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The Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room [brochure]

Boston College Law School

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THE DANIEL R. COQUILLETTE RARE BOOK ROOM

BOSTON COLLEGE LAW SCHOOL
"The law is a learned profession, and its great books symbolize the rule of law. I thought it was important that students be exposed to the art of the book, in the center of the library, where they would be encouraged to sit and look at these great books at their leisure."
The DANIEL R. COQUILLETTE RARE BOOK ROOM

In 1996, a new Boston College Law Library opened its doors. Occupying nearly 50,000 square feet, spanning four levels, and housing well over 400,000 volumes, the library quickly became the intellectual hub and technological nerve center of the Law School. More than twenty library staff members support all critical functions of the Law School, teaching legal research, assisting faculty, providing leadership and support in all areas of technology throughout the Law School — and, of course, answering research questions and checking out books.

Located just inside the entrance in the Edward R. Leahy Jr. wing of the library is the Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room. Funded by Boston College Law School alumni Bruce R. Balter '62, Edward T. Bigham '53, Anne P. Jones '58, '61 and Arthur O. Stern '74, the room honors Daniel R. Coquillette, the J. Donald Monan, S.J., University Professor and Dean of the Law School from 1985 to 1993.

When the Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room opened in 1996, it made the library's rare books and manuscripts visible for the first time. The room provides a beautiful and secure space to house, display and study rare books and manuscripts. It features a state-of-the-art security system and climate-controlled exhibit and storage areas. A popular location for faculty members to be interviewed by the media, the room also attracts law students seeking space for quiet study and visitors who wish to view the exhibits or examine items in the collection. Each semester, students in Professor Coquillette’s English Legal History class, Professor Mary Sarah Bilder's American Legal History class and other Law School classes visit the room for a close-up look at the legal classics they have been studying.

Even in such a modern space, visitors can feel a sense of history. The striking marble mantelpiece and the gilt mirror above it resided in the East Room of the White House from 1912 until 1953, when White House renovations were completed. At that time, John McCormack of the House of Representatives and Rev. William J. Kenealy, S.J., dean of the Boston College Law School, met with President Harry S. Truman, and over “bourbon and branch water” persuaded the President that the mantelpiece and mirror should go to Boston College.

The room also houses an antique tall clock, which once belonged to the Schrafft family of candy-making fame. It spent years in the family’s mansion, which is now Barat House, the current home of the Law School’s Office of Institutional Advancement. The Persian carpet in the Rare Book Room could once be found in Roberts Lounge in More Hall on Boston College’s main campus. More Hall was the home of the Law School from 1954 until 1975.
Legal history is a dynamic subject about how change occurs, and the more we are living in a time of change the more interested we become in that history.

- Professor Daniel R. Coquillette -
The RARE BOOK and MANUSCRIPT Collection

The Boston College Law Library's rare book and manuscript collection consists of more than 850 titles comprising over 1,500 volumes, plus another 3,000 documents. Many of these materials have come to the library through the generosity of Law School deans and faculty members, alumni and other friends of the Law School. The library is particularly grateful to Professor Daniel R. Coquillette, who has been an enthusiastic benefactor of the Rare Boom Room and its programs for years, and to Robert E. Brooker III and Kathryn Conway Preyer, two recent friends of the rare books program and donors to its collections.

The collection is strong in English and American law, with a number of special concentrations that make it one of the top collections among academic law libraries in the country:

A WORKING LAWYER'S LIBRARY

The hallmark of the Boston College Law Library's rare book collection is a large group of works that once resided in the private libraries of English and American lawyers living and working in the sixteenth through mid-nineteenth centuries. When Professor Coquillette began forming his rare book collection during his student days at Oxford in the 1960s, he bought books that a working lawyer would have owned and used, so he could learn firsthand how lawyers of centuries past actually practiced and thought about the law. In 2000, Professor Coquillette began to donate his "working lawyer's library" to the Law School.

The volumes of case reports, abridgments, dictionaries, form books and treatises comprise an ideal working lawyer's library from each century. A few of the special items in the collection include a 1475 edition of Justinian's Corpus Juris Civilis; all major editions of Britton, Bracton, Fleta and other authors of legal classics; every important legal work by or about Edward Coke; and a first edition of Blackstone's Commentaries.

In 2005 Kathryn Conway Preyer bequeathed her magnificent collection of early American law books to the law library. The collection features many books from the infancy of American law book publishing and is rich in legal self-help and justice of the peace manuals, including multiple editions of the Conductor Generalis, Country Justice and Every Man His Own Lawyer.
These books demonstrate how a lawyer would go about solving a legal problem at any point in time. If we want to research a point of law in any century, we can do so right here. Students can step into a lawyer's shoes.
Taken together, all the books in the Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room enable students and scholars of today to enter the world of law study and practice at any point during the past four centuries, to see for themselves how lawyers learned, thought about and practiced law.

DOCUMENTING THE LAWYER’S WORLD
In 2004, Robert E. Brooker III donated his collection of some 2,500 early American legal and land use manuscripts to the Law School. Residing in the Coquillette Rare Book Room, the Brooker Collection provides firsthand evidence of how lawyers practiced law, and how law affected the lives of ordinary citizens. Examples include land deeds, estate inventories, court documents, and even contracts for indentured servitude, among them a contract that bound a four-year-old impoverished orphan into service until the age of eighteen.

LEARNING THE LAW
For those who study the history of legal education, collection highlights include important editions of such stalwarts of legal education as Coke upon Littleton and Blackstone’s Commentaries. Also featured are two scarce sets of notebooks belonging to students at the Litchfield Law School, the first American law school, which show us how students learned the law in the early nineteenth century. The library is also proud to own two unique sets of manuscript notes from 1760s Oxford: one set from a student who attended Blackstone’s law lectures during the time Blackstone was writing his Commentaries, and another set from a lawyer or student who read and attempted to digest Blackstone’s Commentaries and reduce them to a set of principles.
"Elegant medieval ladies, perhaps from the noble Grimaldi family in Monaco, would have followed the calendar of holy days at the front of this book, and the daily prayers set out within. Every owner of this book since the fourteenth century is known. It was sold to me at age twenty-six by George Goodspeed, the dean of Boston book dealers. He was a great inspiration to me and to generations of young collectors. I think he gave me an especially low price to get me collecting! He was a true friend." - DANIEL R. COQUILLETTE

This finely written manuscript of Italian workmanship and origin dates from the late 1300s or early 1400s. It is signed "Ex Dono Comiti...Grimaldi de Bellino...1788," and may have been owned by the famous Grimaldi family of Monaco. Over the centuries it probably traveled from Monaco to Italy to London before crossing the Atlantic and arriving in New England in the early twentieth century.

This Book of Hours provides a stunning example of the art of the book, and demonstrates a stage before the early printed books from the late 1400s. It was written in a large Gothic hand in black and red on vellum leaves. The size of a small octavo (approximately 5" x 7"), it features eleven large and intricately illuminated initial capital letters, plus many other small illuminated or painted initials. Many of its pages feature striking floral borders colored in orange, blue, green, and red and illuminated with gold.
THE JESUIT AND CATHOLIC TRADITION

The Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room contains a number of treasures that bring Boston College's Jesuit, Catholic heritage to life. Foremost is a spectacular illuminated manuscript *Book of Hours of the Blessed Virgin Mary* dating from the late 1300s or early 1400s—well before the invention of the printing press. Scribes and artists labored for over a year to create this work of art, which was donated to the law library by Professor Coquillette in honor of Boston College's J. Donald Monan, S.J., and William B. Neenan, S.J. It is a tangible expression of the Jesuit ideals of the pursuit and transmission of learning and the devotion to art and beauty—all for the glory of God. Other works that highlight Boston College's religious heritage include the *Decretals* of Pope Gregory IX and books that feature magnificent early Jesuit bindings, including a 1507 French edition of Justinian's *Institutes*.

Also housed in the Coquillette Rare Book Room is a collection of approximately 100 titles focused on the life and work of Thomas More, patron saint of lawyers and ardent defender of the Catholic Church. The More Collection was purchased from an estate by the law library in 1961. It includes several very special editions of More's landmark work, *Utopia*, including a beautifully illustrated 1518 edition and an 1893 edition published by William Morris' Kelmscott Press.
St. Thomas More, *Utopia* (Hammersmith, England, 1893). This copy of *Utopia* was published by William Morris' famous Kelmscott Press. The page shown here features Morris' distinctive ornamental borders. (facing page)

*Registrum Omnium Brevium* (London, 1634). The *Registrum* is an important early collection of writs, an essential sourcebook of pleading and practice materials. This copy features an elaborately engraved title page and a beautiful gold-tooled cover. (left)

Hugo Grotius, *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* (Amsterdam, 1720). Grotius' *On the Law of War and Peace* is considered the greatest international law text ever written. This magnificent portrait appears opposite the title page. (center)

*Registrum Omnium Brevium* (London, 1634). (above)
LAW and LIFE
Samplings from the Robert E. Brooker III Collection of Legal and Land Use Documents and Manuscripts

PROPERTY DEED
This beautiful deed, the oldest in the collection, was signed in October 1738 by Isaac Harris. In it, Isaac deeded his property in Bridgewater, Plymouth County, Massachusetts, to his son Arthur, “in consideration of the Paternal Love & Affection which I do bear towards him.” Isaac reserved for himself the “possession and improvement” of the land during his natural life, which ended shortly thereafter. The boundaries are described by such landmarks as a “small maple tree” and a “white oak stake & heap of stones.”

INDENTURED SERVANT CONTRACT
This attractive document is one of three indentured servant contracts in the Brooker Collection. Written in 1797, apparently by mutual agreement of the town’s Overseers of the Poor and the county’s Justices of the Peace, it bound four-year-old Benjamin Evans, “a Pauper apprentice to Nicholas Hoffman” of Shawangunk, New York.

Benjamin was to live with Hoffman until age twenty-one and “shall well and faithfully serve his Master in all lawful business according to his wit power and ability and shall honestly and orderly in all things behave and demean himself toward his said Master during said term.”

In turn, Hoffman agreed to teach the boy to read and write and to provide him with “competent and sufficient meat drink apparel washing and lodging.” Perhaps more to the point, Hoffman also promised to provide for Benjamin so that the boy would not “become in any wise a Charge to the said Town of Shawangunk.”

MEASLES LETTER
In this letter dated June 27, 1821, William Galloway wrote movingly of a measles epidemic that swept through Boston in the spring and summer of that year:

“Five of the children have had the meazles, very bad indeed, especialy George, who is now no more! For it pleased God by his Almighty providence to remove him by death. He was taken on Sunday, the 10 day of the month with the symptoms of the meazles, and continued from that time till the third Sunday following, during that time he underwent the most distressing illness, and at last the Lung-fever, and dropsy in the head, which terminated with his life. He died on the 24th day of the month, and was buried the 25th in Aunt Abigail’s grave. Joanna’s Child is very sick with the meazles, but we hope is not dangerous . . . It is very sickly in Boston now, the meazles has become a very prevailing disorder, all the children have had the meazles except the youngest . . .”
Estate Inventory

The Brooker Collection contains several estate inventories. These inventories are particularly interesting because they tell us what everyday people owned and used. This attractive example, dated 1802, is especially valuable because it includes the prices paid for the items that were auctioned off. We can see that John Hawkins (late of Gloucester, Massachusetts) owned a large array of weaponry, tools and livestock. The most valuable item was a mare, which sold at auction for $23.

Letter

This 1793 letter from a witty character named James Read to his friend William Young, a printer and bookseller, is remarkable for several reasons:

First: It is in beautiful condition.
Second: It shows how early letters were addressed and mailed; in this case, the letter was folded several times, blank side out, and was addressed and sealed on the blank surface. There was no separate envelope.
Third and fourth: It is a commercial document, but unlike most of its kind, it is a very amusing one. Read asks Young to bind several of his books: “I wish you would have my Copy of Bp. Horne done up, at your Leisure, like the Buchan which I send by my good Lad Johnny Barron, so that I may, at a future Day (if a man of 74 years & 5 mos. may presume on a day to come) when dry, have it neatly bound... I find, in this request, the Force of Habit. I am Selfish. Pope said truly,

'Self Love's the ruling Passion still in all.'

I am grown a Recluse. I wish to see the Bishop in his American Dress. Can you contrive me a Look at him?

I hope the Dictionary of my Favourite Brown will also appear, shortly, from your Press.

My best Respects to good Mrs. Young. Tell her she must not spoil your dear Children, either by Severity, or by too fond Caresses.”

Calling Card

“I am C.R. Powers. Who the devil are you?”
Old books and documents, no matter how beautiful and rare, cannot truly come to life until they connect with people in the present. The mission of the Boston College Law School's rare books program is to enhance the quality of the learning, teaching and scholarship at Boston College Law School. Part of the Law School's mission is to “foster new insights through research and scholarship, ... and to critically evaluate the role of law and legal institutions.” What better way to do that than by examining how those institutions have changed over the centuries? By studying the rare books and manuscripts in the Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room, students and professional scholars alike can experience how the legal institutions of yesterday evolved into those we know today.

Faculty and library staff work together to bring the treasures in the Coquillette Rare Book Room to the attention of the community inside and outside Boston College by creating a series of twice-yearly exhibitions. These may feature recent acquisitions or may showcase a special theme. Recent exhibitions have highlighted children’s law books, law student notebooks, and the book collecting passions of lawyers and scholars. The receptions that accompany the exhibitions afford interested alumni, faculty and friends an opportunity to get together, share their love of rare books with like-minded people, and acknowledge the generosity of donors.

The library also welcomes researchers from inside and outside Boston College. Recently, a scholar examined the Microcosm of London, a rare collection of beautiful prints that reveal the real-life workings of old English courtrooms and offices; another sought information about a will of a member of Doctors’ Commons that he learned about from our website; and a third consulted a 1774 Virginia Justice of the Peace manual for his dissertation research.
What we need to teach are the fundamentals and how things change. To do that well, it's helpful to have the firsthand experience of how things used to be, and how they are today. We see both constancy and change when we're looking at books.

| PROFESSOR JAMES STEVEN ROGERS |

Microcosm of London: Court of Exchequer (London, ca. 1808-11). This set of thirteen colored engravings by Thomas Rowlandson features scenes from London courtrooms and government buildings. (left)
Information technology and rare books are at the two ends of the legal information spectrum—and the library plays a major role in both.

| DEAN JOHN GARVEY |
As we move inexorably into the digital age, material is available at the touch of a button to researchers anywhere in the world. In these times, rare books and manuscripts become more important than ever. These unique items enhance the value of a library’s collection and the prestige of an institution. Many rare books and manuscripts have been annotated by previous owners, making each and every copy of a rare book a unique and valuable scholarly resource.

The sensory and emotional experience we get by holding in our hands the same book once owned by the great American patriot James Otis cannot be duplicated by looking at a modern edition. We can learn important clues about how books were actually used by touching them and examining their size, shape and binding. Many collections of statutes, forms and precedents were printed and bound in very small sizes so they could be slipped inside a lawyer’s sleeve and consulted frequently throughout the day. At the other end of the spectrum, owners often chained very large and valuable books to tabletops to prevent their theft, which we can see from the holes left in their covers by chains and clasps.

Rare books can also be exquisite works of art. Beautifully bound in leather or parchment, printed on cotton rag paper that is as crisp and durable today as it was five hundred years ago, and struck from type so sharp and distinct that one can see the impression of each letter on the page, rare books offer a feast for the senses that cannot be experienced electronically or reproduced in modern editions. Detailed engraved illustrations, hand-colored woodcuts and magnificent painted illuminations complete the picture and make the works unique.

Emperor Justinian I: Corpus Juris Civilis (Nuremberg, 1475). This is the oldest printed work in the law library’s collection. Works printed before 1500 are called “incunabula,” from the earliest days, or “cradle” of printing. (above)
My hope was that by giving my collection to the Law School over time, I would inspire others.

| PROFESSOR DANIEL R. COQUILLETTE |
To support the Law School's teaching and research mission and to complement the existing rare book and manuscript collection, the library purchases and accepts donations of law books published before 1870, in good condition, that fit within the subject areas of our collection: books likely to have been found in the libraries of working English and American lawyers, books pertaining to the study and practice of law, books about slavery in New England, and books pertaining to St. Thomas More and the Jesuit, Catholic tradition of legal practice and education. We also solicit legal documents and manuscripts in good condition from the same time period that relate to the study and practice of law. We welcome materials outside these general parameters if they have marginal notations, marks of ownership, distinctive bindings or other characteristics that give them special research or aesthetic value. The curator will work closely with donors to identify those materials that complement the collections and will suggest alternatives for items that are outside the scope of our collections, duplicate existing collections or are more appropriate for other repositories.

We welcome monetary contributions to the Law School Fund to support the acquisition and conservation of rare materials and to enhance our outreach and educational offerings.

Your interest in and support of the Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room is vital to sustain a strong, lasting rare books program for future generations of students and scholars. For more information about giving opportunities, or to discuss the Coquillette Rare Book Room and its programs, please contact:

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Highlights of the

DANIEL R. COQUILLETTE RARE BOOK ROOM COLLECTION

Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis - Illuminated manuscript Book of Hours of the Blessed Virgin Mary (ca. 1380-1450)

Emperor Justinian, Corpus Juris Civilis (1475, & many later eds.)

St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica (1486)

Pope Gregory IX, Decretals (1496)

Book of Genesis, illuminated Ethiopian manuscript written in Gheez (ca. 1500)

St. Thomas More, Utopia (1518 ed., 1893 Kelmscott Press ed. & many other eds.)

Britton (ca. 1530 & later eds.)

Year Book of Edward III & other Year Books of early English cases (1534 & later eds.)

Magna Carta & other collections of English statutes (1539 & later eds.)

Registers of Writs (1553 & numerous later eds.)

Digestorum Pandectarum—“Pisan Pandects” (1553)

Christopher St. Germain, Doctor and Student (1554 & later eds.)

Glanville (1554 & later eds.)

Natura Brevia—collections of writs (1560 & numerous later eds.)

Geoffrey Chaucer, Works (1561)

Abridgments of English cases by Fitzherbert, Brooke, Hughes & others (1565 & later eds.)

Bracton (1569 & later eds.)

Thomas Littleton, Tenures (1592 & later eds.)

Justice of the Peace Manuals from the collection of Kathryn Conway Preyer (numerous titles & eds., ca. 1600-1800s)

Reports of Coke, Vaughan, Dyer, Plowden, Saunders, Comyns & many others (ca. 1600-1800s)

John Cowell, Interpreter—and other law dictionaries (1604 & many other titles & eds.)

Legal self-help manuals (numerous titles & eds., ca. 1600-1800s)

John Manwood, Treatise of the Laws of the Forest & other early environmental law works (1615 & later eds.)

George Ruggle, Ignoramus (1630 & later eds.)

Hugo Grotius, Law of War and Peace (1632 & later eds.)

Michael Dalton, Country Justice (1635 & later eds.)

Edward Coke, Institutes of the Laws of England (1639 & later eds.)

Andrew Horne, Mirror of Justices (1642 & later eds.)

Fleta (1647 & later eds.)

Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan (1st ed. 1651)

John Fortescue, De Laudibus Legum Angliae (1660 & later eds.)

Books of Entries by Coke, Brownlow & Lilly (1671 & later eds.)

Laws and Constitutions of Massachusetts (ca. 1700-1800s)

John Selden, Table-Talk & many other works (ca. 1700-1800s)

Giles Jacob, New Law Dictionary (1729 & later eds.)
Giles Jacob, Every Man His Own Lawyer (1736 & later eds.)
Vattel, Law of Nations (1759 & later eds.)
Notes taken at Blackstone’s law lectures by an anonymous student at Oxford University (1764–1766)
Extracts from Blackstone’s Commentaries on the Laws of England written by an anonymous student at Oxford University (ca. 1790)
Abridgments of English law by Bacon, Viner & others (ca. 1700s–1800s)
Thomas Wood, Institute of the Laws of England (1772)
Richard Burn, Ecclesiastical Law (1781 & later eds.)
William Hawkins, Treatise on Pleas of the Crown (1788 & later eds.)
Small collection of law books written for children (ca. early 1800s)
Two sets of Litchfield Law School student notebooks (1802–1811)
Extensive collection of treatises by Joseph Story (ca. 1800s)
Microcosm of London—13 colored engravings of London courtrooms and parliamentary chambers (1808–1811)
Thomas Howell, Complete Collection of State Trials (1816)
David Hoffman, Course of Legal Study (1817 & later ed.)
James Kent, Commentaries on American Law (1832 & later eds.)
Last Will and Testament of Burman Lauga [manuscript] (1843)
Small collection of law-related advertising, postcards and art (ca. 1880–1916)
Gilbert A’Beckett, Comic Blackstone (1887)
Robert E. Brooker III Collection of Early American Legal and Land Use Documents (ca. 2,500 items, 1716–1930)
St. Thomas More Collection (approximately 100 titles, ca. 1500s–1900s)
"We focus on lawyering, the history of how people learned and practiced law. It ties into our strength as a school where theory and practice merge into a proud tradition of being lawyers."

PROFESSOR MARY SARAH BILTER