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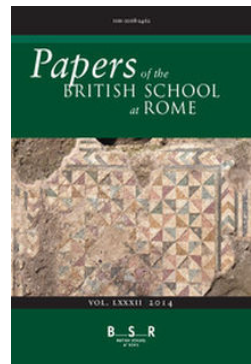
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Note on a Copy of the *Responsiones* of Robert Parsons

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Papers of the British School at Rome / Volume 9 / January 1920, pp 225 - 228
DOI: 10.1017/S0068246200005675, Published online: 09 August 2013

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0068246200005675

How to cite this article:

Mrs. Arthur Strong (1920). Note on a Copy of the *Responsiones* of Robert Parsons. Papers of the British School at Rome, 9, pp 225-228 doi:10.1017/S0068246200005675

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PAPERS OF THE BRITISH SCHOOL AT ROME.

VOL. IX. No. 9.

NOTE ON A COPY OF THE *RESPONSIONES*
OF ROBERT PARSONS.

BY MRS. ARTHUR STRONG.

ANOTHER memorial of Cardinal Allen and of his friends in Rome has lately been brought to my notice by Lord Gerald Wellesley, to whom it belongs, and may fitly be placed in record here in connection with the plaquette of Aristotle. This is a copy of the second edition (Rome, Zannetti, 1593) of the celebrated replies (*Responsiones*) issued seriatim to each clause of Queen Elizabeth's edict against Catholics in the year 1591: *Elizabethae Angliae Reginae Haeresim Calvinianam propugnantis saevissimum in Catholicos sui . . . Regni edictum . . . cum responsione ad singula capita . . . per D. Andream Philopatrum Presbyterum, etc.* It is common knowledge that the pseudonym of Philopater conceals the name of the famous English Jesuit, Fr. Robert Parsons, so that the authorship of the book alone takes us back into the circle of the English College at Rome, which Dr. William—afterwards Cardinal—Allen had helped to found in 1575, and of which Parsons had been appointed Rector in 1585.¹ But this particular copy, as the various inscriptions and stamps it bears testify, had sundry bibliographical adventures which it is not without interest to retrace. A dedication inside the cover reads:—

Hunc librum Cardinalis Alanus Anglus
Doctori Gerardo Vossio pro memoria Romae donavit
Anno Domini 1593. qui Vossius
eum postea dono dedit Praep^{to}
collegii Rom. S. Pauli in Col^a. 1606.

¹ Card. Gasquet's *Hist. of the Ven. English Coll.*, chs. iii. and iv.

The first half of the dedication, down to the date 1593, is in a bold hand, which Monsignor Mercati, librarian of the Vatican, who was good enough to examine it, identified without hesitation as that of Gerard Voss. This same Voss (Vossius or Voskens) deserves at least the passing mention which most histories of scholarship deny him. According to the 'Dictionnaire de Moreri' he belonged to the same family as his more celebrated namesake Gerard John Voss. He was born at Loos in Flanders in 1547;¹ he graduated at Louvain in 1566, and about 1571 he came to Rome where his erudition won for him, among other friendships, that of the two learned Cardinals G. Sirleto and Antonio Caraffa. In 1593 Clement VIII. appointed Voss one of five *correctores* of the Greek and Latin MSS. in the Vatican Library, in view of pushing forward various projected editions of the Fathers. This is also the date of the second edition of Parsons's *Responsiones* which Cardinal Allen, who had been appointed Apostolic Librarian in 1591, under Gregory XIV., in succession to Caraffa, seems at once to have presented to Voss, doubtless as a peculiar mark of esteem, the *Responsiones* being assuredly valued by the Cardinal, both as being by his friend Parsons, and as expressing views that were also largely his own. It is probable, however, that Allen, who was himself a considerable scholar, and one of the Commission appointed under Sixtus V. for the Revision of the Vulgate, had known Voss before that date.

It is not without interest to learn that Voss was at one time *procurator* of Santa Maria dell' Anima, the Church of the Flemings in Rome, and that his library is said to have eventually found a home there.² Parsons's *Responsiones*, however, did not go with the rest of Voss's books to the Anima, for the second part of the inscription³ shows that in 1606 Voss

¹ I am much indebted to Sir John Sandys for providing me with notes on Voss from the account of him in vol. 50 of Zedler's *Lexikon* (Leipzig and Halle, 1750) which is not accessible to me here. Monsignor Le Grelle of the Vatican Library has most kindly provided me with further biographical notices which make it clear that Voss was a prominent figure in the learned world of the 'Counter Reformation.' See *inter alia*, Valeri Andreae *Bibliotheca Belgica*, Louvain, 1643, p. 285-6; Joh. Fr. Foppaeus, *Bibliotheca Belgica*, Bruxelles, 1739, vol. i. p. 382-3; Davis, *Hist. de Looz*, vol. ii. p. 20; Davis, *Hist. du Diocèse et de la Principauté de Liège pendant le XVI^e Siècle*, Liège, 1884, pp. 631-2, etc., etc.

² See Jos. Schmidlin, *Geschichte der deutschen Nationalkirche in Rom* . . . 1906, p. 523, a reference for which I am again indebted to Monsignor Le Grelle. The church of the Anima, originally Flemish, was eventually appropriated by the Germans.

³ I have not succeeded in identifying the writing.

gave it to the *Praepositus*, or Provost, of the 'Roman College' of San Paolo alla Colonna. This may have been at the time that Voss left Rome to return to his native country, where he died at Liège in 1609.

The little church of S. Paolo alla Colonna, to which our book passed, though now all but forgotten, was for the brief period of its existence one of the most important in Rome. It stood on the north side of the Piazza Colonna, and had been erected under Clement VIII.¹ by the Clerks Regular of St. Paul²—more popularly known as the Barnabites—who wished to centralise their various activities in a locality more accessible than was their mother-house at S. Biagio dell' Anello.³ Moreover, a church dedicated to S. Paul, patron of the Barnabites, seemed peculiarly in place under the shadow, as it were, of the column upon whose summit a statue of the Apostle had only recently been placed by order of Sixtus V. (1589). At the bottom of the title-page of Voss's copy of Parsons's book is written: *Bibliot. Collegii Rom. S. Pauli in Columna*, the word 'college' which appears here and in the dedicatory inscription instead of 'congregation' being in accordance with Barnabite usage, so that *Coll. Rom. S. Pauli, etc.*, means nothing more than the Roman branch of the Barnabites established at S. Paolo.

The church was almost entirely destroyed by fire in 1617, rebuilt on an ample scale, but eventually demolished in 1659, by order of Pope Alexander VII., for the enlargement of the Palazzo Chigi. The Barnabites of San Paolo then rejoined their mother-house in Rome which had been removed early in the century from S. Biagio dell' Anello to the more spacious church of S. Carlo ai Catinari, where the order still flourishes.⁴ With them they brought the book of Parsons which was now duly

¹ The Church, which had been begun some years previously, was opened to the public in 1596. See Orazio M. Premoli (Barnabite), *Storia dei Barnabiti nel Cinquecento*, 1913, p. 337 f., and cf. Armellini, *Chiese di Roma*, p. 312. It was the seat of the famous Academy of Music of Sta. Cecilia and of the Company of S. Ivo, founded by a number of lawyers to defend the lawsuits of the poor, and of various other confraternities. See *Memorie intorno alla Chiesa dei SS. Biagio e Carlo*, 1861, p. 39, and pp. 142–153 (qu^{to} ed. = p. 10 and pp. 37 ff. of fo. ed.).

² Founded at Milan about 1533 and surnamed 'Barnabites,' from the Church of St. Barnabas, which belonged to them in the sixteenth century.

³ This very ancient church was given to the Barnabites by Gregory XIII. in 1575. *Memorie*, p. 9 (qu^{to} ed. = p. 3 of fo. ed.); Premoli, *op. cit.* p. 269.

⁴ S. Carlo, to which the name of S. Biagio was prefixed in memory of the first Roman home of the Barnabites, was begun in 1611. In 1870 the convent was suppressed, and the Barnabites moved to the beautiful house, No. 6 Via Chiavari, which was once Cassiano dal Pozzo's. See Premoli, 'Cassiano dal Pozzo' in *L'Arcadia*, ii. 1918.

inscribed in MS. *Libreria di* ($\overline{P+A}$) *S. Carlo di Catinari* inside the cover and stamped on the title page with the official die, *i.e.* the Barnabite monogram ($\overline{P+A}$)¹ surrounded by the legend, *Bibliot. Collegi SS. Blasi et Carol. de Urbe.*

Soon after 1870 the greater part of the fine library attached to S. Carlo was transferred—to the number of 9,000 volumes²—to the Biblioteca Vittorio Emanuele then in process of formation. Among the books taken from the Barnabites was that of Parsons, though it was presently to be ejected as a ‘duplicate,’ its last library stamp being the well-known *Duplum Bibliothecae V. E.* The frequency of this mark on books in the market seems to show how unnecessarily some of the old Roman libraries had been despoiled of their treasures in favour of the ‘Vittorio Emanuele,’ which, since it had for nucleus the grand Jesuit library of the Collegio Romano, did not always require them. In the present instance the Vittorio Emanuele retained the copy which had belonged to the Collegio Romano, probably because it was the cleaner of the two, and was innocent of all autographs or inscriptions such as lend so peculiar an interest to the copy which had belonged to the Barnabites. Fortunately the precious little volume fell into the hands of Lord Gerald Wellesley, who at once perceived its bibliographical value. I am much indebted to him for leaving the book in my care, and allowing me to give here some account of its vicissitudes.

¹ *I.e.*, *Paulus Apostolus.*

² See *Notizie Storiche, Bibliografiche e Statistiche delle Biblioteche Governative del Regno d'Italia*, Roma, 1891, p. 47.