University of Groningen

The University Library of Groningen

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THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY OF GRONINGEN

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Four hundred years of history
in four buildings,
forty collections and infinite pictures

Gerda C. Huisman

Groningen
Barkhuis & University Library Groningen
2014

PREFACE

Four hundred years ago, on February 28, 1615, Groningen University Library came officially into being. This book celebrates these four centuries in which the Library grew from a single room with chained books into a modern and busy centre that functions both as an information hub and as a social meeting place.

The Library's commitment has always been to support research and teaching by collecting books, periodicals and other documentary materials, now in digital formats as well. We continue to develop our digital services to make the collections accessible to the widest possible audience, keeping in mind the enduring importance of the physical collections, and that the duty to preserve this unique academic and cultural heritage for future generations is at the basis of our existence.

This book was produced in close cooperation between the Library and a group of English students supervised by Dr John Flood of the English Department. Keeper of Special Collections Gerda Huisman wrote the text, the students interviewed present and former library staff members and library visitors, commented on the early versions of the text and and the book design, and produced a first translation. Frank den Hollander, of the Library's Communication Team, served as an able co-editor and proof reader.

And last but certainly not least, a multitude of pictures was taken by photographer Dirk Fennema. Thanks to his skills and creativity this book has become a splendid showpiece for the University Library of Groningen. It not only highlights the Library's four-hundredth anniversary, it also appears at a time when many changes are about to happen. Starting in September 2014, over the next few years the building will undergo a complete transformation, reason why this is an appropriate time to focus on the present-day building and the organisation's four centuries of history.

During the four centuries of its existence, the Library has been housed in four different buildings which, and this is unique for the Netherlands, have always been located in the same plot. Descriptions of these four libraries are followed by presentations of forty collections, a small selection of the many beautiful, fascinating and rare items in our care. Together they give an impression of the rich treasure of scholarly information preserved by the Library, which will hopefully continue to do so for many centuries to come.

Marjolein Nieboer

Director University Library Groningen

September 2014

FOUR BUILDINGS

A much quoted wisdom declares that if we want everything to stay as it is, everything will have to change. Indeed, since it was founded four hundred years ago nothing has remained the same in the University Library of Groningen. Almost nothing, that is, because it is the only academic library in the Netherlands that has never moved from its original location. After four centuries it still occupies the block between Broerstraat and Zwanestraat to the north and south, and Poststraat and Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat to the east and west, right in the city center.

Walking around in a building it is easy to forget that, like people, buildings too change during their lifetime. The Library did not always look as it does today, just as today's visitors will hardly recognise the building if they were to visit again in a couple of years. Major renovations of the interior and exterior have just started, and the organisation is in the process of being completely overhauled. But the library has a long experience with such processes and it will surely rise like a phoenix from its metaphorical ashes.

The history of the four buildings is described in the first part of this book. The starting point is the present building and its appearance in September 2014. From there we will travel back to the time of the library's foundation in 1615.

2014-1986

BROERSTRAAT 4

The University Library, the Academy Building and hundreds of bicycles parked around and between them have been iconic for the Broerstraat as the beating heart of the university for the past three decades. The library building was designed by architect Pieter H. Tauber (*1927). The distinctive windows of varying widths are a recurring feature in his work which he also applied in the former Provincial Library at Leeuwarden, now part of Tresoor, the Frisian Historical and Literary Centre, and the ABN Amro bank at the corner of the Stationsweg and the Hereweg in Groningen, which was recently converted into the main office of GasTerra.

The University Library's large glass facade is a real eyecatcher. It provides a view of the central hall with its tall and spacious stairwell, which gradually widens as it ascends. The windows create a harmonious transition between the indoors and the outdoors. Best seen from the window sill on the ground floor or, by night, outside on the street is the art installation *SHA_RE*, presented by the Groningen University Fund to celebrate the University's fourth centenary on August 23, 2014. Designed by Peter Musschenga, it visualizes the university in a dynamic display of thousands of pictures, videos and texts related to historic and ongoing scholarly research and to the academic collections.

Once inside, it is hard to miss the enormous brightly coloured painting which stretches upwards along three floors. It was created by Groningen artist Gerriet Postma (1932-2009) on commission of the University Board, to mark the opening of the 'Electronic Library' in 1997. Postma converted a long room on the fourth floor into a temporary workshop where, standing on a ladder and surrounded by buckets of paint, he covered the enormous canvas stretched out on the floor, using paintbrushes with broomstick handles.

On entering the library, one first encounters the Reception and beyond the former cloakroom, which is being converted into

a café. A staircase and lifts lead to the reading rooms and other facilities on the three upper floors. Both ground floor and basement are largely used for the storage of books. These closed stacks, accessible to library staff only, are equipped with moveable shelving units so as to make the most efficient use of the available space. An automated system transports books to their various destinations within the building.

At present, the UL holds over three million books – and provides access to about one million e-books and e-journals – two thirds of which occupy about sixty kilometers of shelves in the Broerstraat building, while the

staff is determined less by the ever expanding collections of printed and digital materials and the steadily growing number of visitors than by the diversity and number of services supplied to the university's staff and students.

Students especially like to settle themselves in the great hall at one of the many study desks and computer workstations to prepare for their exams, write papers, check their email and meet up with friends. Part of the room is furnished in a rather austere and unassuming style, while the other half was recently redecorated in a much fancier and more colourful design, a lounge as it were. Spread across four floors the library offers approximately 1700 seats for readers – more than any other library in the Netherlands, maybe even in Europe

– partly in carrels, group rooms and quiet spaces, and almost two hundred of them are equipped with PCs. Thus the UL not only fulfills an invaluable academic function but also plays an important role in students' social life.

The second floor has two reading rooms with large collections of literature in the humanities in open shelf areas. The Centre for Russian Studies, which focuses on the study of Russia in general and on Russian-Dutch relations in particular, is in the west reading room. From the south windows of this west room, there is a view of the courtyard with a modern pavilion joined to an older building that presently houses the University Museum. This is what remains of the third library building, completed in 1917 and in use until 1986.

and teams, such as Document Acquisition and IT, Development and Innovation, the information and collection specialists and the license managers, the project managers and consultants. Regular visitors will be familiar with the porters, the staff of the Service Desk and the cafeteria ladies, but many are probably not aware of the fact that the UL has a staff of some 170 people (110 FTEs), without whom catalogues, websites, databases, computer systems, image repositories, libguides, newsletters, e-books and printed books can not be managed, designed, filled, purchased, written, maintained, shelved, preserved, paid for, catalogued and made available. The size of the

Library's services, catalogues and licences, collections and literature searches, and it is also the place to collect and return books.

Behind the many doors on the hall's four sides are instruction rooms, a language lab, a career guidance centre for students, and the offices of the various library departments

remainder is stored in a repository situated at the Zernike Campus in the north of the city. In addition, several Faculties as well as the University Medical Centre Groningen (UMCG) have their own libraries. In the near future, only three locations will remain: the ones at Broerstraat and in UMCG, and the Zernike Library, the joint library of the faculties of Economics and Business, Spatial Sciences, and Mathematics and Natural Sciences. Taking the stairs to the first floor, visitors can hardly fail to notice two large graphics depicting the letters A and B. The remaining letters of the alphabet are displayed

throughout the entire building, ending with Z on the top floor. The series was created in 1986 by twenty six different Dutch artists.

A striking feature of the great hall on the first floor is the atrium with a height of over ten metres. To many visitors this floor is the heart of the library. Until very recently it was here, underneath the atrium, that the Central Information Desk could be found. At present its function has been taken over by the Service Desk, formerly known as the Circulation Desk, situated at the east side of the hall. Its staff provides information on the

cessively occupied which rooms and offices. For example, when the DNPP (Documentation Centre for Dutch Political Parties) moved in in 2003, it was allotted the offices that had just been vacated by the team of Electronic Services. Earlier occupants had been the Expertise Centre for Computer Supported Teaching (ECCOO) and the department of Audiovisual Media (AVM), the original resident. The room at AVM full of electric typewriters and some word processors was very popular.

Until now, the third floor remains relatively unchanged, apart from the move of some open shelf book collections to another part of the room and the unstaffing of the information desk. The second floor has already undergone a metamorphosis. Its eastern half used to be the Periodicals Room, with thousands of titles readily available on the open shelves, often complete sets of volumes or those dating back to the last ten years. As the number of digital journals increased at the diminishment of printed ones, part of the space was fitted out as a set of study areas to supplement those on the first floor. In 2014, the current printed issues of periodicals were relocated to the first floor, and the Periodicals Room no longer exists, nor does the General Reading Room in the western part: the entire floor now serves as Reading Rooms for the Humanities.

Originally, the first floor was dominated by row on row of cabinets with the alphabetical and subject catalogues. A few microfiche readers were available in order to access the results of the first efforts to computerize the catalogue.

of the library escaped renovations and adjustments necessary to improve its service to readers. The new library organisation, instituted in January 2014, will be reflected in the renovation and it will bring significant changes for visitors, staff and collections alike. For a start, the book collections in the open shelf areas are being reorganized as a consequence of the transfer of Faculty libraries to the main building in the Broerstraat.

It would be an interesting exercise to describe the history of the library's services by investigating which teams and departments suc-

came the first visitor to the present building on January 6, 1986, the cafeteria, for example, looked quite different. Already that same year, modifications had to be made to adequately serve its thirsty customers as they were turning up in unexpectedly high numbers. In 1992, the space was expanded by including part of the terrace. New rules demanded the creation of a separate smoking area in 2004, but this section was removed again three years later. On that occasion, the interior was redecorated in the retro style that was to be its final appearance.

Over the past three decades, hardly a part

Collections reading room, located at the end of this floor. The spacious landing is regularly used to display items from the library's collections, or it is made available to professional and amateur artists to exhibit their work.

Just opposite the staircase on the top floor is the Reading Room for Theology and Philosophy. To the left are a lecture room and the Documentation Centre for Dutch Political Parties (DNPP), which documents the development of Dutch political parties, with a focus on extra-parliamentary activities. However, the most popular destination on this floor is the cafeteria with its terrace offering a stunning view of the western part of the city. The space now in use as the cafeteria will be among the first ones to be redesigned in the process of renovating the entire building. It will even be given another function when the new café will have been established on the ground floor. Major alterations are necessary not only to bring the technical infrastructure up to date but also to adjust the building to organisational changes. Moreover, in its present condition it can hardly cope with the ever increasing numbers of visitors. The first plans for a reorganisation were made by University Librarian Alex Klugkist (1990-2010) and these were further developed and supplemented with proposals for the building's renovation by his successor Marjolein Nieboer.

This is not the first time that the library has been challenged with problems caused by changing needs and circumstances. When University Librarian W.R.H. Koops (1964-1990) wel-

obligation to spend one percent of the total building costs of a new public edifice on art.

The largest reading room on the third floor has literature on law and the social sciences, mathematics and the natural sciences, government documentation and genealogy. Old and valuable materials such as manuscripts and early printed books, maps and atlases, letters and archivalia, early newspapers and bookbindings can be examined in the Special

A huge painting by Rudi van de Wint (1942-2006) adorns the stairwell between the second and third floors. Similar artworks by Van de Wint hang in the plenary hall of the House of Representatives in The Hague. The fact that for many years, unnoticed by most, the painting in the UL was displayed upside down, shows that it is a work that can be viewed and appreciated from all angles. Both Van de Wint's painting and the alphabet series were commissioned in 1986 to fulfill the 'one percent regulation', the

The subject catalogue consisted of filing cards in drawer cabinets, while the alphabetical catalogue was contained in thousands of 'Leidse boekjes'. These booklets were named after the university of Leiden, where the system of collecting catalogue slips between loosely bound covers was developed in the late nineteenth century. It was introduced to Groningen by librarian J.W.G. van Haarst (1887-1906). On first opening a volume, all pages seem to be bound the wrong way: they are sorted alphabetically by author's name, but placed from end to front of the booklet with the spine to the right of the text. When trying to find a title, however, the convenience of this method

is immediately evident: it allows for quickly browsing a volume using one's left hand while keeping the writing hand – lefthanders are at a disadvantage here – free for making notes. The covers are fastened around the stacks of slips with strings which made inserting and removing slips – necessary to keep the catalogue up-to-date – a simple procedure. For this job, a small group of library employees sat together every morning, assisted by some retired former co-workers enjoying a few companionable and usefully spent hours. In 1997, when the cataloguing process was fully computerized and the retrocataloguing programme had been completed, these cabinets were relocated to the stacks to make room for an Electronic Library, a study area with over 130 seats offering readers access to digital resources. Today, it is no longer a separate department since the entire UL has gone digital. Another section of the first floor accommodated the Bibliographic Centre, a rich collection of national and international library catalogues and general bibliographies. Created in 1973, it became the starting point for countless students and researchers embarking on new topics because it offered convenient and quick access to scholarly literature on a wide variety of themes. Since such information had become more readily available in digital formats, most books from the Bibliographic Centre were moved to the stacks in 2004.

The room in the south-west corner of the first floor was originally designed as an exhibition space. Books and other documents from the

library's collections were regularly shown here in expositions often prepared in cooperation with researchers and students. The location, far away from the main entrance, did not help to attract streams of visitors. For this and other reasons the room became a Multimedia Education Centre (MOC) in 1994, which in its turn was repurposed as a study area, part of the 'Learning Grid', in 2013. From 1986 until 1992, a Student-Library with multiple copies of required-reading books was housed on the

north side of the first floor. It was replaced by a study area with fifty PCs for the public, especially staff and students of the Arts Faculty.

When the building was being designed, a capacity of two million volumes in the stacks on the ground floor and in the basement was considered sufficient to receive acquisitions during the following quarter century. This turned out to be wishful thinking. Within a few years, it became evident that the collections were growing exponentially. In 1999, the conversion of a former clear-water reservoir at the University's Zernike Complex created additional storage facilities. Some years later another floor was built on top of it, which by now has almost reached its maximum capacity as well.

On the way to the library's exit one might notice two inscriptions on the right. The first shows a floorplan of the St Martinus Church that had to make way for the present building, the official opening of which on May 20, 1987, is commemorated in the second inscription. Though it had already been in use since January 6 of the previous year, the building was not yet complete at that time. According to plan, after the staff and collections had moved into the 'first phase' of the new building, all the old stacks were pulled down to be replaced by the second part. Some rather unsuccessful connections are the only reminders of this necessary phasing of the construction programme. The Dutch Minister of Education and Sciences, W.J. Deetman, who on January 5, 1983, had initiated the construction process by drilling a hole for the first post, had

and office space resulted in the acquisition of four houses in the Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat and temporary stacks at the Botanical Centre in Haren and at Hoge der A 10, in the city centre. Such scattered locations made the organisation all the more complex and led to a decline in readers' services. In the end, all parties concerned reached the conclusion that the situation had become untenable and that the only remedy was to be an entirely new building.

The most controversial issue in the negotiations between the University and the City

850,000 volumes in 1965 to about two million in 1986, over half of which were housed in the UL. Handling the acquisition, cataloguing, circulation, and publication required more and more staff members, while space came at a premium with stacks filled to the roof and office floors and desks covered with the overflow. It became increasingly difficult to reach the intended service level, and in the 1980s even the Reading Room had to be sacrificed and was taken over by the Cataloguing Department. Librarian Koops's constant pleading with the University Council for additional storage

1986-1919

OUDE KIJK IN 'T JATSTRAAT 5 – ZWANESTRAAT 33

During the opening festivities in May 1987, University Librarian W.R.H. Koops must have breathed a sigh of relief over the happy outcome of the long and tedious process of preparation that for many years had taken up so much of his time and energy. All libraries, whether they belong to institutions or individuals, have the objectionable habit of growing continually without a care in the world for the available space. Groningen's University Library began to burst at the seams in the 1960s, a process that only grew worse until it was stopped – for the time being, at least – when the new building finally stood.

From the 1950s onwards, like at all Dutch universities, the numbers of staff and students at Groningen gradually increased, and two decades later they saw an exponential growth. In 1949, about 2000 students were registered, 6000 in 1964, 16,000 in 1980, and today the counter stands at 27,000. Provisions for the library kept pace with this trend. More generous funding for the collection development of the University Library as well as the departmental libraries – of which there were about a hundred by the end of the 1970s – led to an increase of their combined size from about

the distinct pleasure of officially inaugurating the completed building four years later.

Council about a new library was its location. The University favoured a concentration of library provisions in Paddepoel, a district in the north-west of town, or in the Hortus area – the plot used as Hortus Botanicus from the early seventeenth century until 1966 – just north of the Broerstraat. The City Council, however, preferred the site of the vacated Catholic Sint Martinus Church on the Broerstraat. They argued that this location would be much more attractive to the public and that it would generate lots of activities in the city centre, while they fully ignored the fact that the area was far too small for an efficient building, let alone for sufficient parking space. Long and hard deliberations followed, but finally, in 1978, the Broerstraat

location won out. After that it took another two years for the permission needed from the government in The Hague to come through.

The Martinus Church had to be pulled down to make room for the new library. Since 1895, this neogothic basilica, together with the Academy Building, had dominated the Broerstraat. Although the church had not been in use for services since 1970, demolition met with great resistance, mainly because of the reputation of its architect, Pierre Cuypers (1827-1921), famous for the Amsterdam Central Station and the Rijksmuseum. Attempts to rescue the building by granting it the status of monument foundered. A scheme to convert it into a library was doomed to fail

as well, because the plans proposed by architect Herman Hertzberger were not only based on false assumptions and incorrect figures but also technically unfeasible. The Martinus Church was on the plot of land where once stood the Academy Church within which many professors had been buried. It is an ironic twist of fate that the remains of these staunch Calvinists were exhumed and reburied in the Roman Catholic cemetery. The memorial stones of twelve professors had already been removed from the site in 1909 and were stored in the basement of the Academy Building. They are still there but now more prominently displayed in and near the cafeteria. The memorial for Ubbo Emmius, the first Rector Magnificus, occupies a place

of honour against a wall in the entrance hall. The administrative skirmishes were not yet over. A new bone of contention was the neo-gothic building at the corner of Broerstraat and Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat, a shop with an upstairs apartment built in 1896 by the Groningen architect A.Th. van Elmp (1866-1953). The City Council insisted on preserving the corner shop and gave it the status of a protected monument. The ground floor became a bookshop while the upstairs rooms were converted into library offices. Older library employees still refer to it as the 'Postzegelpand', the Stamp House. Since 1939, when barber Roelf Berend de Jonge registered his stamp shop there as a second business, the Groninger Stamp Exchange was a famous address for collectors in the town and its wide surroundings.

In 1986, the UL moved out of the building it had occupied for seven decades. Situated between the Martinus Church, Poststraat, Zwanestraat and Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat, it was almost fully enclosed on four sides – only a small part could be seen from the Zwanestraat. Consequently, not much public credit had been gained from this commission by architect J.A.W. Vrijman (1865-1954). Today the south windows on the second and third floors of the present library offer a good view of the northern facade of Vrijman's building, currently in use as the University Museum. Most of the Library's public rooms and some offices can still be seen there. The stacks used to be located on the east side, and they were joined with a separate four-storey stacks building, extending to the Poststraat, that had been added to the

previous library building in 1898. This whole section was demolished in 1986 to make space for the second phase of the Tauber library.

The entrance to the University Museum is in the pavilion at the end of the 'Catwalk', the illuminated pathway between Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 7 and 9. Designed by 'Architectuur-studio Skets' in Groningen, both pathway and pavilion were constructed as part of an art project set up to celebrate the University's 390th anniversary in 2004. Beyond the recep-

tion desk is the first exhibition room; a corridor to the right leads to the area which functioned as the Catalogue Room with 'Leidse boekjes' from 1969 until 1986. The double doors to the left were the main entrance to the Vrijman building until 1969, when the Library's official address changed from Zwanestraat 33 to Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 5. Outside, an inscription above the door commemorates the completion of this building in 1917. Because it was officially put into use two years later it is usually referred to as 'the library of 1919'.

The former Catalogue Room continues into what used to be the Circulation Department. One of the staff members who reigned here for decades is still famous among Groningen alumni because of his capacious memory: from their second visit onward he greeted every visitor by name. This room had been renovated several times. The staff celebrated the refurbishments of 1959 with a lively party. The stacks could be reached through a door in the wall to the right. The furthest part of

the room used to be a separate office. Behind its back wall were further offices in rooms in the houses along the Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat.

From the 1960s onwards, more work spaces for the growing staff – their number had increased from twelve in 1917 to 37 in 1963 and 90 (FTEs) in 1986 – needed to be found. As the height of the offices and reading rooms was twice that of the floors in the stacks, a gallery could be constructed in the Circulation Department for extra desks and bookcases. From here the stacks could be reached, parts of which were no longer filled with bookcases but occupied by the Cataloguing Department, the Bibliographic Centre, the subject librarians and the subject catalogue.

The Deputy Librarian' had his office in the room to the left of the hallway just off the Circulation Department. For a long time he was also responsible for the subject catalogue which therefore was set up here until it became too wildy and was moved upstairs to the stacks. The mail room, further

offices, and technical areas were located on the lower floor, reached through a door to the right of the staircase. Behind the door to the right in the hallway is a corridor with

steps leading down to the ground floor level of the houses in the Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat. The throughway to the former entrance and the reading rooms and offices on the upper floors of those annexes is now closed. Atelier Crabeth in The Hague produced the stained glass window in the stairwell, which was made to order for this building. It is undated, but the designer's name is recorded in the lower right corner: Lou (Louis Franciscus) Asperslagh (1893-1949), who was employed by Crabeth from 1917 until 1923, when he started his own studio. The two women pictured in the window are the personification of the University of Groningen, holding a book and a shield with the Groningen coat of arms, and Minerva, goddess of wisdom, with a spear and a shield with Medusa's head on it. Above them are the symbols of the Faculties and an eagle with the coat of arms of the city of Groningen. The panel below Minerva represents an owl, her standard attribute, whilst Universitas stands above a hen, the symbol of vigilance and intelligence.

The University Librarian's office was on the upper floor in the room to the right. The double doors – with a clock above them on both sides – opened up to the Main Reading Room, now the main exhibition room of the University Museum. In the final years before the move to the Broerstraat building, this was the seat of the Cataloguing Department. The door at the far end leads to a smaller reading room, located on the first floor of Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 5. From 1929 to 1962, the University rented this house to provide the Library with additional offices, study rooms and this read-

ing room for the use of the Faculty of Law. From the Main Reading Room the stacks could be reached through the door with the

decorated inscription ‘Boekendepôt’. The door in the other corner gave access to the ‘Enschedékamer’. Originally, this was the ‘Tijdschriftenzaal’, the Periodicals Room. After the journals were moved to a much larger room in the Oude Kijk in ’t Jatstraat in 1969, it was converted into a special reading room for manuscripts and rare books, and renamed ‘Enschedékamer’, after University Librarian W.A. Enschedé (1851-1886). This choice was undoubtedly influenced by the fact that the new name consisted of the same number of letters as the old one, and thus would fit in the decoration scheme above the door. Visitors needing special attention were seated in the Enschedékamer as well, such as the ancient professor of history studying old newspapers, who received assistance in turning the pages. In 1980, when a rare books reading room with a large reference collection was installed in one of the Kijk in ’t Jatstraat houses, the Enschedékamer was taken over by the secretariat and the team of Automated Literature Retrieval.

Between 1969 and 1972 the premises Oude Kijk in ’t Jatstraat 5 (again), 7, 9 and 11 were added to the library and converted into offices, reading rooms, storage spaces, and a cafeteria for staff only. A sky bridge was constructed to connect numbers 7 and 9. By relocating the entrance from its rather hidden position in the Zwanestraat to Oude Kijk in ’t Jatstraat 5, a separate space for the ‘Leidse boekjes’ catalogue could be created next to the Circulation Department. On starting in the job, University Librarian H. de Buck (1929-1958) immediately needed to

find extra storage for the new acquisitions and for this purpose the premises at Oude Kijk in ’t Jatstraat 5 were acquired. This lasted

until 1962, when the Law Reading Room was moved from here to the Faculty building. In 1960, De Buck’s successor S.J. Bouma (1958-1963) had the fixed bookcases on two floors replaced with mobile shelving units. Because such a system needs only little space for aisles, the total length of shelves could be extended to 16 kilometres. The installation of these units had no immediate consequences for readers because – with the exception of the professors and a few privileged researchers – they did not have access to the stacks.

To facilitate browsing, the books had always been arranged by subject with the subject

code doubling as the call number. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Librarian W.A. Enschedé revised and extended this system to 69 main sections with 660 subdivisions. The call numbers consist of a combination of letters and numbers, beginning with a letter from the Latin or Greek alphabets indicating the main subject which was further specified by an additional one or two letters, followed by a sequence number. To use space efficiently, books with similar formats were grouped together. One or more dashes, or none, in the call number indicated the size of a volume, ranging from octavo (no dash) to quarto, folio, large folio and plano. To many a reader, this secret language of dashes, letters and numbers remained an incomprehensible mystery.

A major disadvantage of stacking books by subject is the need to reserve shelf space for future additions, leaving the shelves partly empty. Sooner or later, however, the shelves will be completely filled and then inevitably the entire collection has to be rearranged. In order to prevent or at least delay such an internal move, a simplified system was adopted in 1961. It takes account only of the book formats not their subject matter, and it shelves the volumes in the order of their arrival. Pocket-size books are indicated by A, monographs of average size by B, coffee table books by C, and substantially larger volumes by D, E, and F. The serial numbers range from 1-9999, with A 9999 being followed by 1A 1. Currently, we have reached 25A, 65B, and 10C. Similar call numbers are assigned to periodicals and other special materials. Fortunately for the

library staff, this new system was applied only to books acquired after 1961. And when the catalogue was digitized, the old call numbers with Greek and Latin letters still did not have to be changed. It was sufficient to just replace the Greek letters by 'AL for alpha, 'BE for beta, etc. Readers too are happy with this development: requesting materials digitally has made it superfluous to laboriously copy call numbers on request forms, let alone remember them.

The same situation that had occurred in the 1980s – a completely new library had to be constructed because the existing building could not be further adapted to keep up with the demands of the time – had existed at the beginning of the twentieth century. In those days, the most prominent figure in the planning and preparations for the construction process was Librarian A.G. Roos (1906-1917). Educated as a classicist, he catalogued the collection of incunables (1912) and wrote the first history of the library (1914).

The project was developed by Government Architect J.A.W. Vrijman (1865-1954). Other buildings in Groningen designed by him are the Academy Building (1909), the Physiological Laboratory on the Bloemsingel (1911), the Laboratory for Anatomy and Embryology on the Oostersingel (1914), and the Provinciehuis (1915), the seat of the provincial government on Martinikerkhof.

Vrijman first presented his designs in 1912. Two years later a beginning was made to clear the existing building, a fairly minor operation

because only a small part of the collections needed to be moved as the stacks building dating from 1898 would remain standing. The actual construction of the new library was delayed, however, by the outbreak of World War I. Substitute office and storage spaces were found in the basement of the Academy Building and the former Post Office in the Poststraat. It was in the Poststraat building that in January 1917 a fire started in the peat attic from smouldering ashes that had been left untended. Fortunately, not much harm was done: only a small number of books were ruined and the water and smoke damaged the covers of all 800 'Leidse boekjes' so that they had to be replaced.

Later in the year 1917, the new library was finally completed. The interior was decorated in the same style as that of the Academy Building. With their specially designed hand-carved wooden furniture, wainscoting, decorated plaster ceilings and patterned wallpaper, the Reading Room and the offices of the librarian and his deputy were considered particularly stylish. The combined stacks had ample space to store the about 200,000 volumes. However, cuts in construction costs had led to several technical shortcomings such as cracks and holes in the floors and an inadequately functioning central heating system.

A contemporary photograph shows a group of thirteen employees posing on the steps to the front door. At the time, Librarian J.S. Theissen (1917-1929) had just succeeded Roos, who had been appointed to the chair of Ancient History.

The stacks building of 1898 and the stack floors of Vrijman's library fell under the demolition ball in 1986, to be replaced by the second phase of Tauber's building. Three of the four houses, numbers 5-9, on the Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat remained standing and are now occupied by the Law Faculty.

1919-1864

ZWANESTRAAT 33

Vrijman's library served almost two decades longer than its predecessor. That building had been taken into use in 1864, but at the turn of the twentieth century it began to show ever more serious technical shortcomings and could no longer adequately accommodate the increasing numbers of books, visitors and staff. Extension was impossible because the building was enclosed between the Martinus Church and private homes.

The collection, however, had doubled between 1898 – when an additional stacks building was taken into use – and 1914, from about 85,000 to 170,000 volumes, about 6,500 running metres. This fast growth was due not only to better funding allocated by the university and, after the introduction of the Higher Education Act of 1876, by the government too, but also as to a change in policy with regard to the group of readers to be served. While until 1851 books had to be consulted in the library – only the professors and the Curators, the members of the University's governing body, enjoyed borrowing privileges – half a century later books were sent by mail to readers all over the country, to non-members of the academic community as well. Therefore, books in a much wider range of fields needed to be collected, also on subjects that were not taught at the university. This attracted a wider local public, too, and the number of visitors rose to over 17,000 in 1914, almost

three times as many as in 1887. Another contributing factor was the extension of opening hours to the evenings, made possible by the installation of electricity in 1904.

In 1900, Librarian J.W.G. van Haarst (1887-1906) – the first full-time librarian who did not combine this position with a full professorship – was assisted by a keeper, an amanuensis and two attendants, and probably one or two volunteers who hoped that their jobs would eventually become paid ones. In 1914, Roos supervised eight employees, four of whom had a temporary appointment only: the keeper took care of the subject catalogue and the manuscripts, the amanuensis was in charge of circulation, a research assistant was responsible for the alphabetical catalogue, an assistant handled other cataloguing projects, two attendants first class did mostly administrative work, while two others fetched and returned books.

In 1898, a four-storey stacks building was constructed to provide additional housing for the collections. The area needed for this expansion consisted of the yard behind the recently completed Martinus Church (1895), the plot of the vacant sexton's house, which was pulled down, and the eastern part of the library building of 1864. It was designed by Chief Government Architect J. van Lokhorst (1844-1906), whose superintendent was J.A.W. Vrijman, the same who twenty years later would draw up the plans for a whole new library.

The building's interior consisted of a vast empty space, four storeys high, covered by a roof with large windows, in which a huge iron framework was placed, made to measure by the company 'L'Industrie' in Louvain, Belgium. It consisted of three grilled floors and an elevation of 140 bookcases, making a total of 640 for all four floors, with 4,400 m of wooden shelves in this load bearing structure. The grilled floors allowed for air circulation and daylight reaching the lower floors. Walking on them required some caution, however, and wearing very sensible footwear was almost mandatory. Moreover, it was not unusual to see staff and readers hurrying down to retrieve dropped pens and pencils.

Light came into the stacks through many windows: eighteen skylights set in the roof, six windows on each floor in the north and south facades and another eight at the east side. Four lifts facilitated internal book transport. Some sections on the ground floor were partitioned off for special collections, while the most precious books were kept in a basement at the far end of the building, near the Poststraat. The exterior of the stacks building was fairly inconspicuous. A stair turret leading to the roof was the only indulgence Van Lokhorst allowed himself. Four decorative stones were bricked in the east facade. Two large ones featuring the Dutch coat of arms and the inscription 'Rijksuniversiteitsbibliotheek' were flanked by smaller stones commemorating the year of the building's completion. Only the large stones survived the demolition of these stacks in 1986. They were fitted in

the extension of the old library's north wall, and when that had to be partially broken down in 2004 to create a passage from the pavilion to the University Museum, the stones were removed and placed in the Zernike depot, where they await better days.

The operation of pulling down the existing premises, constructing new ones, and moving the book collections first to a temporary, then to the new permanent accommodation was executed in Groningen for the first time during W.A. Enschedé's term of office (1851-1886). The University's Curators commissioned C. Brunings, chief engineer of the Department of Water Management, to present a design.

According to his brief, the new building was to be constructed on the plot of the courtyard with surrounding wings of the old monastic complex in which both the university library and the Latin School were housed. Brunings' monumental design, featuring a large classical library hall, was rejected as too expensive. Another architect was commissioned, J.W. Schaap (1813-1887), whose design for a more compact and less costly construction was accepted.

Schaap was knowledgeable about recent developments in library construction. A few years earlier, as newly appointed supervisor of the university buildings in Leiden, he had undertaken a study tour through England,

they also found tables to do their reading.

The building was inaugurated in 1864 as part of the celebrations of the 250th anniversary of Groningen's university which could boast to be the first one in the Netherlands to have a library that had been built specifically for that purpose. However, it took another two years before it could actually be taken into use; first the gutters needed to be repaired and other technical imperfections to be fixed. Just over 40,000 volumes were placed on the 4,000 m of shelves, leaving ample room for additions. The Germanic and other antiquities were moved elsewhere in 1874 and replaced, in 1881, with a collection of plaster casts of antique statues used for the teaching of archeology.

Overall, the building functioned rather well. Only the glass roof turned out to be not completely successful: it caused leakage in winter and overheating of the rooms below in summer. As counter-measures, new and improved gutters, air ducts and sunscreens were installed.

collections in the smallest possible storage space, he devised a central two-storey book repository in a self-supporting iron construction with cast-iron gridded floors and a glass roof. A one-storey stone building surrounding this depot on three sides contained some smallish reading rooms, a Cabinet of German Antiquities and the offices of the librarian, the keeper and the assistants. From the entrance in the 'Bibliotheeksgang', the Library Alley leading off the Zwanestraat, visitors could walk straight on to the book depot where

France and Germany together with Leiden's university librarian. Inspired by these experiences, he first oversaw the construction of an extension of Leiden's library, soon followed by the commission from Groningen for a completely new university library. Because this building would be sandwiched between private homes and the former Academy Church, which had become a Roman Catholic parish church in 1829, optimal use had to be made of daylight coming in from above.

Schaap's design reveals a strong influence of the modern techniques applied in the British Museum Library in London which he had seen on his study trip. Aiming for easily accessible

1864-1615

POSTSTRAAT – ACADEMY CHURCH

For two and a half centuries, the library was housed in a complex on the Broerstraat that had been built as a Franciscan monastery ('Broer' refers to the friars, i.e. brothers, 'broeders' in Dutch). During this time, thirteen professors served as librarian, a supplementary though poorly remunerated job.

After six centuries, bad maintenance and the increasing weight of the ever expanding book collections had caused the monastic buildings to become irreparably dilapidated and essentially uninhabitable. The imminent risk of its pupils falling prey to collapsing walls and ceilings forced the Latin School to move to another location in 1862. Soon after, the library's collections were transferred to the choir of the Martini Church at Martinikerkhof, while reading rooms and offices became available in the Ommelandershuis in the street opposite. The ancient monastery could then be pulled down to make room for the ultra-modern library designed by J.W. Schaap.

In the nineteenth century, the University's library as well as the Latin School inhabited all three wings of the former convent. The Latin School had its classrooms on the ground floor of the south and east wings. The alley off the Zwanestraat leading to the school,

the future Library Alley, was marked with the so-called Latin Gate, built in 1633 and pulled down in 1867. The upper floors of all three wings housed the library, which for over two centuries could only be reached through the Academy Church. In 1829, a new entrance had to be constructed in the Poststraat because falling stones made entering the church a dangerous enterprise. In that same year the University agreed to return the church to the reconstituted Roman Catholic parish. In 1852, shortly after the accession of W.A. Enschedé as Librarian, revised regulations for the library came into force. Students and educated citizens rejoiced, as from then onward they were finally allowed to take out books from the library. The screens that for centuries had barred readers from direct access to the books were removed, and visitors could freely browse the collections during opening hours: every day except Sunday, between noon and 2 pm, and on Monday and Thursday also between 3 and 4 pm. In 1853, the number of volumes to choose from was 28,634, four times that of 1811.

Enschedé's success as a librarian was based on the groundwork laid by his predecessor P. van Limburg Brouwer (1835-1847), professor of Greek, Roman antiquities and history. Brouwer held a doctorate in medicine, too, and had practised as a physician before changing to a scholarly career; he was also the author of some well-received novels. As librarian, he solved the library's financial problems, made up arrears in the binding of books, replaced missing and damaged volumes, and compiled

on November 26, 1612, to found a 'Provincial Collegium'. The first professor to be appointed was the most learned man in the region: historian Ubbo Emmius (1547-1625). Born in Ostfriesland, Germany, where he had been rector of the Latin Schools in Norden and Leer, he had taken over the supervision of the Latin school at Groningen in 1595, just after the Reduction. In the following months, another five professors were appointed and in

They invited Mello Brunsema (±1557-1610), who had given up a professorship at Helmstedt, Germany, to pursue, in vain, an appointment in Leiden, to teach an introductory course in law. Brunsema's lectures, however, failed to attract the expected audience and had to be discontinued. In the period of peace and recovery during the Twelve Years' Truce (1609-1621) between Spain and the Republic – at war since 1568 – the Estates decided,

peared already in the following year. With 48 years, Lammers also holds the record of being the university's longest serving librarian.

In 1655, students were given limited rights to use the library during its official opening hours on Wednesdays and Saturdays, between noon and 2 pm in winter and from 1 to 3 pm in summer. The four Curators and the professors – they were twelve at the time – all had a key and could go in and out at any time. Originally the books had been chained to the cases, but the chains, chain plates and nails were removed around the year 1660 to facilitate consultation.

In line with other university libraries in the Netherlands, the one in Groningen was originally accommodated in an existing building, converted for its new function. On the introduction of the Reformation to the city of Groningen in 1594, the so-called Reduction, the possessions of the Catholic church were put to public use. Among these was the Franciscan monastery at the Broerstraat. Originally built in the mid-thirteenth century, it consisted of three wings around a courtyard with the church at the north end. In 1595, the Latin School took over the ground floors of two wings, but the remainder of the buildings remained empty until, in 1614, the Estates of the City and the Province handed over the church to their newly established university.

The first attempt to establish a university in Groningen dates from 1595, when the Estates accepted a proposal to institute a 'College'.

The second room, the one in the south wing, had been taken into use by the library in 1667. At the time, some magistrates raised objections against this extension because the resulting extra duties would entail an increase of the professor-librarian's salary. By 1774, all three wings were filled with bookcases. One of the instructions approved in 1668 made it the task of the librarian to compile an alphabetical catalogue of all the books present and to have it printed. The first to whom these instructions applied was Gerhardus Lammers, professor of medicine (1668-1716), who must have been a fast worker: his catalogue ap-

a supplement to the defective catalogue prepared by the previous Librarian, J.R. van Eerde (1816-1835). Brouwer's accomplishments are all the more admirable knowing that his only assistant was too old and frail to do any real work. His tasks were hardly lightened when in 1844 a classical scholar was appointed to support him as this person often failed to show up because of other commitments.

In 1823, the professors had to give up their two-centuries old right to a key to the library, and from then on they could go in only when accompanied by the amanuensis. This official therefore had to be available at all times, reason why he was given rent-free living quarters nearby. Opening hours for other readers were from 9 am to 1 pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, and from 2 to 4 pm on Thursdays and Fridays. In 1818, a heated reading room was installed. Painted boards informed visitors on how to behave in the library.

In the report written by Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach, a book lover from Frankfurt who visited Groningen in 1710, we read that the library was housed in two dark and desolate long and narrow passages with bookcases placed at one side filled only partially with badly bound books. A small cabinet contained the manuscripts. Readers could work at desks and benches in front of the windows. Uffenbach's guide, the stammering professor of rhetoric A.M. Isinck, later became the Librarian (1716-1727) and published a supplement, in 1722, to the library's first printed catalogue which had appeared half a century before.

the summer of 1614 a printed announcement that a university would soon be opened in Groningen was distributed in the Dutch provinces and abroad. The inaugural ceremonies took place on August 23 (Julian calendar).

To house the new academy, two convents for women and the Franciscan monastery, all situated at Broerstraat and abandoned since 1594, were converted into Groningen's centre of learning. In the Vrouw Sywenconvent three lecture rooms were set up, a Senate Room and living quarters for the beadle; three professors came to live in the adjacent Menoldaconvent; and the Franciscans' church on the opposite side of the street became the new academy's church and the venue for academic functions.

On February 28, 1615 (March 10 in the Gregorian calendar), it was decided to install an anatomy room on the ground floor of the monastery's east wing and a library on the floor above it, the same place where the Franciscans had kept their books. To get there, one had to enter the church on the Kijk in 't Jatstraat and walk its full length up to the choir from where a staircase led to the upper floor. For the moment, however, there was not a single book to put on the shelves.

At that time it was difficult to acquire scholarly books in Groningen, let alone a whole collection. Thus some learned men – the most prominent of them being Mayor Joachim Alting – took it upon them to acquire the necessary volumes for teaching and research in bookshops and at auctions in Holland. Four

years later, they had collected just over two hundred titles in more than four hundred volumes. Nicolaus Mulerius, the professor of medicine and mathematics who acted as unpaid librarian, copied a handwritten list of the titles of these academic books in a volume called *Librorum Academicorum Syllabus*. In the following two centuries, he and his successors added the titles of books purchased by the library as well as many donations presented by local and foreign beneficiaries.

The most important pictorial source for the library in the Franciscan monastery is the city plan drawn by Egbert Hauboos in 1643. It clearly shows the eastern wing of the convent, looking out on the courtyard, with six windows on the upper floor. This space was about 30 m long and less than 4 m wide. To catch as much light as possible, the bookcases may have been placed at right angles to the windows. The books themselves, mostly large formats, were chained to the cases, and could therefore be consulted only in the library.

It must have been a mixed blessing to study here. The rooms were unheated and the only light came from the sun. Books had to be consulted on the spot, standing at a lectern, after having taken these large and heavy tomes down from the shelves. One of the professors doubled as librarian, and since 1626, when Mulerius started a second term (1626-1630), he received a supplement to his salary for this additional task. His main responsibility was to acquire and register new books, and to keep expenses within budget. At first, this cannot have been a very time-consuming task since there was hardly any money to spend after the university's generosity of the initial few decades had dwindled. Moreover, entry to the book room was the prerogative of the Curators and professors only, and there were no regular opening hours to be kept.

Just as their present-day counterparts, scholars in the early modern period generally had their own personal libraries at home. Such collections could be quite substantial and it was not unusual for professors to own more books than their universities did. Academic libraries in those days specialized in large-format books and series of source editions, expensive publications that most private persons could not afford to buy. At the same time, a library filled with large and heavy tomes made scholarship visible to magistrates, potential donors, foreign visitors, and other dignitaries, thus enhancing the university's status.

Z	7	14	21	28
M	1	8	22	29
D	2	9	23	30
W	3	10	24	31
D	4	11	25	
V	5	12	26	
Z	6	13	27

FORTY COLLECTIONS

Since its foundation in 1615, the University Library collects and manages information in diverse media formats for the benefit of the academic community. In the seventeenth century, just as today, it was impossible to acquire the complete academic book production, and librarians have always needed to make a selection of the best and most recent scholarly studies, editions, reference books, and periodicals.

New publications are added continuously, and inevitably works that were once of topical interest become out-of-date at some point in time. This process tends to go faster for the exact sciences than it does for the arts, but every collection eventually becomes a historical collection: the documents no longer contribute to the current scholarly and intellectual discourse, and instead become part of the history and memory of mankind. It is an important responsibility of repository libraries such as university libraries, from which generally no books are removed, to preserve and present this cultural and academic heritage.

Today, Groningen University Library possesses over three million printed and handwritten volumes, comprising works on almost any imaginable topic. They can be divided in numerous subcollections, the major ones being those based on material type (e.g., books, manuscripts, maps, e-books, periodicals), subject (socialism, surveying, Robinsonades,

film history, Groningana), exterior characteristics (typography, bookbindings, illustrated books, annotated books), and provenance.

Many of the selected collections presented in the following section were brought together by individuals and organizations based in the city and province of Groningen, and thus reflect various aspects of the cultural and scholarly history of the region. They were either purchased by the Library or they arrived as donations, bequests and loans. Invaluable supplements to the regular collection, the fill lacunae or introduce subjects that were not yet represented. They may either be kept together under a specific name or they receive regular call numbers and almost disappear from sight in the general collection. Some are further developed, others stay as they are. It also happens that research on new topics leads to the discovery of a collection that had been formed by accident, as it were, which may then be consciously expanded. Such finds prove the great value of the Library not only as a cultural treasure house but most of all as a repository of source materials for present and future scholarly research.

1614 ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

In July 1614 posters appeared in the northern provinces of the Republic and adjacent regions in Germany announcing the upcoming opening of an academy in the city of Groningen. The broadsheet was printed in 700 copies by Hans Sas, the newly appointed printer of the academy and the province. This was a sought-after position since it brought with it a certain source of income. Academic patrons were the university's magistrates, the faculties, the library and other institutions, as well as professors and students. An instruction enumerated the rights and duties of the parties involved, such as the quality of the paper and the fonts to be used, the printer's remuneration for the printing of disputations, and the right of the library to receive two copies of all material printed for the academy and the province. The last officially appointed academy printer in Groningen was Jan Oomkens, who died in 1872. The firms of P. Noordhoff and J.B. Wolters continued the production of academic publications, and by extending their activities with the publication of schoolbooks they became the largest education book publishers in the Netherlands. Among the publications produced by the academy printers are announcements of academic ceremonies and events – the so-called programmata – disputations, dissertations, orations, library catalogues, course schedules, occasional poems, and ordinances and placards. Programmata are broadsheets an-

nouncing the change of office transfers of the Rector Magnificus, inaugural lectures of newly appointed professors or the funerals of members of the academic community. Although the chances of survival of such ephemeral printed matter are relatively small, the UL has a large collection of Groningen programmata. They form an important source for the history of

the university and for genealogical studies. On Copper Monday, the first Monday after Epiphany, journeymen printers traditionally offered their masters and customers printed new year wishes. The custom was revived in Groningen in 1977. The Copper Monday print of 1989 has as its theme the relation between printers-publishers and the University since 1614.

1615 THE COLLECTION OF MAPS AND ATLASES

At the celebrations of the official opening of the present edifice, the firms involved with its design, construction, and furnishing offered the librarian a rare wall map of Europe. The beautifully decorated map is was produced and hand-coloured by the office of Justus Danckerts in Amsterdam, probably around the year 1670. Because of its size – 88 x 110 cm – it was printed on four leaves. This present mirrors the first donation received by the library, recorded on a calligraphed and decorated page in the handwritten *Syllabus Academicorum Librorum*, the library's earliest catalogue. On August 18, 1615, one of the university's Curators, the Groningen magistrate Abel Coenders van Helpen (1564-1629), donated a magnificent *Atlas sive cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mundi*. Most of the more than hundred maps in this volume were originally drawn by the Flemish cartographer Gerard Mercator (1512-1594). Another early acquisition was Abraham Ortelius's atlas *Theatrum orbis terrarum*, printed by the Antwerp firm of Plantin in 1612. The collection which grew from these small beginnings through purchases and donations today consists of hundreds of maps, atlases, and city plans. A major collection is the one assembled by the Groningen magistrate Mello Backer (1807-1883), which came to the UL in 1899. Some of its highlights are two beauti-

ful maps drawn by the Groningen engineer and surveyor Henricus Teysinga (1706-1756). One is of the area along the Dollard which was drowned in the Christmas Flood of 1277, the other shows the dikes, posts and piles

along the northeastern coast of Groningen. A fine cartographical rarity is the world map inserted in the *Cronycke van Hollandt Zeelandt en Vrieslant* by Cornelius Aurelius (Leiden: Jan Seversz, 1517). Printed in 1514, also by Jan Seversz, it is the only known copy of the earliest map printed in the Netherlands.

1619

THE FOUNDATION COLLECTION

On 28 Februari 1615, when the decision was made to create an academic library, there was not yet a single book to place there. A trade in scholarly books hardly existed in Groningen in these days, reason why most books for the University Library were acquired at bookshops and auctions in Holland. Nicolaus Mulerius (1564-1630), professor of medicine and mathematics as well as acting librarian, entered the titles of these purchases in the *Syllabus Academicorum Librorum*. Until well into the eighteenth century, the *Syllabus* was used to record purchases and donations. Not all of Mulerius's successors were equally conscientious, however, and there are lacunae of sometimes several years. Mulerius compiled a list of just over 200 works in 403 volumes which were present in the library on Februari 10, 1619. Nearly all of these books are large-format volumes written in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. They are mostly fairly recent publications: almost sixty percent of them date from after the year 1600, and the majority was printed in Germany, Switzerland, and France. With 76 and 66 titles, the sections on theology and law are the largest ones. History holds the third place with 21 items. Only a few of the volumes were second hand ones, and thus already had a binding. The new books were bound for the library in dark brown leather with a characteristic type of blind-tooled decoration. About half of them are

still protected by such bindings. Traces of nails and metal plates on the back covers of many of these volumes show that originally this was a chained library. Around 1660, when students

had been given permission to use the library during regular opening hours, the chains were removed. Almost inevitably, this led to the subsequent disappearance of some volumes.

1620

THE CHRISTMANN COLLECTION

On May 2, 1620, the Senate – the University board consisting of the professors chaired by the Rector Magnificus – bought a small collection of books previously owned by the Heidelberg professor Jakob Christmann (1554-1613). They were sold by Joachim Borgesius, the recently appointed headmaster of the Latin School in Groningen. He received 125 florins for thirteen manuscripts, two rolls, a folded sheet and two printed Arabic textbooks. All books save one are completely or partly written in Arabic and Turkish. In the early modern age, knowledge of oriental languages, especially Arabic, was of great practical use for merchants and diplomats active in the Levant and Northern Africa, while theologians needed to be well-versed in Hebrew and related languages to reach a better understanding of the original versions of the Bible. Moreover, many classical texts on medicine, mathematics, astronomy and other sciences were passed down in Arabic translations, which in their turn needed to be translated into Latin for use by European scholars. Jakob Christmann was a well-known orientalist and astronomer who had studied in Heidelberg, where he was appointed professor of Arabic in 1608. Eight of his books which ended up in Groningen are in his own handwriting. The only Latin book in the collections is a fourteenth-century manu-

script illustrated with astronomical tables. As printed aides for teaching and learning Arabic were few, Groningen would have been eager to buy the Christmann books as the start of an oriental library, particularly because they included textbooks on grammar and vocabulary. However, it was only in the

second half of the eighteenth century that the oriental collection was further extended with fifteen Arabic manuscripts. Some of them were presented by professors Petrus Camper (1722-1789), Leonardus Offerhaus (1699-1779), and Nikolaus Wilhelm Schroeder (1721-1796), others may have been acquired at an auction in 1776.

1620

MEDIAEVAL MANUSCRIPTS

One of the University Library's most prized possessions is the collection of approximately one hundred medieval manuscripts, dating from the tenth to the fifteenth century. The oldest of them is a copy, written around the year 1000, of *Etymologiae* or *Origines*, a popular medieval textbook by Saint Isidore, archbishop of Seville (c. 560-636), the patron saint of the Internet. In 1620, six centuries after this particular volume was produced, it was donated to the library by the Groningen magistrate Justus à Cleven. Most of the fifty manuscripts recorded in the library's first printed catalogue (1669) date from before the year 1600. They arrived as gifts or as part of the Christmann collection purchased in 1620, while others come from the library of the Martini Church in town, which was transferred to the university in the early 1620s. In the following centuries the collection grew only slowly, mostly through donations and bequests. The fourteenth-century copy of the *Rijmbijbel*, a rhymed biblical history by the Flemish poet Jacob van Maerlant, was bequeathed by B. H. Lulofs (1787-1849), professor of Dutch language and literature in Groningen. The *Chronicle of the Bloemhof monastery at Wittewierum*, written by Emo – the earliest known foreign student at Oxford University – and Menko, two of the monastery's thirteenth-century abbots, is the oldest surviving written source for the history of Groningen.

Around the turn of the seventeenth century, Ubbo Emmius (1547-1625), then rector of the Groningen Latin School, read it extensively, transcribed parts of it and wrote comments in its margins. The manuscript was presented to the Library in 1852 by W.J. Koppius, in remembrance of his recently deceased son Frans Koppius, minister in Den Ham, the last private owner. Other manuscripts produced in the region's monasteries are a lectionary for the use in the convent of Selwerd and several books of hours, all decorated in the characteristic Groningen style. One of these was presented on the occasion of University Librarian W.R.H. Koops's retirement in 1990.

1620

MODERN MANUSCRIPTS

Among the modern – post-1500 – manuscripts, the collection of over two hundred volumes with lecture notes is one of the largest. The earliest specimens in the library are even older: they contain the notes written in the late 1480s by young men from Groningen studying at German universities. Lecture notes by professors have survived too, such as the volumes with the inaugural lecture and course notes written by Mello Brunsema (1563-c. 1611), who was appointed in 1596 as the first and only professor in the newly established Faculty of Law. The library received them in 1620, as a donation from one of the university's curators, Rudolph Wycheringe. Measuring 52 x 39 cm, the two volumes of the so-called Codex Boerhaavianus are the largest in the collection. They derive their name from the first owner, the famous Leiden botanist and physician Herman Boerhaave (1678-1738), who wrote down the names of the plants that are illustrated on loosely inserted leaves. These illustrations are copies Boerhaave had made of the originals in Paris, which were drawn by the French botanist Charles Plumier (1646-1704) during his travels in the West-Indies. Carolus Linnaeus (1707-1778), founder of the binary nomenclature, studied them when he spent time in Leiden in 1735. At the auction of Boerhaave's library, one of

his students, Johannes Burman (1707-1779), purchased the books. He supplemented his teacher's notes, had about half of the illustrations engraved and published them as *Plantarum Americanarum* (Amsterdam 1755-1760). Even more exotic are five manuscripts from Java, Sumatra, and Bali. They are written on palm leaves which are bound together on a cord between wooden covers. One was bought by the library in 1926, the others were presented by various donors between 1924 and 1961.

1624

THE LIBRARY OF THE MARTINI CHURCH

After the official adoption of the Reformed faith in Groningen in 1594, the monasteries and other Catholic religious institutions were closed and their properties confiscated. It is not clear what happened to the book collections of these organisations. Part of them will have been destroyed or reused, while priests and monks leaving Groningen have undoubtedly taken books with them. Other books ended up in the library of the Martini Church, the most important church of the city. In 1622, the City Council agreed to the transfer of this collection to the University Library. One of the conditions was that the books should be placed as a recognizable collection, separately from the rest of the library's collections, and that ministers and other scholars in town would be given free access to them. The move took place two years later. Unfortunately, no list of this loan survives. Research has shown that the collection is made up of at least sixty books, including manuscripts and incunabula. Part of these books came from the library gathered by the very learned Wilhelmus Frederici, one of the priests in the Martini Church, who had studied theology and medicine in Cologne and Ferrara, and exchanged letters with Erasmus and other scholars. In some of his books Frederici noted where and when

he had bought them, and how much he had paid to have them decorated and bound. In those days, books were usually sold as a stack of paper; it was up to the buyer to decide on the type and costs of finishing a volume. Frederici's broad scholarly interests are evident

from his book collection: beside some theological works, such as a bible in Hebrew, he owned the encyclopaedia *Speculum Maius* by Vincent of Beauvais, the *Canon Medicinæ* by Avicenna, Eusebius' church history and works by classical as well as humanistic authors.

1669

THE WILHELMI COLLECTION

The *Syllabus*, the UL's first catalogue, records how in May 1669 the Curators consented to a substantial purchase, realized through the mediation by Mayor and Curator Johannes à Julsingha. For the price of 800 florins, paid

to the heirs of Harmen Wilhelmi, the library expanded its collection of mathematics and astronomy with another two hundred books. Included in the purchase was an astrolabe, an instrument used for making astronomical and navigational calculations, but also applied for surveying purposes. Unfortunately, the present whereabouts of Wilhelmi's astrolabe, described in the *Syllabus* as 'manufactured in a special way', are unknown. Harmen Wilhelmi was admitted as a sur-

veyor in Groningen in 1646. The collection must have been his professional library, as it contains mostly books on mathematics, surveying and the art of fortification. Remarkably, most books are in Latin, though the surveyor education was in Dutch because students usually had not mastered the Latin language. The Wilhelmi collection was catalogued immediately upon arrival and its titles are included in the first printed catalogue, published in that same year 1669. It was compiled by Gerhardus Lammers (1642-1719), the young professor of medicine who had been appointed librarian in the previous year. He retired in 1716, after having been in office for 48 years. Lammers did not keep Wilhelmi's books together as a special collection. Instead, he placed them in the appropriate subject groups. Fortunately, with the help of the list of titles in the *Syllabus* it is easy to recognize the volumes and to reconstruct Wilhelmi's library.

1669

ILLUSTRATED NATURAL HISTORY BOOKS

It is one of the responsibilities of a librarian to generate and sustain the public's interest in their collections. A tried and tested method is to display beautifully executed scholarly books and share their knowledge about them. One way to catch the audience's attention is the approach taken by Gisbert Eding, an eighteenth-century Groningen lawyer with a personal library of some 15,000 volumes. He was particularly fond of scarifying his female audience by showing them an enormously magnified illustration of a flea in Robert Hooke's *Micrographia* (1665). Among the beautifully illustrated books

mentioned in the library catalogue of 1669 are Basilius Besler's description of the Hortus Eystettensis, the episcopal garden in Eichstatt (1613), Jacques Dalechamp's *Histoire générale des plantes* (1615), Rembertus Dodonaeus's *Cruydt-boek* (1554), the works on zoology and botany by Conrad Gesner from the 1550s, and Andreas Vesalius's study of human anatomy *De fabrica humani corporis* (1555). A later acquisition is a copy of *Over de voortteeling en wonderbaerlyke veranderingen der Surinaemsche insecten* (1719) by Maria Sibylla Merian which was probably coloured by the artist herself. In 1780 a grateful alumnus, the Earl of Kintore, surprised his alma mater with a beautifully illustrated two-volume work in folio format, Mark Catesby's *The natural history of Carolina, Florida and the Bahama Islands* (Londen 1771). The Earl had been born in Groningen as Antony Adriaan Falconer, son of a Scottish father and a Dutch mother.

No less impressive is the set of over four hundred watercolours of Chinese fishes, probably produced in Canton. They were donated to the Cabinet of Natural History in Groningen and transferred to the UL around 1870, a gift from M.J. Senn van Basel (1808-1863), a Groningen-born businessman in Batavia and consul in Canton.

BOOKS IN GREEK

Greek has always been taught at the university of Groningen. In the foundation collection, therefore, we find many works by Greek theologians, philosophers, physicians, mathematicians and historians, and today the library has an extensive collection of classical and medieval Greek literature. There are only about a dozen Greek manuscripts. One of them is a fifteenth-century copy of the letters of St Paul; it was acquired in the nineteenth century but its provenance is unknown. The remaining volumes contain notes on Greek manuscripts in foreign libraries made by Tjalling Halbertsma (1829-1894), who was appointed to the chair of Greek in Groningen in 1877. The *Syllabus* records the donation in 1621 by the law professor Cornelis van Pijnacker of a six-volume edition of the collected works of Aristotle, printed by Aldus Manutius in Venice in 1495-1498. The set is bound in fine green leather with gold tooling. A much more recent addition is Another fine publication by Aldus Manutius is the first edition in Greek of the plays of Aristophanes, printed in 1498. In this book, the commentary is printed in the margins, and it must have caused the compositor a lot of headache to get it aligned with the main text. In 1688 the library of the Groningen professor of law Jacobus Oiselius (1631-1686) was auctioned. The UL successfully bid for a magnificent copy of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssee* in Greek and paid the sum of five guilders for a first edition of Homer in Greek, published

in Florence in 1488 by Bartolomeo de' Libri. The two printed volumes are illustrated with hand-painted initials and border decorations. In the second half of the twentieth century, Medieval and New Greek were added to the Groningen curriculum. The UL therefore has a sizable collection of academic books in Greek as well as modern Greek literature.

ANNOTATED BOOKS

Before he came to Groningen in 1614 to teach medicine and mathematics at the young university, Nicolaus Mulerius had practiced as a physician and had been the rector of the Latin School in Leeuwarden. For many years, he also published almanacks which were printed in huge numbers. Very few of these have survived, since copies of such ephemeral publications are usually thrown away at the end of the year. By good fortune, the UL could acquire a very special copy of Mulerius's almanack of 1608, printed by Hans Sas in Groningen. On its interleaved pages there are some notes in French, Dutch, and Latin in Mulerius's own handwriting, with remarks on the weather, the political situation, his appointment in Leeuwarden, and other events. Such books with handwritten notes, underlinings, and comments offer valuable information on the history of book ownership and reading culture. The library's Luther Bible is an impressive example. The first owner of this copy of the fourth edition of the New Testament edited and translated by Erasmus, printed in Basel by Johannes Froben in 1527, was Martin Luther. He studied it attentively, as is obvious from the numerous underlinings and notes, in which he often argues against Erasmus. Luther's sons gave the book to an Ostfrisian nobleman, and by the middle of the sixteenth-century it was in the possession of the theologian Regnerus Praedinius, rector of the Groningen Latin School. Praedinius in his turn added even more and often very exten-

sive comments, often directed against Luther. The volume was donated to the UL in 1724. A fifteenth-century manuscript of Cicero's *De officiis*, for example, contains annotations made by both Gansfort and Praedinius. Some notes in Praedinius's handwriting appear in a coy of Horace's collected works in the Riedel collection, and a New Testament heavily annotated by Luther was used extensively used by Praedinius too.

THE CRIJNSZ COLLECTION

The library holds thousands of pamphlets and brochures. Because such tracts could be printed fast and cheap, and were easy to distribute, they were an important medium to spreading information and opinions. The primary purpose of pamphlets is to influence public opinion on a specific issue, often concerning politics or religious debate. Their size varies from a single sheet to several quires. Many of them are unbound, others consist of folded and stitched sheets, or they have a paper cover, often blue. The first major acquisition for the library was made in 1751 with the collection of seventeenth-century pamphlets on religious controversies gathered by Willem Crijnsz, minister in Maasland (province of South Holland) around 1600. At an auction held in Amsterdam in 1842, a collection of seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century pamphlets was bought, to which a number of items dating to the period 1779-1800 was later added. Gregorius van Alphen, who started his library career as an assistant in Groningen but soon became the keeper, compiled a catalogue of the pamphlets in the UL which at the time were not recorded in the catalogue of the Royal Library in The Hague. It was published in 1944, when the author had already moved on to the position of deputy librarian in the Royal Library. Digital repro-

ductions of the pamphlets catalogued by Van Alphen are included in the database *The Early Modern Pamphlets Online* (TEMPO). Dutch pamphlets published after 1813, the year of accession of King Willem I, are usually called brochures. A major part of the collection in the UL was originally collected by the Leensmuseum (Reading Museum), founded by a group of professors in 1867. The latest issues of peri-

odicals to which the UL subscribed could be consulted there first, because its reading room was open for longer hours than the one in the library. Numerous brochures, especially on the labour movement and political economy, may be found in the Conamur collection, donated in 1905. J. Reitsma (1837-1902), professor of theology in Groningen, collected brochures too, and they were donated to the library in 1907.

1805

THE SMITH COLLECTION

Edzard Pompejus Smith (1729-1805) was born in a distinguished Groningen family of justices and mayors. He enrolled as a student of arts in his hometown in 1744. The UL owns a volume with notes he took during lectures on geography given by Leonard Offerhaus in 1746. At the same time, from 1744-1748, Smith was enlisted in the army of the Estates General in the province. In 1754 he completed his doctorate in law. During his career Smith held several

administrative positions, such as justice, secretary of the town orphanage, deputy to the Provincial Court of Auditores, deputy to the Provincial Executive and to the Estates General. Smith died unmarried and childless, and left his entire library of some 500 volumes, dating from the sixteenth to the very early nineteenth century, to the university. His only condition was that the books be placed separately from the main collection. Written in Latin, French, and Dutch, they are mostly of a legal, historical, and philosophical nature, but there are also travel accounts, books on landscape designing, and journals of expeditions such as Dutch translations of Charles Burney's *The present state of music in France and Italy* (1786) and the

Baron de Lahontan's *New voyages to North America*, or Jan Huyghen van Linschoten's *Itinerarium, ofte schipvaart naer Oost ofte Portugaels Indien* (1614). Notes and markings in several of these books indicate that they had been in the family before becoming part of Smith's library.

1807

THE NAUTA COLLECTION

Hendrik Jan Nauta spent all of his life (1735-1807) in the city of Groningen, where he studied law and subsequently found employment with the municipal tax office. In 1761 he graduated in law in an expensive public promotion ceremony. To commemorate the occasion, eight years later Nauta's portrait was painted, featuring the sitter in a red gown. Few of Nauta's colleagues would have understood his hobby, let alone have shared it. He pursued sciences such as magic, wizardry, divination, alchemy, astrology, demonology, chronology, and related subjects, sciences which are nowadays referred to as occult or esoteric. For a long time, however, these had been considered the traditional fields of science – Isaac Newton was a famous alchemist – but this began to change in the eighteenth century. Nauta had great interest in this development and collected hundreds of books in Dutch, German, French and Latin on these subjects, including works by followers as well as opponents of these scientific methods. Such a specialised library would have been difficult to sell in the early nineteenth century, reason why Nauta's heirs donated the collection to the UL. On arrival in the library the books were catalogued and subsequently shelved with the relevant subject groups. The collection as such disappeared from view, but it could be reconstructed with the help of the inventory

list compiled at the time of the transfer. The importance of the collection became evident when checking the titles in the national cat-

atalogue: many of the books are not present in other Dutch libraries. In this case, too, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

1932

ALBA AMICORUM

The tradition of collecting contributions by friends, professors, and acquaintances in a book of friends, or album amicorum, originated at German universities in the sixteenth century. In those days, it was customary for students to spend time at several universities, often in various countries. Their alba amicorum served as a memory and a record of the relationships formed during these years. The University of Groningen has reversed the chronology of the process: as part of the graduation ceremony, Master and PhD students receive a printed album amicorum as a memento of their student days in Groningen. The UL owns several dozens of alba from the sixteenth up to the nineteenth century, compiled by students originating from Groningen or studying there. Such books do not traditionally belong to the category of scholarly literature, and they became collectibles for the library only in the nineteenth century. The first album it acquired had belonged to Petrus Keuchenius (1601-1644) and was brought to auction by a late descendant in 1832. Born in Wesel, Germany, Keuchenius first studied in Marburg then moved to Groningen in 1627 where he was called as preacher two years later. Alba offer valuable historical information such as biographical data on the owners and their circle of friends, and on academic networks. Many contributors decorated their inscriptions with drawings, paintings, portraits, paper cuts, and embroidery. Emblem books with their

combination of pictures and texts provided popular themes for illustrations in alba. The collection of emblem books donated by W.G. Bakker in 1919 offers invaluable support for the study of these pictorial contributions. Alba may also supplement the often incomplete matriculation books of universities. For example, the album amicorum of Peter Baumann, a student from Meurs in Germany who studied theology in Groningen between 1644 and 1648, includes inscriptions of twenty students who are not recorded in the university's register.

1832

MEDICAL COLLECTIONS

Although Nicolaus Mulerius, the university's first librarian, not only taught mathematics but medicine as well and even practiced as a physician, the collection of medical works in the UL developed only slowly. The main reason must have been that physicians preferred to keep their reference books at hand. This was certainly the case with Mulerius, because the auction catalogue of his library proves that he owned many more books on medicine than the academic library did. A remarkable donation was given by E.J. Thomassen à Thuessink (1762-1832). It is a collection of some two thousand medical dissertations defended at Dutch, German and French universities. Thuessink arranged them by theme and had them bound in 98 volumes. Their

provenance is recorded as 'Don. Thuessinkii'. Medical literature of the nineteenth century is very well represented in a number of bequests. from J.F.K.R. Ranke (1849-1887), educated as a surgeon in Halle, Germany, came eight hundred books together with ninety periodicals, whose subscriptions were continued. In 1898 a collection of mainly obstetrics and gynaecology arrived as a bequest of prof. W.M.H. Sanger (1833-1898). H.A. Kooyker (1832-1904), who occupied the Groningen chair of pathology and medicina forensis, destined his library of 1200 books to the university. Shortly after a collection focusing on neurology and psychiatry was

received from the estate of Dr. A.O.H. Tellegen (1848-1904), a psychiatrist in The Hague who had been assistant to both Kooyker and Sanger. In 1877 the Groningen branch of the Dutch Society for the Promotion of Medicine (Nederlandsche Maatschappij tot Bevordering der Geneeskunst) agreed to place in the academic library the books collected by its reading society. There are about 600 volumes, mostly published in the first half of the nineteenth century. Deposited in 1900 was the ophthalmological collection of the Institute for the Treatment and Care of Poor Eye Patients (Inrichting tot Behandeling en Verpleging van Minvermogene Ooglijders), established in 1879.

1833 THE VAN SCHOOTEN MANUSCRIPTS

With the purchase of the library of surveyor Harmen Wilhelmi in 1669, the library had acquired a good foundation collection in the field of mathematics which was expanded as best as possible. In the early nineteenth century, an interesting donation was given by the Groningen family Baart de la Faille. They presented fifteen manuscripts with texts on algebra, arithmetics, logarithms, and mathematics in general, written and copied by Frans van Schooten and his half-brother Pieter. The books are first mentioned in the printed library catalogue published in 1833. They may have come from the estate of Jacob Baart de la Faille (1757-1823), holder of the Groningen chair of mathematics, physics and astronomy since 1790. Frans van Schooten (1615-1660) taught at the ‘Duytsche Mathematicque’, an engineering school associated with the university at Leiden. The majority of the students were surveyors, engineers and carpenters, reason why the lectures were given in Dutch. Van Schooten’s most important work, *Mathematische oeffeningen*, was published shortly after his death. He came from a mathematical family: he succeeded his father Frans senior as a teacher at the Duytsche Mathematicque, while he in his turn was succeeded by his half-brother Pieter. In 1914, on the occasion of the University’s third centenary, a doctorate honoris causa was

awarded to Alicia Boole Stott (1860-1940), a mathematician with a special talent for four-dimensional geometry. She coined the term ‘polytope’ for a convex solid in four dimensions. Boole Stott could imagine objects in four dimensions, but in her timemaking visualizing them was possible only in three dimensions. The Groningen University Museum preserves a number of such objects. Five preparatory drawings which until recently were kept in the Mathematical Institute, are now in the UL.

1853 THE LIBRARY OF PRO EXCOLENDO IURE PATRIO

The Faculty of Law has always been one of the pillars of the University. Not surprisingly then, in the *Syllabus* of 1619 only the section on theology is larger than the one on law, and collection development in this field has always continued. The most important acquisition made during the library’s first century is the so-called *Oceanus Juris*, the Ocean of the Law, an enormous collection of texts on civil and canon law published under the auspices of Pope Gregory XIII. The set consists of 28 volumes in-folio and was printed in Venice in 1584. The academy purchased them in 1668 at the price of 400 florins. Some important additions arrived as loans or donations. In 1853, the Groningen Societas Pro Excolendo Iure Patrio (Society for the Cultivation of the Nation’s Law), deposited its library in the UL. Pro Excolendo is the oldest Dutch legal society, founded in 1761 and still flourishing. Its main goals are the study of natural and national law and the publication of legal sources. To that end, a collection of some 3,500 legal and historical books concerning law and government in the northern and eastern regions of the Netherlands was built, including over a hundred manuscripts mainly with Frisian and Groningen legal texts such as the *Saksenspiegel*, and texts regarding land law, dike law, etc. A very recent arrival is the library of the Law

Court of Drenthe. Donated by the District Court (Rechtbank) Noord-Nederland in 2014, it is a fairly complete collection of works on legal systems that have been applied in the country: Roman and canon law, customary law, and French law, which was in use between 1811 and 1813. The library was constituted by Sibrand Gratama (1784-1858) during his term of office as President of the Court at Assen. He installed it in the Courthouse, exactly the right place to serve the intended users.

University Library. Not included in the sale were the more than 1100 titles of Horatina. Following Riedel's wish, they had been bought by the Harinxma family who then donated them to the University Library. An early example of a book illustrated with photographs is an edition of Horace's *Opera* published by the firm of Firmin Didot in Paris, in 1855. A volume with a remarkable provenance is a copy of the *Opera* printed in Basel in 1545. On the title page is written the name of Hindrik Hofsnider (1671-1741), a Groningen jurist, and there are a few annotations in the book itself in the unmistakable handwriting of Regnerus Praedinius (1510-1559). In the margins of the first letter to Maecenas, the headmaster of the Groningen Latin School wrote: 'hoc pertinet ad me mea(m)que schola(m)': this pertains to me and my school. Apparently, this copy has been in Groningen since it was acquired by Praedinius shortly after publication.

in rooms on the ground floor of the former Franciscan monastery, while the University Library took up most of the first floor. With a fairly small number of pupils to supervise, Riedel had plenty of time to prepare his thesis on the *Letter to Augustus* by the Latin poet Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65 BC-8 BC), which earned him a doctorate in 1831. The life and works of Horace remained a lifelong interest of Riedel. He continued to publish on the topic and amassed a large collection of editions, commentaries and studies. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century German dissertations and school programmes form an interesting group in the collection. After his death in 1871, the library was sold. It took twelve days to auction the 6596 lots, 600 of which were acquired by the

THE RIEDEL COLLECTION

Hendrik Riedel (1796-1871) was first educated by his father, the rector of the Latin School in Kollum (Friesland). He turned out to be such a brilliant pupil that already at the age of fourteen he was appointed tutor of the sons of the Baron Van Harinxma thoe Slooten, who lived in nearby Holwerd. In 1824, Riedel accompanied two of his pupils to Groningen to continue their studies at the university. Within two years, Riedel graduated and found a position as teacher at the city's Latin School. At the time, the School was housed

1900

THE BACKER COLLECTION

One of the focal points of the library's collection policy are materials concerning the region's history and culture. The principal collection of Groningana goes back to Mello Backer (1807-1883), member of an distinguished and well-to-do family. In 1830, the year of his graduation in law, he took part in the Ten Days' Campaign to suppress the revolution in Belgium. As a member of the Provincial Estates and the Provincial Executive, and president of the Commission of Agriculture he gained a wide knowledge of the province. His not overly onerous duties allowed the wealthy and unmarried Backer plenty of time and money to spend on his pastimes. He expanded the collection of china that had come down to him from his great-great grandfather Jan Albert Sichterman (1692-1764), who had acquired a fortune in Bengal in the service of the Dutch East India Company. Upon his return to Groningen – as the story goes, two ships were needed to transport his art collection – Sichterman built an imposing town palace at the Ossenmarkt. Backer also devoted much attention to his library, amassing a significant collection of books, manuscripts and maps, mostly on law, history, geography, agriculture and water management of the province of Groningen. Besides hundreds of books, maps, and post-mediaeval manuscripts, he owned letters,

sales catalogues, pamphlets and government publications such as edicts and ordinances. Backer's heir was his nephew, R.M.A. de Marees van Swinderen (1823-1899), who in his turn bequeathed the porcelain to the Groninger Museum and the library to the university.

In 1990, another important collection on the history of agriculture was placed in the University Library as a loan. It is the library of the Nederlands Agrononisch Historisch Instituut, the Netherlands Agricultural Historical Institute (NAHI),

1905

THE CONAMUR COLLECTION

The Groningen Student Association to Promote the Social Sciences (Groningsche Student-en-Vereeniging tot beoefening der Sociale Wetenschappen) 'Conamur' collected literature on the labour movement to supplement

the Library's collection. 'Conamur' (Latin for 'we strive') was founded in 1899, it organized lectures, courses, and discussions with the objective of raising the awareness of Groningen students for the study of social science. Initially, the association flourished, but after 1906 the audiences at the lectures dwindled. After World War I, a revival could not be achieved and Conamur was dissolved in 1927. The Conamur collection contains books and brochures about the labour movement and

literature on political economy. It was first located in the bookshop of H.L. van der Klei in Oude Ebbingestraat, where members could borrow them free of charge, and in 1905 the collections was transferred to the UL. A catalogue had been printed two years earlier, and a second edition appeared in 1912. The reason why pamphlets and brochures were included was that they were printed on bad and cheap paper to make them affordable for labourers, and therefore had a short life expectancy. Because of their historical value, however, the Conamur members judged it important to preserve at least a few copies of such publications in public libraries. In 1986, the library received a collection of older periodicals and books in the field of socialism and communicism from Stan Poppe Sr. (1899-1991), for a long time an active member of the Social Democratic Labour Party (SDAP).

1907

THE VAN HAMEL COLLECTION

For many centuries Latin was the lingua franca of the international scholarly community. Knowledge of modern languages, however, was indispensable for merchants, diplomats, and travellers, even learned ones. From time to time opportunities to improve one's knowledge of languages were offered in Groningen. In the 1600s, for example, a student received permission to give French lessons, while another student, whose family refused to support him financially because he had left the Catholic Church, earned his living by teaching Italian. It was not until 1876, however, that regular courses in German, French, and English language and literature were offered at Groningen University – the first one in the Netherlands. In 1881, three years after his admittance as private tutor in High German and English, Barend Sijmons received a professorship to teach Old German, the principles of comparative linguistics and of Sanskrit, and High German language and literature. For the time being, however, this was only an academic teacher training; doctorates were not granted until 1921. In 1884, Antonius Gerardus van Hamel (1842-1907) became the first professor of French Language and Literature. His library with some 1200 publications focussing on the French language and literatue of the Middle Ages

was deposited in the UL in 1907. In 1925, the Association to Promote the Study of French (Vereniging tot Bevordering der Studie van het Frans) transferred it book collection with about 800 titles to the UL. Today it contains about a thousand volumes, mainly nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature. Professor of English Johan Gerritsen (1920-2013) bequeated his sizable library with early English books, dictionaries and bibliographical literature to the UL. In 2001, he donated his collection of some 220 seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century editions of works by Joost van den Vondel, the most prominent Dutch poet and playwright. They form an important

addition to the collection already present. It had taken a while before the Library showed any interest in Vondel: his works appear for the first time in the printed catalogue of 1841.

1907

THE LIBRARY OF THE NATUURKUNDIG GENOOTSCHAP

The 'Natuur- en Scheikundig Genootschap te Groningen', the Physical and Chemical Society, was established on February 28, 1801. The name was later changed to 'Natuurkundig Genootschap', and on the occasion of its 175th anniversary in 1976 the predicate 'Royal' was granted. The society's goal is to widely promote the knowledge of sciences, through lectures open to members and non-members and publications. Each year a grant, named after one of the society's founding fathers, Theodorus van Swinderen, is given for the best summary of a scientific dissertation. Van Swinderen (1784-1851) not only taught natural history in Groningen, he also served as a school inspector for over forty years, and thanks to him several historical monuments were put up in the city and province of Groningen. His own memorial bust is now placed near the entrance of the University Museum. The society's library containing works on scientific themes and reports of and works published by other scholarly associations, was deposited in the University Library in 1907. Today the collection consists of some 4,500 works, including the society's own publications.

1908

THE GUYOT COLLECTION

Henri Daniel Guyot (1832-1908), a judge and later Vice-President of the Groningen district court, not only published in the field of law, but also on the history of French protestantism and the Réfugiés, protestants

who had fled France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in 1685. This interest was probably related to his grandfather's origin, after whom he was named. Born near Liège, in Belgium, Henri Daniel Guyot senior (1753-1828) studied theology in Franeker and settled in Groningen in 1777 as pastor of the Walloon church. Some years later his focus shifted to the education of deaf people, and in 1790 he was one of the founders of the first Institute for the Deaf in the Nether-

lands. This interest in deafness and its consequences was taken over by his grandson, and it is reflected in the collection he left to the UL. Guyot also bequeathed to the University a sum of DFL 10,000, to grant a five-yearly award to any Dutchman or foreigner who in that period has made the most important discovery in the field of otology. The most recent recipient of the Guyot Prize, in 2010, is professor A.J. Hudspeth of Rockefeller University in New York.

1912

THE ENSCHEDÉ COLLECTION

One of librarian W.E. Enschedé's sons, Jacobus Johannes Christiaan, was born in Groningen in 1846 and died in 1912 in Soerabaja, in the Dutch East Indies, where had been the State Attorney. His interests were wider than the law alone, as is evident from his membership of various cultural associations, such as the Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen (Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences). His younger brother Maurits (1856-1934) settled in Soerabaja as well, and even succeeded him in office. Both Enschedé siblings were collectors. While Maurits surrounded himself mainly with art objects from the Dutch East Indies, Jacobus amassed an immense library with books and periodicals on Dutch and English colonial history and politics, including a section on railways – reports of Dutch and East Indian railway companies in particular. Jacobus bequeated

this collection to Groningen's University Library. The books arrived in Groningen in 1913, about 160,000 volumes packed in 260 boxes and insured for DFL 50,000. They arrived in good shape, considering that they had been kept in tropical conditions for such a long time. After packaging, vermin had been able to nestle in a few boxes only, irreparably erod-

ing some books. Once shelved in the UL, the Enschedé collection occupied the largest part of the fourth floor of the stacks building. To finance the collection's expansion, Enschedé also made a provision for a capital giving an annual interest of DFL 800. Items are indeed still being added on a regular basis to the 'Bibliotheek Enschedé'.

1924

THE DE HAAN COLLECTION

After finishing his studies at Leiden and Groningen, the Leeuwarden born hispanist Fonger de Haan (1859-1930) departed to the United States where he received a doctorate from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore in 1895. Two years later he was appointed at Bryn Mawr College. In 1924 – the year in which he retired as professor of Spanish language and literature – De Haan donated his library to the UL in Groningen. Five years before, during a sabbatical, he had taught there to raise interest in the studies of the Spanish language and culture. It took another four years for the first private tutor to start teaching this language. He was Gerardus Johannes Geers (1891-1965), a scholar of the Dutch language, who had graduated in Leiden in 1917 with a thesis on aspects of the language of the Blackfoot Indians. He then spent three years in Spain and became fascinated by its language and culture. Geers exchanged the unpaid tutorships for a teaching position in 1932. In 1946, he started as a lecturer at Groningen, a position that was upgraded to an extraordinary professorship in 1961, the year before his retirement. Geers's private library, which the UL acquired in 1966, focuses on the Baroque, the Spanish Civil War, social-realistic literature, and Spanish philosophy, in particular the work of Unamuno and Ortega y Gasset. Afterwards the UL also acquired Geers's lec-

ture notes and his research documentation. In 1943, the books collected by Johan Brouwer were donated to the UL by his widow, who had been on the library staff until her marriage. Brouwer graduated in 1943, after a tumultuous period in which he had worked as a missionary and had spent some years in jail after having been condemned for murder. He published historical studies on topics related to Spain, translations, two novels, textbooks and a dictionary. With Geers he co-authored *De Renaissance in Spanje* (1932).

Influenced by his experiences as a war correspondent in Spain during the Civil War he was active in the resistance during the German occupation of the Netherlands during World War II. In 1943 he participated in an attack on the Amsterdam registry office, for which he was condemned and executed. A fourth hispanic collection is the modest library of the Groningen branch of the Dutch-Spanish Society (Vereniging Nederland-Spanje), which was deposited in the UL in 1932.

1926

PAPYRI

A collection of 127 fragments of texts written on papyrus arrived in the library in 1926. They had been acquired through the leading papyrologist of the time, Professor Wilhelm Schubart of Berlin University, who bought them with a dealer in Egypt. The fragments were mounted between glass plates in 35 sets by the famous papyrus conservator Dr h.c. Hugo Ibscher. The initiative to enrich the library with such a collection was

taken by A.G. Roos (1877-1953), professor of Ancient History and Roman Antiquities (1916-1947), previously keeper (1904-1906) and University Librarian (1906-1917). The exact origin of most of these fragments is not known. In a few cases, the texts provide some clues: one is from Oxyrhynchos, two others are from the Arsinoites district, another one from Hermopolites. All were written in the Roman or Byzantine era, and can be dated to the period from the second to the sixth or seventh century. In 1933, Roos published 22 fragments, judging the remaining ones to be too small or in too bad

a condition for publication. Half a century later, Dr. Ignace H.M. Hendriks of Groningen University published a few more in collaboration with other papyrologists. After almost a century, the glass plates were aged and dirty, two plates were broken, the paper had browned, one papyrus was affected by fungus, and salt migration had caused a white deposit on all glass plates. The necessary conservation treatment could be realized thanks to a grant given by the Atlas Fonds, and was executed by Dr. Machteld van der Feltz. The collection of 35 sets is now kept in four made-to-measure boxes.

1929

THE BIBLIOTECA ITALIANA

A significant contribution to the library's collection of Italian literature was made by the Groningen branch of the Società Dante Alighieri. This society was founded in Rome in 1889 with the purpose of promoting and distributing the Italian language and culture outside Italy. The library of the 'comitato' at Groningen was deposited in the UL in 1929, in order to make it possible for non-members as well to inform themselves about Italian literature, art, and cultural developments. The collection of over a thousand items not only contains novels and non-fiction books, but also many periodicals on art, theatre, music, architecture and politics, especially from the 1920s and 1930s. A collection of studies on the influence of Italian art and culture in the northern provinces of the Netherlands during that period was published in 1991, on the occasion of an exhibition on that subject held in the UL.

1954 THE STAVERMAN COLLECTION

Movies and shows such as *Castaway* or *Survivor* (*Expeditie Robinson*) are modern interpretation of the old theme of how to survive on a desert island. The novel *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner* is the model for these and countless other imitations in any genre. Robinson Crusoe's fame is such that it is easy to forget that he is a creation of the English journalist and author Daniel Defoe (c. 1660-1731), who published the novel in 1719 as a fictional autobiography of the castaway Crusoe. An immediate bestseller, it had three reprints in that same year and was followed by innumerable editions, translations, as well as adaptations as children's books and comics, plays, movies and television shows. Werner H. Staverman (1881-1956), a teacher of Dutch at a secondary school in Deventer, earned his doctorate in Groningen with a thesis entitled *Robinson Crusoe in Nederland: een bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van den roman in de XVIIIe eeuw* (Robinson Crusoe: a contribution to the history of the novel in the eighteenth century). Staverman's interest in the subject continued, and he built a collection of adaptations, translations, and especially imitation of Defoe's book, the so-called 'robinsonades'. There are, for example, German, French, Flemish, Dutch, Saxon, Silesian, Spanish, Swedish, and Swiss Robinsons, a *Robinson des demoiselles*, a *Robinson der Jüngere*, a *Nuevo Robinson*,

De nieuwe Robinson van Parijs, and countless adaptations, many of them for children. They appeared in all kinds of genres, as schoolbook, play, children's encyclopedia, education man-

uals, language courses, and comic books. Staverman donated his collection to the UL in 1954, with an additional section of related utopian literature, and it is still being expanded.

BOOKBINDINGS

Bindings serve in the first place to protect the contents of a book, contained in the leaves forming the book block. Because of this functionality, libraries often replace damaged bindings, particularly in times when money is not an issue. In Groningen, this was not often the case, reason why many of the university's old books still have their original bindings, for example the books listed by the successive librarians in the *Syllabus*. Some bindings in the Christmann collection are notable because the original owner provided them with covers made of written vellum leaves cut from medieval manuscripts. There is also a collection of prize bindings: from the seventeenth until the nineteenth century schools awarded their best pupils with

books, mostly copies of classical in the humanities, bound in leather with the city's coat of arms or the school's crest embossed on the front cover. A diploma with the name of the prize-winner would be stuck on the guard leaf. A collection of about a thousand Dutch industrial publishers' bindings from the period between 1890-1940, purchased in 1974, has grown considerably and now counts about 3,500 volumes. Among the designers represented are H.P. Berlage, Theodoor van

Hoytema, Ella Riemersma, and Jan Toorop. Other special bindings were made at the instigation of private individuals. On the occasion of the second centenary celebrations of the University of Groningen, the members of the philosophical society 'Veritas et Officium' offered a specially bound set of Immanuel Kant's *Opera ad philosophiam criticam* (1796-1798) to the library. The four volumes donated in 1761 and 1765 by an Englishman who called himself 'a lover of liberty' are

The Library owns a wide selection of works by these 'marginal printers' including ones from the region such as Elze ter Harkel (De Vier Seizoenen), Dick Ronner (Trionapers), Hester Verkruijsen, and Pim Witteveen (de Breukenpers). Special editions are some boxes presented as a collaborative effort to celebrate a member's anniversary, such as the one presented to Dick Ronner.

struction to use it for the production of their own finely printed books, which emphasize quality and individuality less than profit. In 1975, a group of Dutch private press printers and publishers founded the Society "Drukwerk in de Marge" (Printing in the Margin). Its members share an interest in the craft of printing, printing techniques and publishing, and about two hundred of them produce publications on a more or less regular basis.

1975 PRIVATE PRESSES

In the 1960s, when composed lead type was replaced by offset printing and phototype-setting, and their hand presses and movable type were dumped on a large scale by commercial printing companies. Amateur printers succeeded in saving this material from de-

bound in distinctive gold-tooled red leather, decorated with emblems of, e.g., Britannia, Freedom, an owl. The anonymous donor was Thomas Hollis (1720-1774) of Londen, a renowned defender of civil liberty and an advocate of the rights of the American colonists, who distributed works of radical political philosophy among libraries in England and the United States. Groningen received John Wallis's *Grammatica linguae Anglicanae* and 'Milton's prose works & Tolands life of Milton'.

1979 GRONINGEN IMPRINTS

For a long time, the printers of the books, periodicals, pamphlets and broadsheets published in Groningen did not appear in the catalogue descriptions. This gap of information was filled in the mid-twentieth century and the Library's collection of works printed in Groningen up to 1800 could be published in 1979 thanks to the efforts of cataloguer F.C. Willemse. The publications that survived the centuries are mainly in the field of theology, with academic publications such as programmata, disputations and dissertations forming another important part. The huge print runs of schoolbooks, children's books, almanacks and other ephemeral

works, however, are almost completely lost. The published works of great Groningen scholars is another field collected by the Library. The commemoration of the eminent early humanist scholar Rudolf Agricola (1444-1485), half a millennium after his death, gave rise to a renewed study of his work. After a ten-year sojourn in Italy, the multitalented Agricola, born in the village of Baflo near Groningen, returned to his homeland to become Groningen's Town Secretary. He is considered the most brilliant of the group of intellectual predecessors of the University of Groningen, to which theologian and philosopher Wessel Gansfort (1414-1489) and Regnerus Praedinius, rector of the Latin School in Groningen, belonged as well. The last great humanist scholar in Groningen was the historian Ubbo Emmius (1547-1625), who in 1614 served as the university's first Rector Magnificus. A sizable part of his correspondence

is preserved in the library, as well as some alba amicorum, students' friendship books, to which he contributed, a travel report of the journey he made to Geneva as a young man, and a few volumes from his own library. Emmius's own library has been dispersed, some volumes remaining in Groningen, others ending up in far-away parts of the world such as Tasmania, which was not yet discovered at his time.

MEMBRA DISJECTA

Used as covers for two of the manuscripts in the Christmann collection are fragments from a thirteenth-century copy of the *Decretals* of pope Gregory IX. Similar fragments of medieval manuscripts are visible in the bindings of many early modern books, where they were used as guard leaves, covers, strengthening of the quire or the backing. Such vellum leaves were taken from Roman Catholic liturgical and theological books, and books on canon law, which had no interest for protestants. Bookbinders, however, could still put them to good use, since parchment is a sturdy material and discarded books could be bought for next to nothing. These scattered fragments, or 'membra disjecta', often contain texts, some of which have not survived in any other way. The results of a research project on membra disjecta in books in the UL were published in 1980 with an exhibition and a publication. Because the fragments have a function in the structure of the binding, and are also part of the book's history, they are now usually left in place. In earlier times, many of them have been removed, such as a leaf donated to the UL by the Provincial Archives of Drenthe, in 1895. This particular fragment originally came from a thirteenth-century book of psalms in Latin, in which many words were translated into Frisian. It is the oldest documented example of written Frisian. Slightly younger are two double leaves, four pages, found in a fourteenth-century manuscript of *Parthonopeus van Bloys*, a Middle Dutch

translation of a French chivalric romance. The text survives only in fragments from six different manuscripts. The leaves in the UL were discovered in a bookbinding in the nineteenth century. Fortunately, the importance of the find was recognized but the book in which the leaves were found was not recorded. A number of printed leaves which were pasted onto each other to make a sort of board which served as the inside of a book cover

were discovered in the Groningen Archives in 1989. They turned out to be a part of the Dutch translation of a German play, *Eine christliche tragedia, die coopman ofte dat ordel geheeten* (A Christian tragedy, entitled the merchant or the judgment), printed by Berendt Peters at Bremen in 1593. The translator was Doede van Amsweer (1546-1630/1), a protestant from Appingedam, who lived in exile in Emden (Ostfriesland) for fourteen years.

1988 THE SCHOOL MUSEUM COLLECTION

The collection named 'Schoolmuseum' was acquired in 1988 from the 'Noordelijk Instituut voor Opvoeding en Onderwijs te Groningen' (Northern Institute for Education and Teaching at Groningen). It consists of several thousands of volumes on pedagogy, psychology, teaching methods for sport and games, handicraft and needlework, singing and drawing. The editions up to 1850 represent all kinds of schoolbooks (reading, writing, language, calculation etc.) and the works of the beginning of the nineteenth century. The works from a later date are in the fields of pedagogy, psychology, and teaching methods, and there are also textbooks on sports and games, handicraft and needlework, singing, drawing and writing. These publication give a fascinating, and sometimes nostalgic, insight in the history of education and the ever changing world of schoolchildren.

Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890-1950), who taught in Groningen from 1918 until his death, with an intermission of one year, just after the Second World War, when he served as Minister of Education, Arts and Sciences, were donated to the Library by his heirs. Further worth mentioning are the personal papers of the archaeologist Albert Egges van Giffen (1884-1972) and the botanist Jan Willem Mol (1851-1933) 1945-1946), and the letter collections of the historian Ubbo Emmius (1547-1625) and the physician Petrus Camper (1722-1789).

professor extraordinarius at the recently established Sociological Institute. He was appointed to the chair of philosophy in 1946. Five years later he decided to remigrate to Germany, where the University of Göttingen offered him a chair. He kept in close contact with friends and relations in the Netherlands, and presented his personal papers to the Library in 1983. They comprise a large correspondence, drafts of papers and publications, newspaper clippings, and documents relating to his scholarly career in Groningen. The papers of the influential theologian

1983 THE PLESSNER PAPERS

The most comprehensive collection of personal papers preserved in the Library is the one donated by Helmuth Plessner in 1983. Plessner (1892-1985), a German philosopher and sociologist, had to flee the country in 1934 and found a position in Groningen, first as a private tutor, since 1939 as

PRESENTS FROM THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

The Society of Friends of the University Library Groningen was founded in 1990, on February 28, the day on which the library celebrated its 375th anniversary. The Society's aims is to promote gifts and bequests to the library, and to financially support the library to acquire books and documents of special scholarly, cultural or regional importance. The annual gifts from the Society of Friends have grown into a greatly varied collection. The smallest item, *'t Oranje geslagt*, measures only 2 x 1 cm. It was printed in Groningen in the middle of the eighteenth century and is bound in red leather with gold tooling. Among the manuscripts acquired with the support of the Friends are the sixteenth-century cartulary of the Aduard water authority, the alba amicorum of Peter Baumann (1644-1648) and of Johannes Siertsema (1749-1762), and a travel journal written in 1722 by Daniel Gerdes (1698-1765), who later became professor of theology in Groningen. The subject matter of the printed books are just as diverse. Publications by David Hume and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel, a beautifully illustrated book on wall paintings in Pompei, and productions of private presses in the region find them-

selves together in this collection with books against Socinianism, a sixteenth-century German book on architecture, an album with pictures of the city of Groningen from the nineteenth century, and a small volume with various texts printed in Groningen in 1714-1715, including a funny illustrated *Placcaet, ende ordonnantie van het neuse-geldt*, A placard and ordinance regarding nose-money.

1992 DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

The fundamental difference between printed or handwritten and digital collections is that digital ones are invisible and that libraries are not their owner but provide access to them. In 1992, the Library created its first repository for digital publications, one for dissertations. It was followed by many others, such as those for the research data of re-

search institutions and research schools, for individual faculties, and publications of the Library and the Documentation Centre of Political Parties DNPP. JSTOR started the process of digitisation, long-term preservation and presentation of huge numbers of mainly periodicals but also monographs in 1995, and the Library was quick to license this database. The list of electronic collections and databases available to the Groningen academic community contains hundreds of items from ABC-CLIO e-books, e/book

versions of introductory reference works in history, to ZEPHYR, a database on mergers nad acquisitions, IPO's and venture capital deals. Among the Library's first digital publications is the presentation of the *Syllabus Librorum Academicorum*, the handwritten library catalogue of 1619. The Library also digitises part of its own collections and presents them in the image database 'Facsimile'. Some of its manuscripts are also included in MMDc, Mediaeval Manuscripts in Dutch Collections and ABO, Annotated Books Online.

1995

THE COLLECTION VAN MARKEN

Amy van Marken (1912-1995) taught Scandinavian Languages and Literature in Groningen from 1954 until 1982, from 1975 as a full professor. Besides her scholarly work, she published translations and actively promoted Scandinavian culture. One of the six Groningen professors who took the initiative to found the Arctic Centre at Groningen University, established in 1970, she remained committed to its activities. Among the projects executed by members of this multidisciplinary centre for polar research in the Netherlands is the archaeological excavation of Smeerenburg, a seventeenth-century whalers' settlement on Spitsbergen. Van Marken bequeathed her library of some 10,000 volumes to the UL. A large collection of Scandinavian books was presented to the library in 2007 by Greta Baars-Jelgersma (*1911), a translator of numerous literary works from Norwegian, Danish, Swedish and Icelandic into Dutch, and owner of a literary agency. Swedish Americana, including literature by Scandinavian immigrant authors are an interesting section in the collection donated by one of Van Marken's successors, Alan Swanson. Spitsbergen received its name from the Dutch navigator Willem Barentsz in 1596, during a voyage to discover the Northeast passage, and with it a shorter route to East-India. This expedition turned out disastrously. Pack ice

forced the crew to abandon the severely damaged ship and to hibernate on the island of Nova Zembla. The diary published in 1596 by Gerrit de Veer, one of the survivors, contains illustrations of the extreme living conditions, ships hitting icebergs and the hunting of polar bears. The *Syllabus* records the arrival of a copy of this book in the library in 1626. Another proof of the early interest in Groningen in the history and culture of the

northern European regions is the donation made in 1644 by professor of logic, physics and filosofica practica Martinus Schoock of a copy of Olaus Magnus' history of the northern peoples, *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*, printed in Rome in 1555 and richly illustrated with woodcuts.

1998

THE WIJCHERS COLLECTION

The Wijchers Collection, named after J.J.W.A. Wijchers (1914-1977), a minister in The Hague, contains religious song books from the seventeenth up to the twentieth century and a theological reference library. With an estimated total of some 15,000 volumes, the collection has an international and inter-denominational character. More than half of the items that have been catalogued so far appear not to be present in other Dutch libraries. In 1998, the Wijchers family gave the collection on loan to the University of Groningen, where it was accommodated in the library of the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies. Together with the Faculty library, the Wijchers Collection was transferred to the UL in 2014. The presence of many special bookbindings and numerous notes in books made by readers and owners further contribute to the collection's significance for the study of religious reading culture in combination with social and religious history and the history of music. Furthermore, it complements other religious research collections in Groningen such as the religious song books and service books of the Faculty, and the Faculty's Documentation Centre for the Material Culture and Musical Tradition of Christendom in the Netherlands, as well as the Unitarian Library (1919), the Vos Collection of Mennonitica (1926), and the Theological Library created in 1878 for the Groningen professors appointed by the Dutch Reformed Church.

2014

THE KOOPS COLLECTION

Many years ago Librarian W.R.H. Koops (1925) decided to will his books to the UL, but he has already begun to transfer selected parts of his extensive collection. Dutch, French and German impressionist and expressionist art, literature, history, and politics are some of its core themes. Special mention deserve the many publications by small museums and galleries from all over Europe, ephemeral documents which are difficult for an institutional library to collect. In the past the Library has received various other art-related collections. The 'Kunstlievend Genootschap Pictura', the Groningen society of art lovers, placed its library there as a permanent loan in 1904. The Groningen Museum of Antiquities, the predecessor of the Groninger Museum, did the same in 1919. Reurt Jan Veendorp (1905-1983), an architect and owner of brick-manufacturing companies in Groningen, bequeathed his art collection to the J.B. Scholten Foundation, which deposited the art works in the Groninger Museum and the supporting library in the UL. From the bequest of Theo van Baaren (1912-1989), who was active as a surrealist author and artist before and after occupying the chair of the History of Religions and Egyptian Language and Literature in Groningen, came a collection on modern art and literature, especially on surrealism and French litera-

ture. Van Baaren's ethnographic art collection formed the basis of the University's Anthropological Museum Gerardus van der Leeuw, which existed between 1978 until 2003, when it merged with the University Museum. A collection comprising numerous catalogues, specimen sheets, brochures of printing equipment and other typographical materials from the Netherlands and other countries was acquired in 1999. Historian and film theatre director Frans Westra donated numerous books on film history. Thanks to his efforts, the Library could also acquire part of the film library built by Huub Bals (1937-1988), first director of the Rotterdam Film Festival, and was presented with a selection of books from the estate of Jan Heijs (1952-2006), editor of the *Filmkrant* and film producer.