

Kelli Hansen  
INF 388K.5  
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Book Cataloging Assignment:  
A Sixteenth-Century Edition of Petrarch  
HRC MIN 14476

**Author, Title, Place of Publication, Printer and/or Publisher, Date of Publication**

The title page for this copy is missing, and has been replaced by a pen-and-ink rendering of a title page that lists the following information:

*Rime di messer Francesco Petrarca.* In Venezia presso il Roviglio, 1520.

There are no editions of Petrarch recorded in Venice by Roviglio in 1520. A further perusal of this copy reveals a date of January 12, 1550, and a place of publication at Lyon, both given at the end of the dedication. Picot records an edition published by Rovillio at Lyon in 1550, and gives the entire text of the dedication (v. 1, 193-195). The text on the single remaining dedication page corresponds. Based on this information and the book's physical characteristics, the title and publication information should be recorded as follows:

Petrarca, Francesco (1304-1374). *Il Petrarca, con nuove et breve dichiarazioni, insieme una tavola di tutti i vocabulari, dette, e proverbi difficili diligentemente dichiarati.* Lyone: appresso Gulielmo Rovillio, 1550.

Francesco Petrarca is the medieval humanist poet known in English as Petrarch, whose 366 sonnets to Laura (known as the *Rime sparse* or *Canzonere*) provide one of the bases for modern Italian. Petrarch was also the author of the *Trionfi*, a series of allegorical triumphs, as well as numerous religious, scholarly, and personal writings. His works remained popular throughout the Renaissance, but they received a flurry of renewed interest in sixteenth-century France. The *Trionfi* were first published in moralized editions during this period, and the *Canzonere* became the inspiration for a new flowering of French poetry in what came to be called the *renaissance lyonnais* (Balsamo).

Guglielmo Rovillio, or Guillaume de Roville (also spelled Rouille, Rouville, Rovillé, and Roviglio) was born near Tours in 1518, may have been apprenticed in Venice to Gabriel Giolito de Ferrari, and inherited his printing business from the de Portonariis family in Lyon around 1548. Unlike his rival, Jean de Tournes, Roville was not himself a printer: he operated primarily as a bookseller and merchant, surrounding himself with skilled printers, editors, and illustrators in order to produce high-quality editions of Italian and Latin classics. His books were often illustrated with engraved title pages and woodcut vignettes. Roville had a reputation for learning, and many of the annotations, commentary, and historical matter he added to his literary editions were his own work; however, Ebert records the author of the annotations in this edition as Antonio Brucioli (16412). Roville was a shrewd businessman, and he

marketed his books toward those interested in Italian culture, but not necessarily well versed in Petrarch's language -- as witnessed in the diligent explanations of difficult phrases alluded to in the title of this edition. The output of Roville's printing house was voluminous. He soon outpaced Tournes in the publication of books in Italian, and he also catered to the market in Lyon by publishing numerous legal and religious texts. Roville became a leading citizen of Lyon, involved himself in a number of civic and charitable projects, served as a director of the Hotel-Dieu of Lyon in 1583, and died in 1589 (Picot, 183-188; Montfalcon, LXII-LXIII; *Archives*, 39-44).

### **Illustrations**

For the most part, this edition is unillustrated. Woodcut headpieces appear at chapter headings, and each separate text is accompanied by a vignette.

### **Probable edition (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or subsequent)**

This copy most likely represents the first edition. Picot notes that the first edition of Petrarch produced by Rovillio was dated 12 January 1550 or 1551, and that subsequent editions were printed in 1558, 1564, and 1574 (v. 2, 11). Ebert records editions printed in 1550, 1551, 1568, and 1564, and remarks that this edition and its annotations are neatly executed, but not correct (16412). Fiske (33) and Hortis (89) record a variant pagination for the 1550 edition that corresponds to this copy.

### **Probable issue or state**

Bingen notes that Picot's description of the first edition is partially erroneous, in that two states of the 1550 first edition existed: one dedicated to Lucantonio Ridolfi, and the other to Giovanni Mannelli ("Les éditions lyonnaises de Petrarque", p. 142-146 in Balsamo). The first state was issued without a statement of privilege; the second included this statement on the verso of the title page. Since this copy lacks the title page and all but the last page of the dedication, it is not possible to determine which state is represented.

### **Format (folio, quarto, octavo, 12mo, etc).**

All the bibliographers cited above agree that this edition was printed in 16mo, and my examination supports this conclusion: chain lines run vertically, there are eight leaves per gathering, and no watermark is apparent.

### **Collation**

demy 16mo: a-z<sup>8</sup>A-N<sup>8</sup>+<sup>8</sup>\*<sup>8</sup> [\$5 signed (-K4)]

### **Pagination / foliation**

288 leaves pp. 1-4 5-12 13-16 17-544 545-546 547-576 (misprinting 159 as 195, 254 as 196); 16 unnumbered leaves

### **Size of paper (height x width) in millimeters**

Trimmed, each page measures approximately 120 x 65 mm. The original height is difficult to ascertain, as this copy has been closely trimmed, and Picot notes that one of the copies he examined had broad margins. WorldCat records for existing copies report the height as 13 cm. Based on the standardized

paper sizes in Gaskell, the untrimmed dimensions of the paper were probably close to 12.5 x 9.5 cm. The uncut sheet would have measured 50-51 x 35-38 cm, which roughly corresponds to the size of sixteenth-century French demy.

### **Binding (material / possible date)**

The binding consists of ruled stiff vellum with a red spine label, gilt. A search of the British Library's database of bookbindings revealed that it is typical of the relatively inexpensive bindings produced throughout Europe and most likely dates to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.

### **Sewing supports (material)**

The book is sewn on linen cords as a hollow back with waste paper reinforcement. A green silk ribbon bookmark is attached.

### **Size of binding (in millimeters)**

68 x 122 mm.

### **Pastedowns, endleaves, endbands**

All edges and endpapers are marbled. Marbling on the edges is a blue-green agate pattern. The endpapers have a multicolored combed pattern similar to the nineteenth-century French papers in the University of Washington's Decorative Paper Collection (<http://content.lib.washington.edu/dpweb/index.html>).

### **Provenance / marks of ownership**

The bookplate of the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary is fixed to the front pastedown, and the title page bears its embossed stamp in blind. The seminary itself is located just north of the University of Texas campus. It was founded in 1902. Although the seminary does maintain a library and archives, presumably this book was discarded and either sold or offered to the HRC.

There are several inscriptions on the version of the front free endpaper: G with a foliate flourish, two names written on top of each other in brown ink, and then crossed out, and *Chiasvini 1808*. I was unable to discern the inscription below the flourished G. It may be a last name. Information about who or what is signified by the word "Chiasvini" could not be located.

The following is written in the gutter of the leaf following the title page: Galliera, 9/24/59, 2.00, 1520-2 (in pencil); 50323 (accession stamp). The meaning of the pencilled term Galliera is unclear. It is the name of a town just outside of Bologna; it is also the name of a ducal house in Italy with ties to the royal families of both Spain and France. Although Philip von Ferrary, Duke of Galliera in the late nineteenth century, collected stamps and numismatics, I could find no indication that he was also a book collector. Sales of his collections took place in the 1920s and thus do not correspond to the penciled date. It is possible that the penciled notations refer to the location, price paid, and supposed date of the book when it was purchased by a previous owner or dealer.

The verso of the back endpaper contains the inscription of Filippo Merlo, with a flourish. Filippo Merlo

was a banker, government official, and man of letters in Turin, Italy, in the early nineteenth century. He was involved in an artists' colony called the Pastori della Dora, and one of the comedies of the Italian playwright Alberto Nota was dedicated to him (Nota, 353). Merlo also seems to have been a book collector, although there is no bookplate in this volume corresponding to that described in Gelli (257). His name in the book suggests that at some point it traveled from Lyon to Turin, a distance of around 200 miles.

### **Condition (defects, wear, damage)**

The title page is missing and has been replaced by a pen-and-ink rendering that includes incorrect information about the book and its publication, as noted above. Leaves a1 and a2 are missing and have been replaced with blanks that have horizontal chain lines and part of an unidentified watermark in the gutter. Signatures begin at a3; both a3 and a4 are torn, and a4 has been mended with another type of paper. Leaves a7-8 are missing. Leaves L1 and M8 are also missing and replaced with blanks.

The rest of the leaves have been ruled around the edges of the text block in a light brown ink. Scattered light stains and marginal notations are visible throughout. The binding has chipping to the spine label and considerable surface grime on the boards.

### **Subsequent conservation efforts (repairs, preservation housing, etc.)**

Other than the filled tear in leaf a4, this book has received no apparent conservation treatments.

### **Reference sources consulted (printed and/or online)**

*Archives historiques et statistiques du département du Rhône*. Vol. 11. Lyon: J. M. Barret, 1829.

Balsamo, Jean (ed.). *Les poètes français de la Renaissance et Pétrarque*. Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2004.

*Database of Bookbindings*. British Library. 20 February 2010. <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/bookbindings/Default.aspx>

*Decorative and Decorated Paper Collection*. University of Washington. 20 February 2010. <http://content.lib.washington.edu/dpweb/index.html>.

Ebert, Friederich Albert. *Allgemeines bibliografisches Lexikon*. Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1830.

Fiske, Willard. *A Catalogue of Petrarch Books*. Ithaca, NY: University Press, 1882.

Gelli, Jacopo. *3500 ex-libris italiani*. Milan: Ulrico Hoepli, 1908.

Hortis, Attilio. *Catalogo delle opere di Francesco Petrarca esistenti nella Petrarquesca Rossettiana di Trieste*. Trieste: Appolonio & Caprin, 1874.

Montfalcon, Jean Baptiste. *Manuel du bibliophile et de l'archéologue lyonnais*. Paris: Adolph Delahaye, 1857.

Nota, Alberto. *Commedie di Alberto Nota*. Paris: Baudry, 1829.

Picot, Émile. *Les français italianisants au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Paris: Champion, 1907.