging from Shakespearian delights to 'geometrical turning', from the sole photographic record of Neil Armstrong's first steps on the Moon to a 17th century embroidered binding. Welcome to the Jewel House.

Boris Jardine
December 2025

For all orders and inquiries contact:

Boris Jardine
info@borisjardine.com
+44 (0)7951 597703

Free shipping on all orders, worldwide

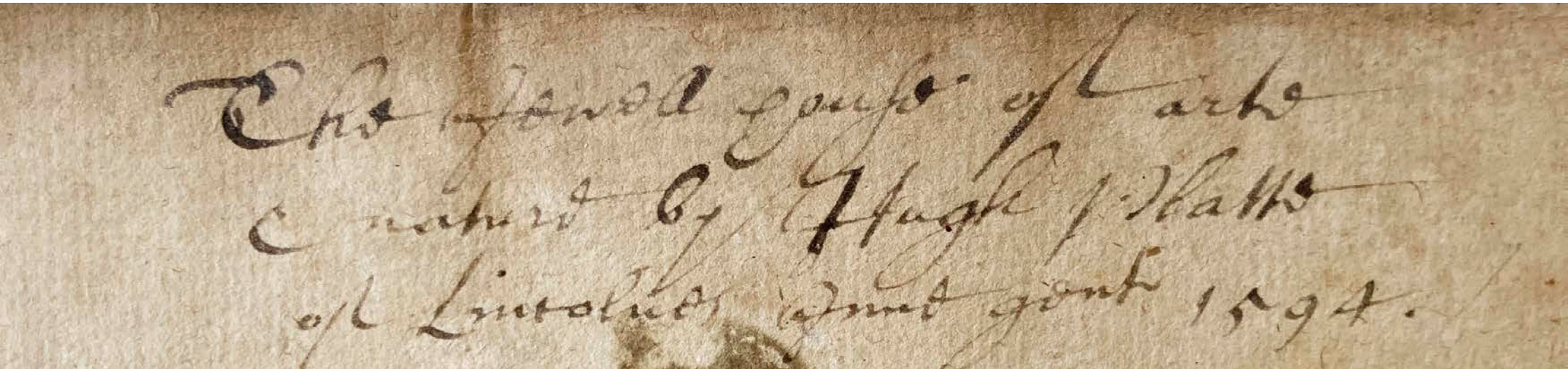
Local taxes and import duties may be additionally applicable

VAT applicable in the United Kingdom where the price is marked with an asterisk*

Front cover: no. 7, Geometric turning (image inverted)

Below: no. 1, Elizabethan recipes (MS)

Rear cover: no. 5, Embroidered binding



I. ELIZABETHAN RECIPE COMMONPLACE

[PLAT, Sir Hugh (1552–1608)]

Elizabethan manuscript of recipes, cures and household experiments, after 1594

Eight MS pages (4 loose leaves: 2 single sheets either side of a bifold sheet), 202 x 155mm, laid paper, one leaf with single-handed pot watermark with crescents and maker's mark 'P | P/F O', evidence of previous stab-stitching; inscribed on all sides (approx. 1,500 words); fair to good condition: edges worn, water-mark and stain to the same place on all pages, but not generally affecting legibility

£4,500*

An extensive set of extracts, all adapted from Hugh Plat's famous work *The Jewell House* (1594), including recipes for beer, purgitaves, preserved meat, 'daintie sweete butter', 'delicate cakes without spice or sugar', as well as practical advice, metallurgy and animal husbrandry. In total 24 separate extracts are given, ranging from brief sentences ('To preserve garments from moths') to multiple paragraphs ('To fatten a horse').

Of the very wide range of subjects covered in Plat's book, our copyist prefers household tips and utilitarian solutions – though some are still extravagant, for example 'To grave armes or posies vpon an eggshell', and 'To carrie gold in a secret maner'.

This anonymous manuscript is apparently contemporary with the first edition of *The Jewell House*, the title of which and spelling of Plat's name ('Platte') it copies faithfully. It seems unlikely that the description 'Hugh Platte of Lincolnes Inn gent' would be used after his death in 1608, giving us a likely *terminus ante quem*. The secretary

'To make delicate cakes without spice or sugar: Take parsnip roots wash then then drie them and beate them into powder…'

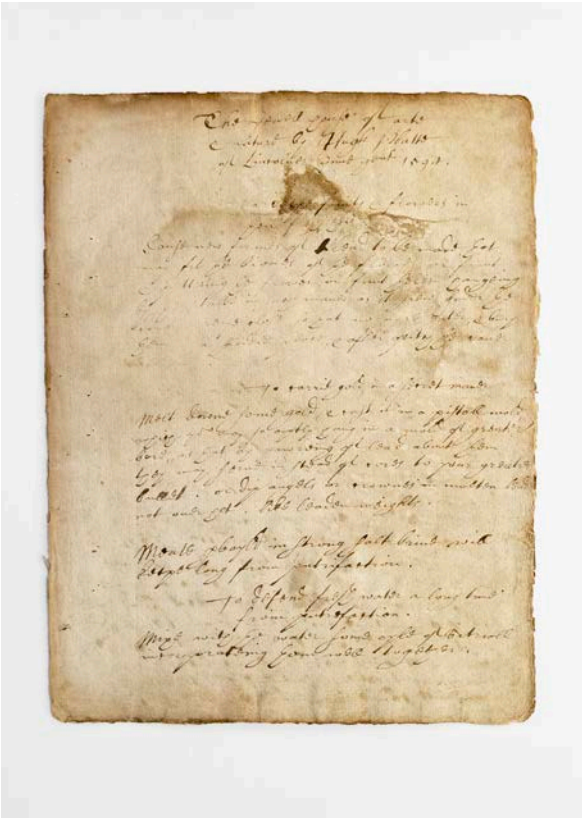
hand is consistent with an early date, and the watermark of the single-handled pot with maker's initials and multiple crescents is typical of paper made after about 1570.

In contrast of the his interest in the know-how of artisans, Hugh Plat was in fact a wealthy Cambridge educated lawyer. His inherited fortune gave him the leisure to pursue his interests in useful knowledge, with the proviso that everything that he published would be 'drawn from the infallible grounds of practice'.

As Deborah Harkness writes in her historical study of the Elizabethan culture of invention (which takes its title from Plat's book):

> For Plat, London was a 'jewel house' of experimental expertise, a treasure trove of natural knowledge, and he saw himself as the lapidary responsible for testing, polishing, and authoritatively recounting the best examples of this work for future generations.

For Harkness and others this places Plat at the origin of experimental science itself: his work predates that of Francis



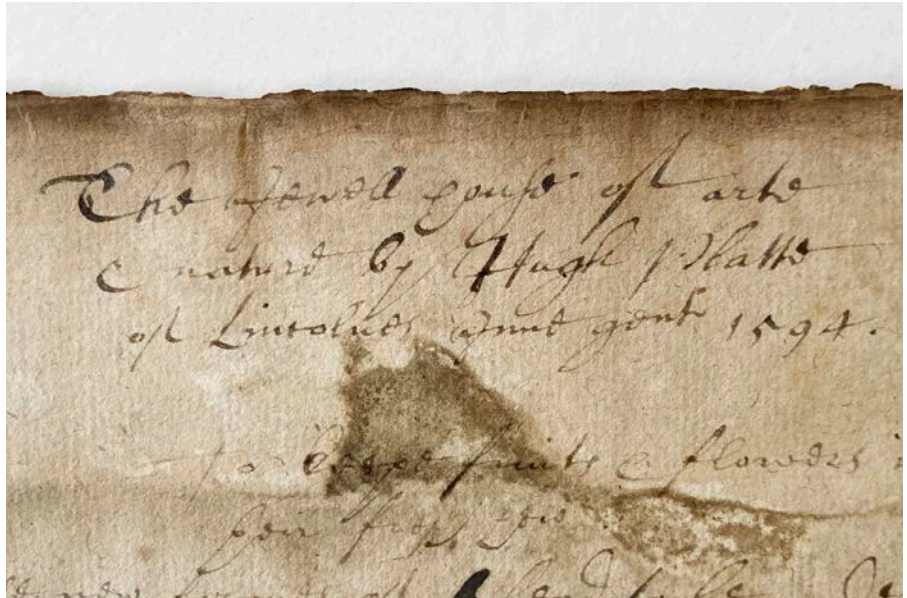
Bacon, Samuel Hartlib, and the various groups that would go on to form the Royal Society, and is a treasury of artisanal empiricism.

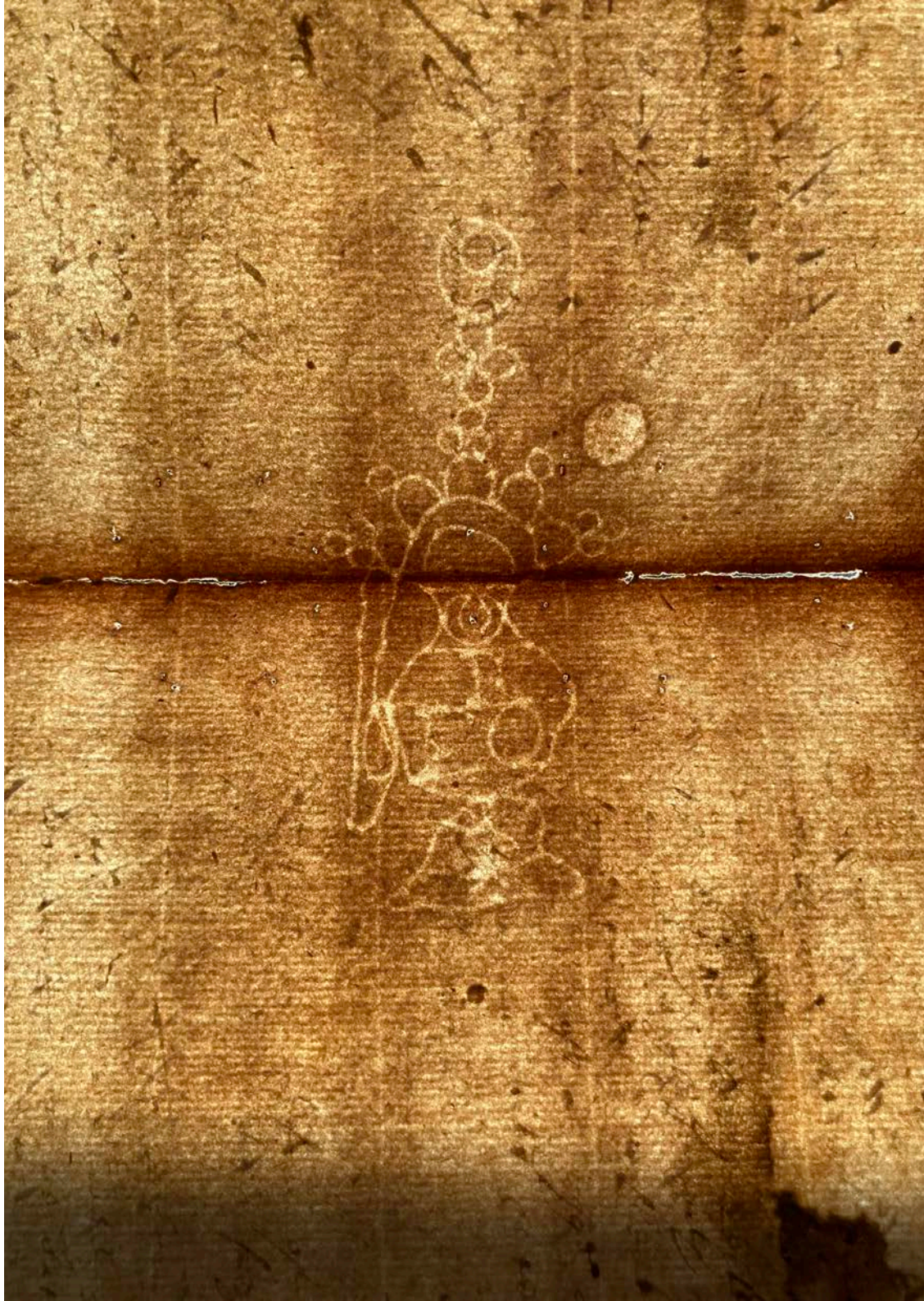
The Jewell House, as published in 1594 by Peter Short of Breadstreet Hill, is fairly well represented in collections and auction records, yet we have been able to locate only lightly annotated copies; we have not found any manuscript copies of any part of the text. Hence the present manuscript is an invaluable record of the way in which Plat's text was read and put to use. The selection, ordering and adaptation of Plat's recipes as they are presented here will reward further study. This is particularly salient, given Plat's own stated aim, that

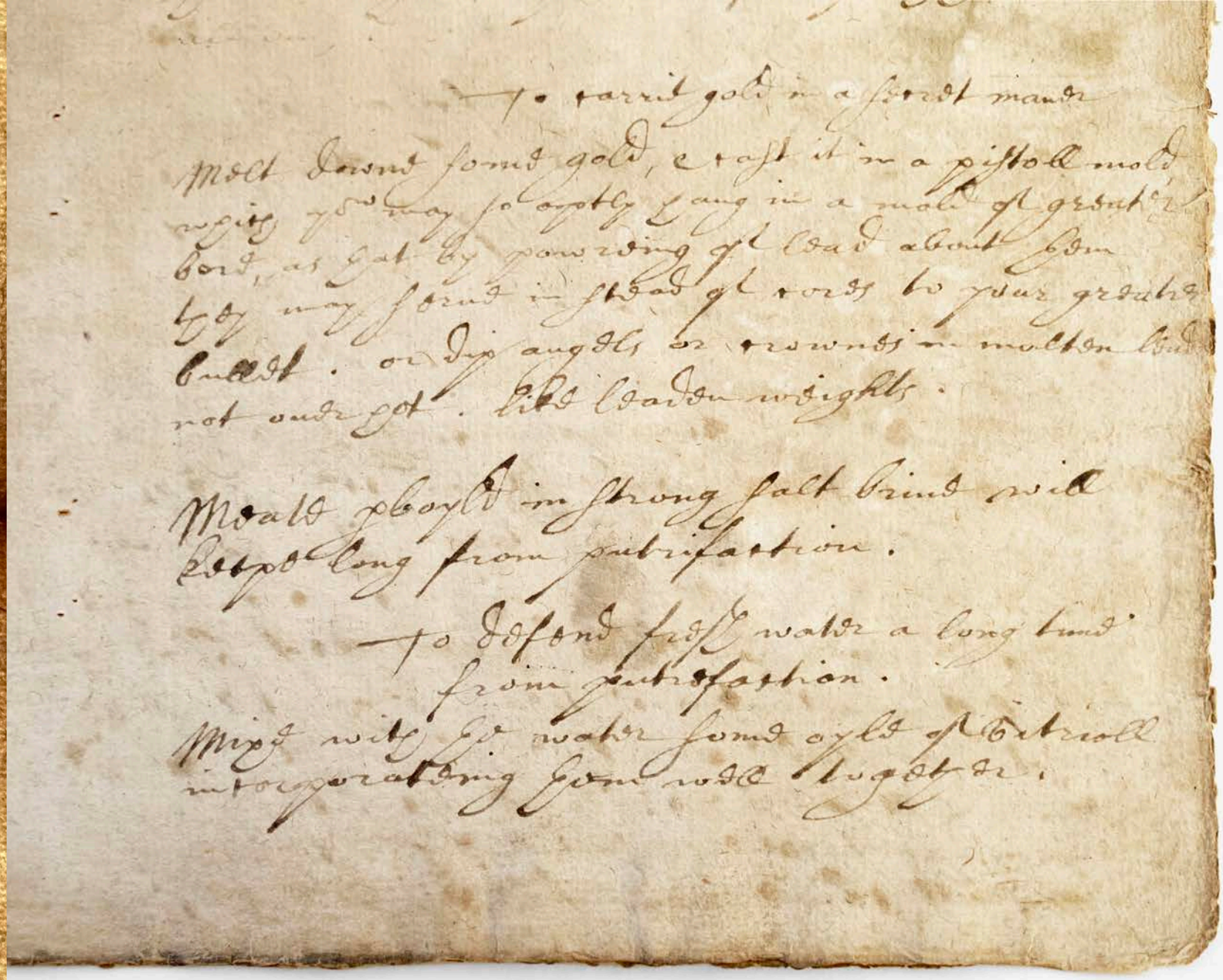
> as the rustical people & plain clouted shooes, shal happily find from varietie of soile in sundry places where their ordinary dung doth faile them, so those which are ingenious, may gather philoſophical matter enough, to stirre vp their sharpe wits to a higher contemplation of Nature

Elizabethan recipe manuscripts of any kind are exceptionally scarce: of the more than 150 recipe manuscripts at the Folger Shakespeare Library, only 5 date from *circa* 1600 or ealier.

The manuscript is offered with a full transcription, with only a handful of uncertain words.







'To carrie gold in a secret maner…'

'Meate playcd in strong salt brine…'

'To defend fresh water a long time…'

2. SHAKESPEARE ILLUSTRATED, FOR CHILDREN

[SIDNEY, Herbet (1858–1923)], SHAKESPEARE, William (1564–1616)

Scenes from Shakespeare for the Young […] edited by Charles Alias; preface by E.L. Blanchard

London: Alfred Hays, 1885

Oblong elephant folio format, 330 x 452mm; colour illustrated title-page and letterpress title-page, followed by sixteen colour plates, engraved by Lefman & Co., printed by B. Renaudet, each with corresponding leaf of text; index of plates to final leaf. Very good condition: elaborate gilt-decorated red cloth binding; spine worn and a little weak, frayed at the bottom; internally very good throughout.

£500

A STUNNING PRODUCTION, and a high-point of Victorian Shakespeare-mania. Sidney's evocative illustrations are presented in a massive and elegantly produced 'elephant folio', with a gilt version of Sidney's pictorial title-page applied to the front cover. The title-page itself, with Shakespeare gesturing to Queen Elizabeth I, is much reproduced (see overleaf).

The work was backed by more than 1,000 subscribers, amongst them actors Henry Irving and Sarah Bernhardt, and soprano Adelina Patti. The volume was issued in June 1885 at price of 21 shillings (1 guinea), perhaps belying the notion that this was intended as an exercise in introducing Shakespeare to children.

Scarce: 5 copies listed on COPAC, with OCLC adding 7 more; Sidney's own copy is held at the Folger Shakespeare Library.


SCENES
FROM
Shakespeare
FOR
THE YOUNG
Illustrated by
H. SIDNEY
EDITED BY
CHAR: ALIAS
Come, draw this curtain and let's see your picture
Troilus and Cressida
Act III, Sc II

3. SOPHIA LYGON'S CHISWICK SHAKESPEARE

[LYGON, Sophia (1789–1834) – her copy], SHAKESPEARE, William (1564–1616)

The Dramatic Works of William Shakspeare

Colophon: 'Chiswick: Printed by C. Whittingham. Sold by Carpenter and Son; J. Carr; Sharpe and Hailes; Gale, Curtis, and Fenner; R. Jennings; and J. Martin; London. 1814' [individual plays dated 1813]

7 vols; small 8vo, 122 × 80mm; various paginations. Very good condition: attractive contemporary half-leather binding, with gilt spine titles and marbled boards; internally very good, noting only some sporadic pencil markings, a somewhat loose leaf to the rear of Vol. II, and the fact that the trimming affects some examples of Sophia Lygon's signature.

£850

A BEAUTIFUL FIRST EDITION SET of Whittingham's Chiswick Shakespeare, each of the seven volumes inscribed 'Sophia Lygon', and bearing the armorial bookplate of Sir Charles E. Kent.

Lady Sophia Kent, née Lygon (1789–1834) was the daughter of William Lygon, 1st Earl Beauchamp, and wife of Sir Charles Egleton Kent, 2nd Baronet. These volumes evidently predate her marriage, which took place in 1818. A bust of Lady Sophia Kent was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1818.

Charles Whittingham (1767–1840) was one of the most enterprising printers of his age. Following an apprenticeship to a Coventry printer and bookseller, he set up a small business just off Fleet Street. His chief innovation was the production of handy editions of famous authors. In 1809 he moved his business to Chiswick, where he used old ropes from the dockyards to extract the tar for ink and pulp for paper. Under the Chiswick imprint he specialised in illustrated books.

The Whittingham Shakespeare was to become one of the most popular editions of the 19th century, and his Chiswick Press is seen as a precursor of the 'private press' movement of William Morris and others later in the century.

The present set is the first edition of the Chiswick/Whittingham Shakespeare, complete in 7 volumes, Vol. I including John Britton's 'Remarks on the Life and Writings of William Shakspeare [*sic*]' and Samuel Johnson's 1765 'Preface'. The set boasts 'Two Hundred and Thirty Embellishments', these taking the form of attractive vignettes to the volume title-pages, titles of each play, and each act. Volume I with additional frontispiece showing Shakespeare's birthplace, and a vignette of a bust of Shakespeare opposite the first page of Britton's 'Remarks'. Vol. VII with an unpaginated 'Glossarial Index', and 4 unpaginated leaves of adverts for Whittingham's Chiswick Press.

Scarce: COPAC records only 7 institutional holdings for this first Chiswick/Whittingham Shakespeare. Note that some supposed first editions are in fact mixed editions; each play has a separate title-page and these should all, as here, be dated 1813.

Sophia Lyon.

THE

DRAMATIC WORKS

OF

William Shakspeare.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

the Infant,
Mewling and puking in its nurse's arms.

Whittingham's Edition.

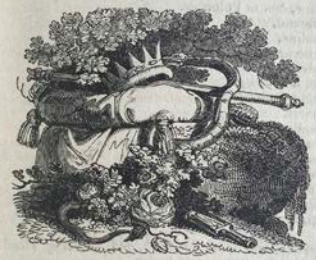
CHISWICK:
PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM.
SOLD BY CARPENTER AND SON; J. CARR;
SHARPE AND HAILES; GALE, CURTIS, AND FENNER;
R. JENNINGS; AND J. MARTIN; LONDON.

1814.

CRITIQUE.

HAMLET,

PRINCE OF DENMARK.



From the Chiswick Press.

1813.

CRITIQUE.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

From the Chiswick Press.

1813.

4. 'TRAGEDY PERSONIFIED': SARAH SIDDONS' COPY

[SIDDONS, Sarah (1755–1831) – her copy]

The New Whole Duty of Man [...]

Colophon: 'London: Printed for W. Bent. at the King's Arms. Paternoster Row. *And the other Proprietors.*' [No date, 1798?]

8vo (247 x 156mm), pp. [2], [i]–x, [1]–526, [16, index]

£1,250

An extensively marked-up copy of this classic devotional text, bearing a long note to the front free endpaper, attributing ownership to the renowned Shakespearean actress Sarah Siddons (1755–1831):

> *This copy of this admirable work belonged to the late & great Mrs. Siddons; & the markings in pencil & ink are by her hand. It passed into the possession of her daughter Mrs. George Combe who, from phrenological impulse, parted with it to Stillie the bookseller, from whence I bought it.*

The note is signed 'Borthwick', and the title page is also inscribed 'Borthwick / Crookston 1838'. This is John Borthwick, 13th Lord Borthwick (1788–1845), and Stillie is James Stillie, book and manuscript dealer of George Street, Edinburgh. George Combe, meanwhile, was the leading phrenologist of his age, and indeed married Cecila Siddons in 1833.

Sarah Siddons (1755–1831) was the leading actress of her age. In 1816, as her career reached its end, William Hazlitt wrote a of her:

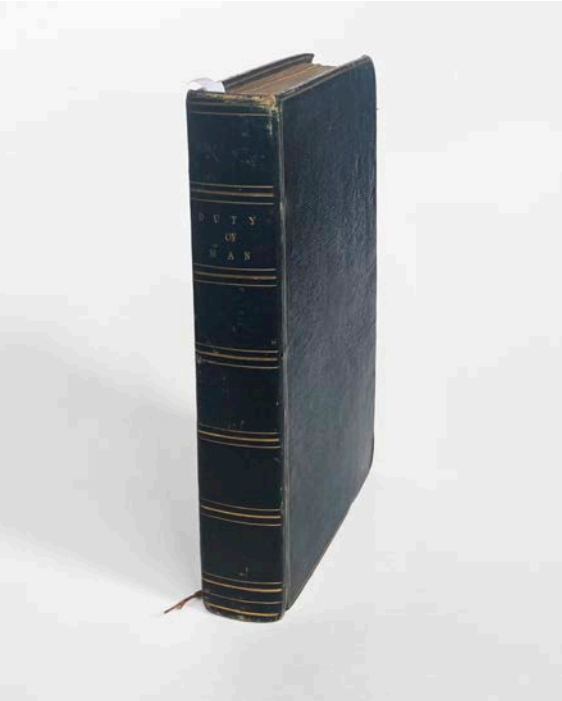
> *She raised Tragedy to the skies, or brought it down from thence. It was something above nature. We can conceive of nothing grander. She embodied to our imagination the fables of mythology, of the heroic and deified mortals of elder time. She was not less than a goddess, or than a prophetess inspired by the gods. Power was seated on her brow, passion emanated from her breast as from a shrine. She was Tragedy personified. She was the stateliest ornament of the public mind.*

This was no overstatement: throughout her career, Siddons had become not only a leading light of the stage, but also one of the first true 'celebrities'. She was painted by Thomas Lawrence (14 times!), as well as by Reynolds and Gainsborough. In Reynold's portrait she is, as Hazlitt says, a literal personification of the Muse of Tragedy.

Siddons' breakthrough role was Lady Macbeth, about whom she wrote following the success of her portrayal. She played almost every major female role in Shakespeare, but also starred as Hamlet on many occassions, to great success.

The marginal marks and alterations in the present volume are extensive, and indicate a very close reading of the text, perhaps over a prolonged period of time. Siddons was the daughter of a Catholic father and a Protestant mother, and with her sisters (though not her brothers) she was brought up as an Anglican. Later in life she turned more deeply to religion, as her early biographer Nina A. Kennard notes:

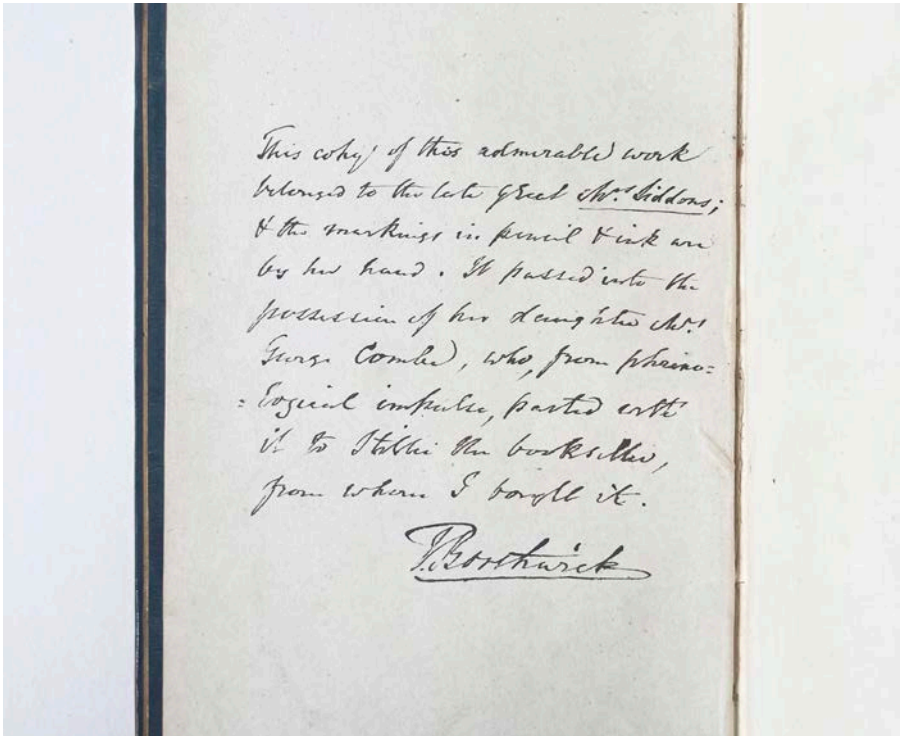
> *Above all, she had the support and consolation of a pure unswerving religious faith; through her chequered life of triumph and bereavement, joy and sorrow, Sarah Siddons had ever kept that alive in her heart.*



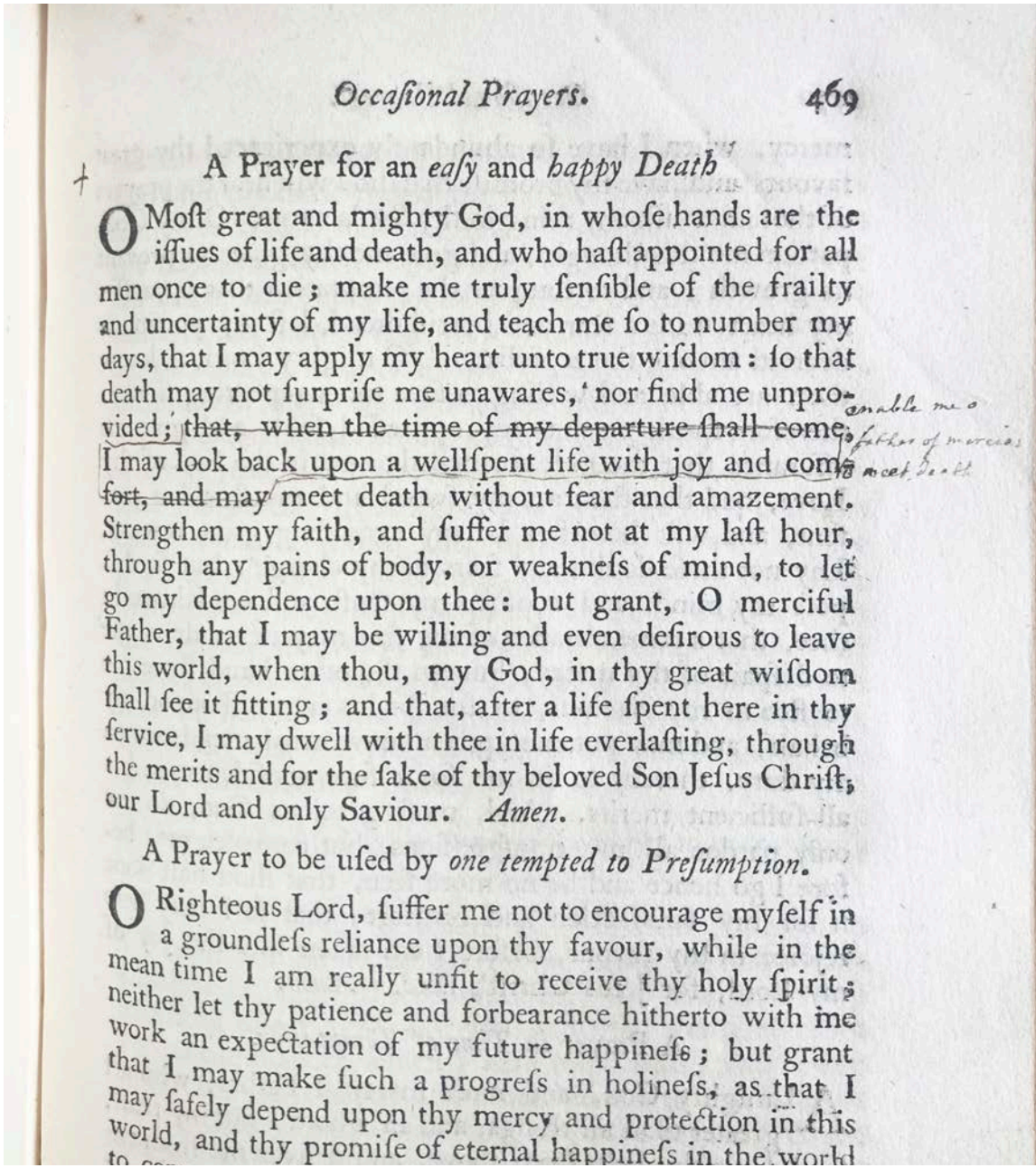
Particularly poignant is the sole marginal comment in the text, where, next to the phrase 'when the time of my departure thall come, I may look back upon a wellspent life with joy and comfort', Siddons has written 'enable me o father of mercies to meet death'.

Other more substantial annotations take the form of altering the pronouns in one section from I/me to we/us, numerous marginal marks, checks to the index presumably of favoured passages, and a large excised section from a prayer for a young person, perhaps indicating that Siddons had intended the volume to be used by one of her surviving children.

Why Combe would have given the volume to Stillie from a 'phrenological impulse' is unclear, though humour may be intended.


This copy of this admirable work belonged to the late great Mrs. Siddons; & the markings in pencil & ink are by her hand. It passed into the possession of her daughter Mrs Frances Combe, who, from phrenological impulse, parted with it to Stillie the bookseller, from whom I bought it.

J. Broderick



A Prayer for an *eaſy* and *happy Death*

O Moſt great and mighty God, in whoſe hands are the iſſues of life and death, and who haſt appointed for all men once to die; make me truly ſenſible of the frailty and uncertainty of my life, and teach me ſo to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto true wiſdom: ſo that death may not ſurpriſe me unawares, nor find me unprovided; that, when the time of my departure ſhall come, I may look back upon a wellſpent life with joy and comfort, and may meet death without fear and amazement. Strengthen my faith, and ſuffer me not at my laſt hour, through any pains of body, or weakneſs of mind, to let go my dependence upon thee: but grant, O merciful Father, that I may be willing and even deſirous to leave this world, when thou, my God, in thy great wiſdom ſhall ſee it fitting; and that, after a life ſpent here in thy ſervice, I may dwell with thee in life everlaſting, through the merits and for the ſake of thy beloved Son Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord and only Saviour. *Amen.*

enable me o father of mercies to meet Death

A Prayer to be uſed by *one tempted to Preſumption.*

O Righteous Lord, ſuffer me not to encourage myſelf in a groundleſs reliance upon thy favour, while in the mean time I am really unfit to receive thy holy ſpirit; neither let thy patience and forbearance hitherto with me work an expectation of my future happineſs; but grant that I may make ſuch a progreſs in holineſs, as that I may ſafely depend upon thy mercy and protection in this world, and thy promiſe of eternal happineſs in the world

5. EMBROIDERED, UNRECORDED

[EMBROIDERED BINDING]

The Whole Booke of Psalmes Collected into English Meeter, by T. Sternhold, I. Hopkins, and others

Colophon: 'Printed by the Printers to the *Vniversity* of CAMBRIDGE: And are to be sold at *London* by *Roger Daniel* at the *Angel* in *Lumbard-street*. 1628'

32mo in 8s, [A1]–Aa7, but missing Aa8 (last leaf of the index), ff. [1]–173 [i.e.172], [17], pagination omitting f. 127 but the text unbroken. Contemporary embroidered binding with bird in an oval frame, and extensive silver stumpwork and deocration with coloured thread, sequins and coils (one sequin loose but preserved); binding faded and worn, internally fragile, having been repaired using two needles (still present), one of which holds Aa[1]; inside cover exposed to the pasteboard; inside rear cover with early ownership inscriptions; miniscule worm trace to about 5 leaves, lower margin, not affecting text.

£3,000

AN EXCEPTIONAL SURVIVAL: an unrecorded Cambridge imprint of the Book of Psalms (the much reprinted edition of Sternhold and Hopkins), in a contemporary embroidered binding, with a bird in an oval frame to each cover, and extensive and very fine stumpwork in silver and coloured threads. The binding is unrestored and, though faded with age and with darkened silver as always, it is still utterly charming and in fact remarkably well preserved, repaying close examination.

This specific Cambridge imprint is unrecorded: Roger Daniel issued multiple Cambridge printings of the Psalmes in 1628, and yet none are at all similar to the present volume, which instead shares many bibliographic features with ESTC S90750, published by the Company of Stationers in 1624. The Folger Shakespeare Library preserves King Charles I's own copy of the 1624 printing, in elaborate embroidered binding. The present volume is far closer in style to another volume at the Folger – their copy of the 1633 Barker imprint of *The New Testament* (together with the Psalms).

THE
WHOLE
BOOKE OF
PSALMES

Collected into English
Meeter, by *T. Sternhold*,
I. Hopkins, and others.

Printed by the Printers to the
Vniversity of CAMBRIDGE:

And are to be sold at *London* by
Roger Daniel at the *Angel* in
Lumbard-street.
1628.

6. A SAMPLE OF EARLY SYNTHETIC DYE

PERKIN, Sir William Henry (1838–1907)

On Artificial Alizarin

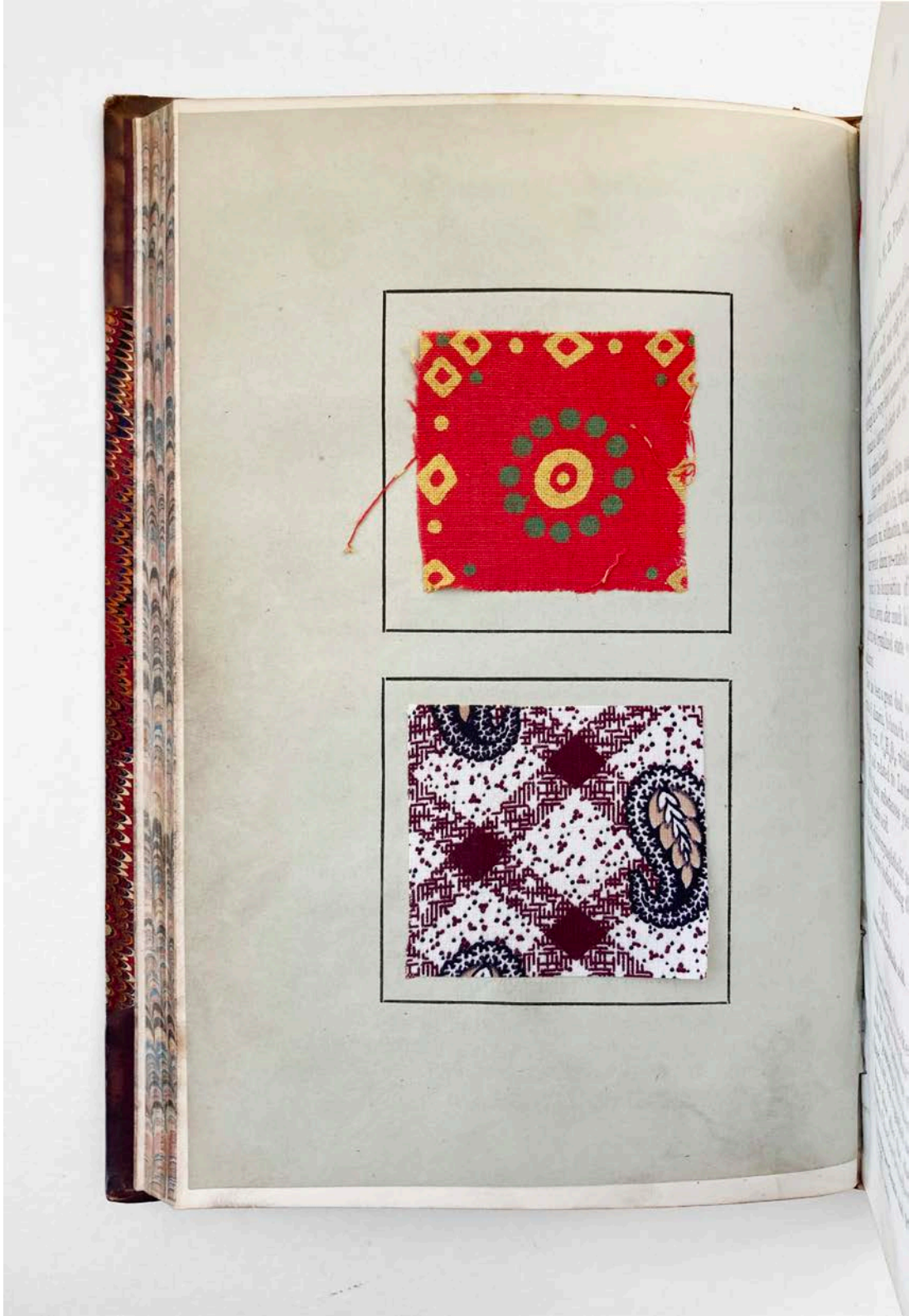
London: Van Voorst, 1870

[IN:] *The Journal of the Chemical Society of London*, Vol. 23 (1870), pp. [1], plate with mounted samples, 133–142; 8vo, 220 x 145mm, in half-leather binding with marbled boards and gilt title to the spine. Very good condition: *not* ex-library; occasional spotting, not affecting the Perkin article; errata slip tipped in after last leaf.

£950

THE FIRST EVER artifical substitute for a natural dye. In 1856 Perkin, then aged only 18, had accidentally discovered mauveine – an event that effectively launched industrial chemistry. Perkin immediately realised that he had created an entirely new and synthetic colour, which could be used in the clothing industry. In 1869 Perkin added the production of the brilliant red dye alizarin – this was the first time an already-existing colour (madder) had been synthesised. Unfortunately Perkin submitted his patent a day after the German industrial giant BASF, which subsequently dominated production of artificial dyes.

Here Perkin describes his process and his understanding of the chemistry of the process. In order to show the results, and also make the case for the utility of his dye, Perkin includes two actual samples as a 'frontispiece' to the essay. Research at the University of Glasgow has shown that there are three variants of the red cloth – which dramatically demonstrates alizarin's vibrancy – and two variants of the more complex patterened cloth, which is presumably included to show the chromatic flexibility of the dye.



7. VICTORIAN 'GENERATIVE' ART

[PLANT, George (1820–1890)]

[Specimens] of Turning done in Plant's Geometric Chuck.

[Alsager, Cheshire, 1860s(?)]

Clothbound album, 236 x 186mm; 95 album leaves, with 2 loose prints laid in, and 2 further folded sheets tipped in; together a total of 469 original prints, most engraved but 10 are original photographs. Good condition: rebacked with new endpapers; inscription to the first page largely erased; paper occasionally worn and fragile, specimens generally very good, noting that there is evidence of at least six having once been present, now removed.

£2,500

An exceptional record of 'ornamental turning', apparently the personal collection of inventor George Plant, including his own work together with specimens from his circle, including H.S. Savory and Captain Richard Pudsey Dawson.

The tradition of geometric or ornamental turning goes back to the early-modern period, but became a widespread hobby following the the development of Holtzapffel's lathe *circa* 1800. Inspired by 18th century mechanical drawing instruments, John Holt Ibbetson (1771–1844) designed the 'geometric chuck' in the 1810s. This was an attachment for the lathe, and allowed complex geometric patterns to be engraved onto a surface, which could then be printed from.

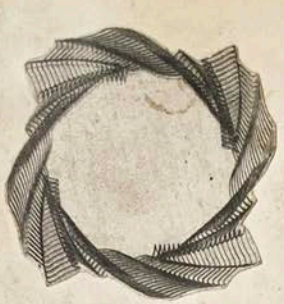
Another printing technique was developed later, in which scratched lines could be photographed and reproduced. Ten of the specimens here use this early photographic technique.

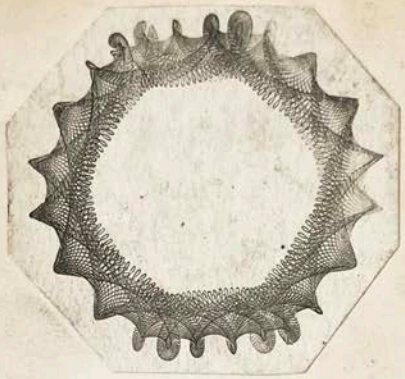
George Plant was an inventor and engineer, and in the 1860s he developed his own improvement on Ibbetson's geometric chuck. His originality was disputed by William Hartley, who claimed to have sold Plant the chuck in 1859. A lively debate in the pages of *The English Mechanic* and other journals apparently did not resolve the priority dispute, and because George Plant and Son Ltd was a successful firm, eventually established in Birmingham, the name of 'Plant's Geometric Chuck' is the one that lives on.

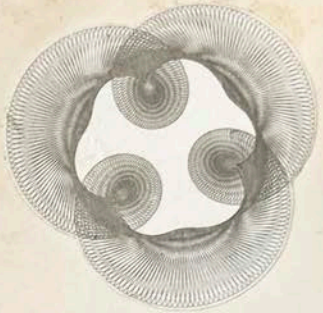
The best known product of Plant's chuck was H.S. Savory's *Geometric Turning*, published in 1873 and containing many hundreds of specimens, as well as an illustrated description of the chuck. Of the specimens in the album attributed to Savory, some do correspond with those printed in *Geometric Turning*, though the numbering differs, and many are original to the present album.

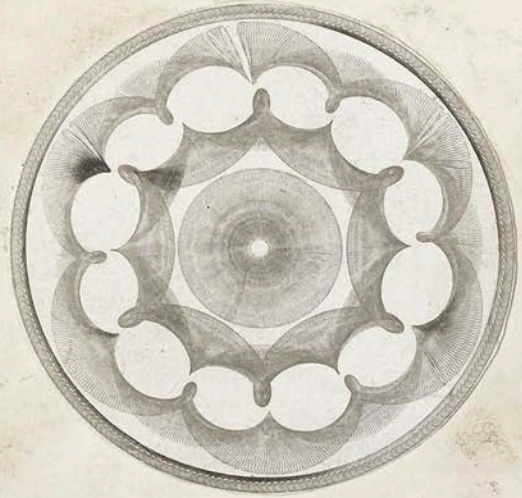
The attribution to Plant himself is from the inscription to the cover, which is located to Alsager, Cheshire; this is where Plant lived prior to his firm's move to Birmingham. An inscription to the first page is largely obliterated, but mentions the name H.S. Savory, a 'Miss Jackson', and the date 1870. Other names recorded in the volume are 'R. Livesey' of Brighton, and a 'Rev [C?] Phillips' of Ascott College, Birmingham.

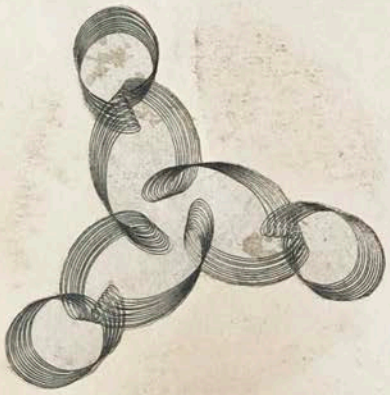
In the age of computer art, these early experiments in 'generative' or even 'algorithmic' aesthetics are undergoing a revaluation. The most famous productions of the era are the photographic 'Specimens of Fancy Turning' by Edward J. Woolsey. The examples in the present album are of similar quality, and it is notable that 10 are produced photographicaly, in a manner similar to Woolsey's.

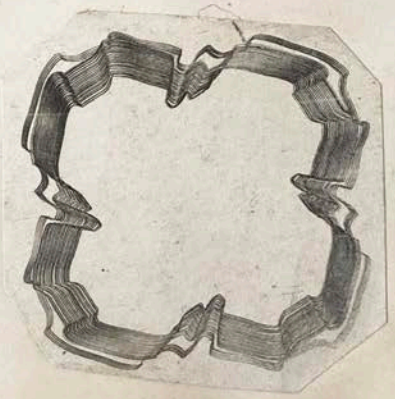


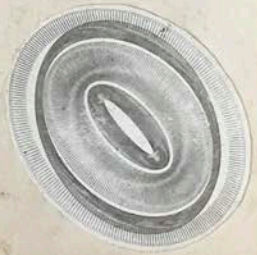


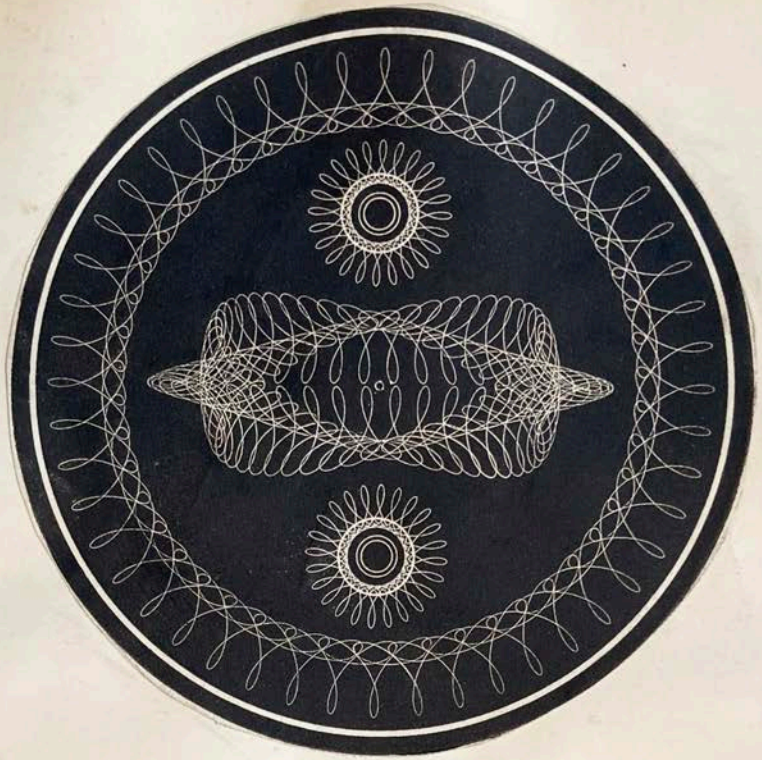


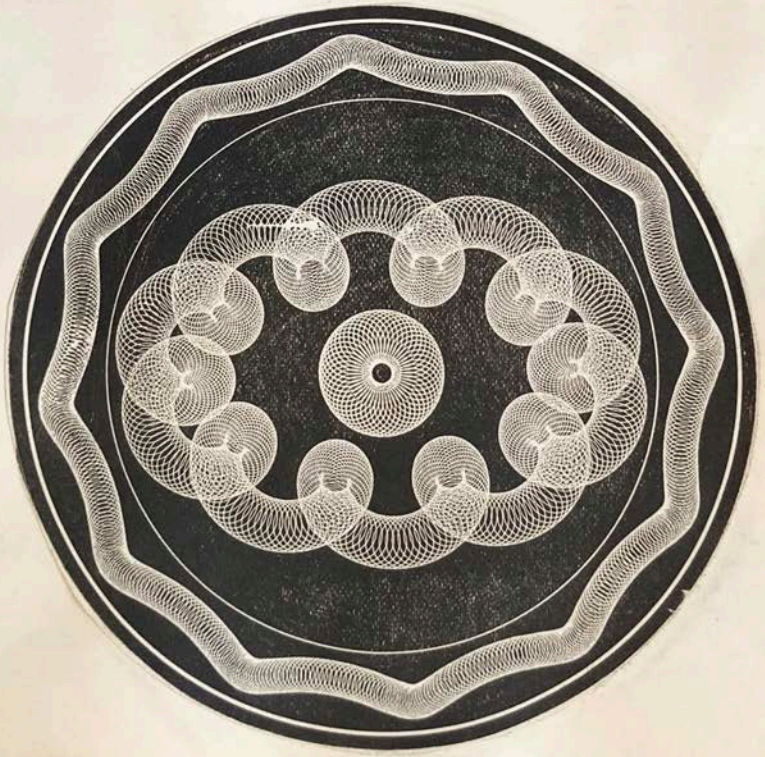












8. THE EARLIEST STEREOVIEWS?

[WHEATSTONE, Charles Sir (1802–1875)]

Set of 26 early stereocards, mainly of geometrical figures

[n.d., n.p., *circa* 1840]

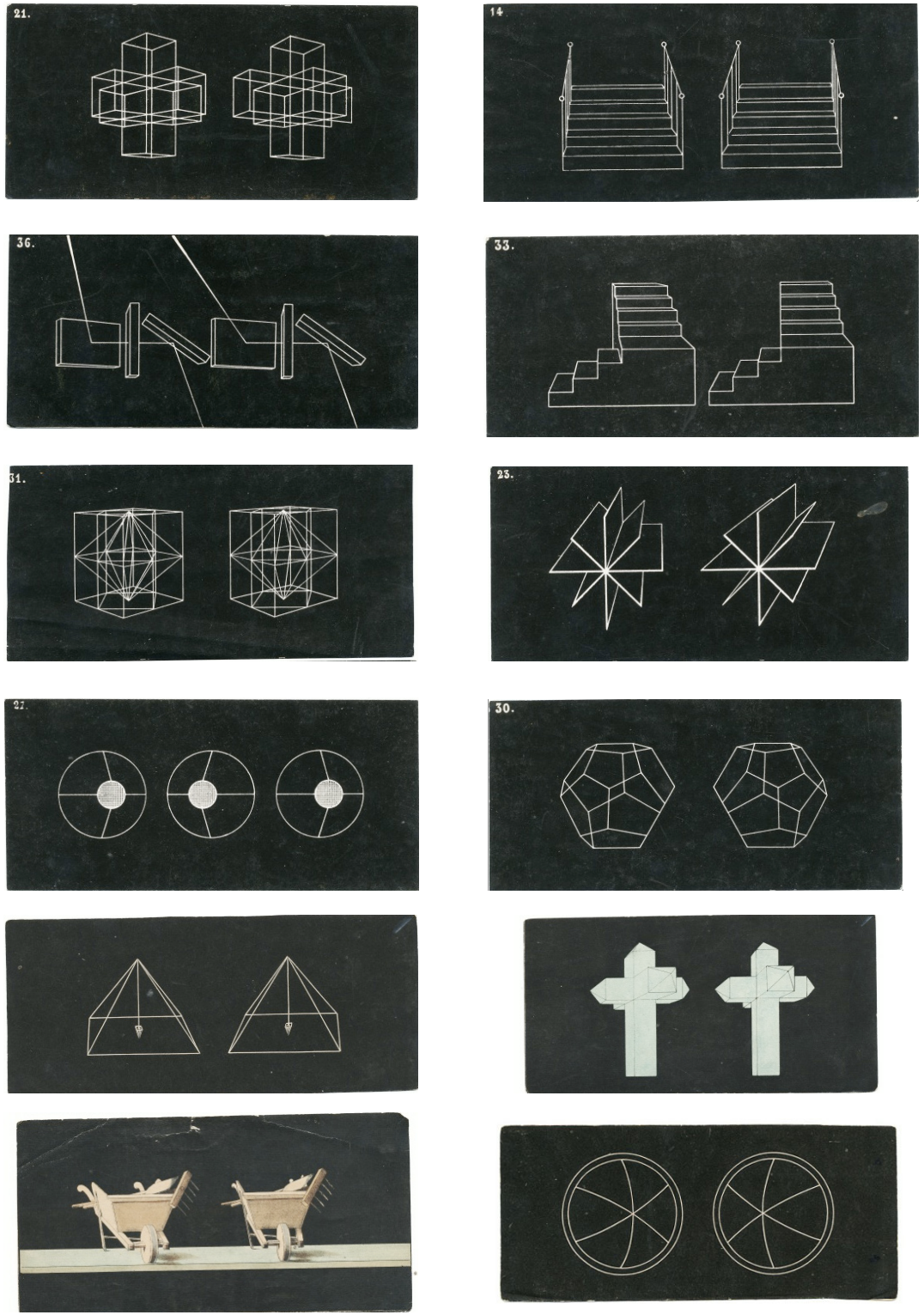
26 cards, each approx. 80 x 180mm (3¼ x 7in), 8 on blue card with white numbers (non-sequential up to 36), 18 on white card, unnumered. Generally very good condition; some fraying to edges and wear to corners; one card (loaded wheelbarrow) creased with small closed tears to top edge.

£1,250

A SUBSTANTIAL COLLECTION of early stereoviews. Most of the images are purely geometrical, but some shade into the pictorial (stairs, pyramids), and one shows a photo-realistic image of a wheelbarrow.

Charles Wheatstone discovered the principle of stereoscopic vision in 1832, giving an earliest date for these images. In 1838 he published the first part of his monumental 'Contributions to the Physiology of Vision' in the *Philosophical Transactions*, and a year later he began to use the newly invented technique of photography to produce stereoviews. In the early days of photography achieving good stereoscopic images was not easy, however, and these cards may have been produced as late as the early 1850s, when the second part of Wheatstone's paper appeared. In 1852 the *Illustrated London News* featured an article on Wheatstone's work and included a number of stereoscopic images, again showing a clear affinity with the present images.

Very scarce indeed: although John Jones features an image of one of these cards in his *Wonders of the Stereoscope* (1976), we have been unable to locate any similar cards in collections, though a group seems to be in private hands (depicted on 'The Stereoscopy Blog').



9. THE DISCOVERY OF ISOTOPES

THOMSON, Sir Joseph John [J. J.] (1856–1940)

Some Further Applications of the Method of Positive Rays

[London: The Royal Institution, 17 January 1913]

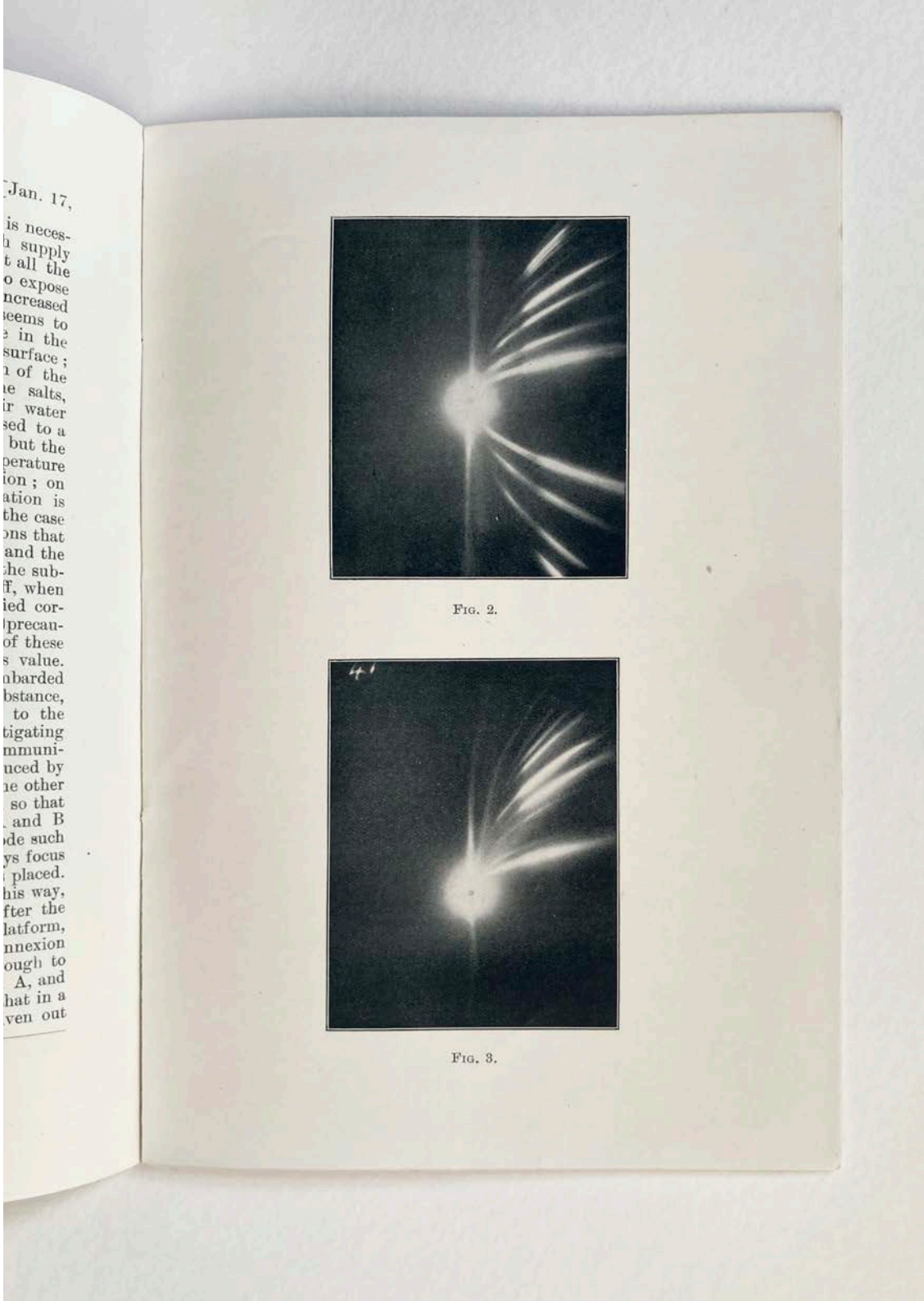
Separate printing in self-wraps, stitched as issued, 215 x 140mm; pp. 9, [2] leaves of plates. Near fine condition.

£1,500

A LANDMARK IN THE HISTORY OF PHYSICS. During experiments conducted in 1912, Thomson had recorded the deflection of neon ions in a magnetic field. In a paper published in August 1912, in the *Philosophical Magazine*, Thomson gave a technical account of the method of mass spectrometry, but passed over the fact that there were multiple deflections for neon, a result that could not be accounted for by the expected atomic mass. Here, in his lecture to the Royal Institution of 17 January 1913, Thomson remarks that 'the gas giving the 22 line is only a small fraction of the quantity of neon', and concludes: 'There is, however, the possibility that we may be interpreting Mendeleef's law too rigidly'. This was the first indication indication ever given in print that what were to be called 'isotopes' of elements existed.

Thomson's assistant F.W. Aston subsequently discovered the isotopes of many elements. The importance of this discovery was immense: the development of nuclear energy relied upon and understanding of the phenomenon, as did the radioactive dating of rocks and organic material. A high-point of Thomson's exceptional career, and a turning-point in the history of physics

Very scarce indeed: OCLC gives only Trinity College, Cambridge (Thomson's college).


Jan. 17,

is neces-
h supply
t all the
o expose
ncreased
eems to
e in the
surface ;
n of the
ne salts,
ir water
sed to a
but the
perature
ion ; on
ation is
the case
ons that
and the
he sub-
ff, when
ied cor-
precau-
of these
s value.
nbarded
bstance,
to the
tigating
mmuni-
nced by
ne other
so that
and B
de such
ys focus
placed.
his way,
fter the
latform,
nnexion
ough to
A, and
hat in a
ven out

FIG. 2.

FIG. 3.

10. THE DECIPHERMENT OF LINEAR B

VENTRIS, Michael (1922–1956), and CHADWICK, John (1920–1998)

Evidence for Greek Dialect in the Mycenaean Archives

London: Council of the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, 1953

[IN:] *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 73, pp. 84–103; 287 x 283mm; printed wraps. Very good condition: spine a little chipped near the top and frayed at the bottom; wraps overhanging the text block and therefore worn as always; fade to a portion of the front cover; internally very good, largely uncut, but the Ventris and Chadwick article is opened.

£750

THE GREATEST ADVENTURE in the history of linguistics. Michael Ventris' and John Chadwick's decipherment of Linear B, which they controversially identified as the oldest written form of the Greek language.

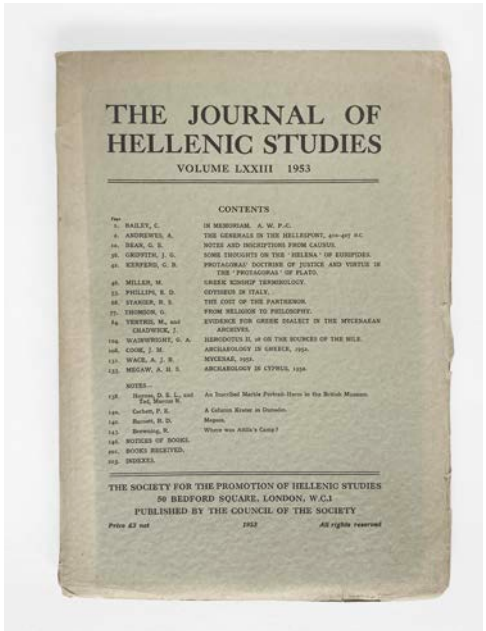
Linear B is a semi-pictographic script that was known even to the ancient Greeks themselves – yet neither they nor anyone before Ventris could read a single word of the language. In the late 19th century Arthur Evans was the first to conduct a systematic study of inscriptions, which were found mainly at Mycenaean palatial sites in Pylos (Peloponnese) and Knossos (Crete).

Various theories about Linear B followed, but it wasn't until the 1940s that Alice Kober was the first to grasp the grammatical structure of the language: she constructed grids, linking similar symbols in groups of threes, and identified the language as inflected, amongst other findings.

This lay the groundwork for Ventris – a young architect and erstwhile classicist – to begin his detective work. His first moment of inspiration came when he realised that certain symbols groups only occurred on Cretan inscriptions. Might these be the names of Cretan places? This inspired guess allowed Ventris to decipher much of the language, and he announced his findings in July 1952 in a BBC radio programme. The classicist and Bletchley Park codebreaker John Chadwick heard Ventris' talk, leading the two to collaborate to solve a riddle almost as old as written language itself. When a tablet with a pictographic cauldron was discovered, with symbols tallying with Ventris' and Chadwick's 'ti-ri-po-de', it became clear that Linear b was in fact an ancient Mycenaean Greek script.

Here we offer the first published account of Ventris' and Chadwick's work – the paper immortalised as 'the decipherment of Linear B'.

Ventris tragically died young, in a motoring accident, in the same year (1956) as he and Chadwick completed their monumental *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*. Controversy and doubt initially surrounded their work, but time and further research have proved the decipherment correct. (Linear A, meanwhile, remains undeciphered.)


THE JOURNAL OF HELLENIC STUDIES

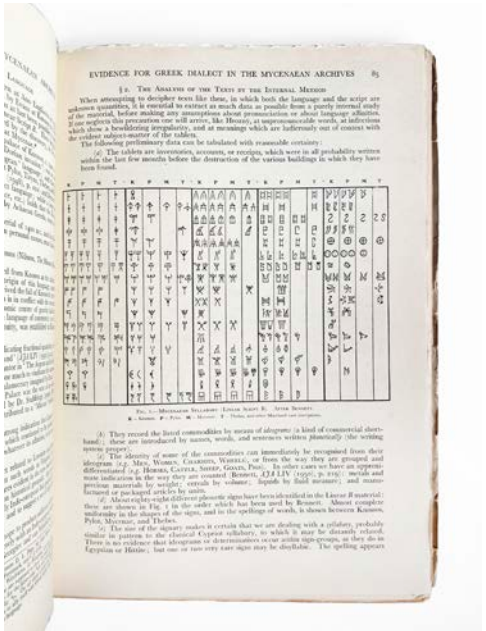
VOLUME LXXIII 1953

CONTENTS

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF HELLENIC STUDIES

50 BEDFORD SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1

PUBLISHED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE SOCIETY


EVIDENCE FOR GREEK DIALECT IN THE MYCENAEAN ARCHIVES

II. ‘ONE SMALL STEP FOR [A] MAN…’

[NASA], [ARMSTRONG, Neil (1930–2012)]

Group of three photographs showing Neil Armstrong’s first steps on the Moon

Three vintage gelatin silver prints, 89 x 127mm (3.5 x 5in), each watermarked ‘A KODAK PAPER’ to verso. Fine condition.

£3,500*

THE ONLY KNOWN PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD of the first steps taken by a human being the Moon. At 02:56 UTC, on July 21, 1969, Neil Armstrong stepped off the bottom rung of the ladder descending from the Lunar Module *Eagle*, and uttered some of the most famous words in history: ‘it’s one small step for [a] man, one giant leap for mankind’.

The moment was captured as a live feed from a Westinghouse camera attached to the Eagle, yet this provided no permanent record, so NASA, as with other televised events, had photographs taken of the moment as it played out on television. This triptych is the result.

The first photograph shows Armstrong on the ladder, where he paused and commented on the fine sand-like surface of the Moon:

> *I’m at the foot of the ladder. The LM foot pads are only depressed in the surface about 1 or 2 inches, although the surface appears to be very, very fine grained, as you get close to it. It’s almost like a powder. […] I’m going to step off the LM now.*

The second photograph shows the first steps – the moment Armstrong uttered his famous line.

The third follows Armstrong as he bounds on, commenting:

> *The surface is fine and powdery. I can […] pick it up loosely with my toe. It does adhere in fine layers like powdered charcoal to the sole and sides of my boots.*

Although Armstrong took an extensive series of very famous photographs on the surface of the Moon, there are only a couple of photographs in which he is visible himself, and aside from the present group there is no photographic record of the first steps.

These photographs were produced immediately after the landing: not only do they bear the typical ‘a kodak paper’ watermark, but they are in fact dated in the print ‘JUL • 69 •’, the month of the lunar landing, and possibly before Armstrong, Aldrin and Michael Collins made splashdown near the Marshall Islands in the Pacific Ocean, on July 24.

NASA later released a large-format photograph from the video showing Armstrong on the ladder prior to the first step (NASA S-69-42583), but we have been unable to locate any other photographic images of the first moments after Armstrong actually descended to the lunar surface.

12. THE FIRST VIEW OF THE MARTIAN SURFACE

[NASA]

The First Photograph from the Surface of Mars

Vintage silver gelatin print photograph, 203 x 254mm (8 x 10in), image ID Viking 1-44 P-17053, watermarked 'THIS PAPER MANUFACTURED BY KODAK' to verso. Fine condition.

£600*

THE FIRST EVER VIEW of the surface of another planet. This image was broadcast back to Earth by the Viking 1 Lander, on July 20, 1976, seven years (almost to the day) after Neil Armstrong walked on the surface of the Moon.

From the NASA website:

> This is the first photograph ever taken on the surface of the planet Mars. It was obtained by Viking 1 just minutes after the spacecraft landed successfully early today [July 20, 1976]. The center of the image is about 1.4 meters (five feet) from Viking Lander camera #2. We see both rocks and finely granulated materia – sand or dust. Many of the small foreground rocks are flat with angular facets. Several larger rocks exhibit irregular surfaces with pits and the large rock at top left shows intersecting linear cracks. Extending from that rock toward the camera is a vertical linear dark band which may be due to a one-minute partial obscuration of the landscape due to clouds or dust intervening between the sun and the surface. Associated with several of the rocks are apparent signs of wind transport of granular material. The large rock in the center is about 10 centimeters (4 inches) across and shows three rough facets. To its lower right is a rock near a smooth portion of the Martian surface probably composed of very fine-grained material. It is possible that the rock was moved during Viking 1 descent maneuvers, revealing the finer-grained basement substratum; or that the fine-grained material has accumulated adjacent to the rock. There are a number of other furrows and depressions and places with fine-grained material elsewhere in the picture. At right is a portion of footpad #2. Small quantities of fine grained sand and dust are seen at the center of the footpad near the strut and were deposited at landing. The shadow to the left of the footpad clearly exhibits detail, due to scattering of light either from the Martian atmosphere or from the spacecraft, observable because the Martian sky scatters light into shadowed areas.

BORIS JARDINE | RARE BOOKS