HISTORIANS IN ANTIQUITY; 
*Classical Editions of the Past*

A.M. Todd Rare Book Room
Upjohn Library
Kalamazoo College
During his lifetime, A.M. Todd collected noted editions of many classical historians. Since coming to the College, the collection has been augmented by donations from other private collectors, and the library now holds a large number of works of both well-known and obscure classical historians. In view of the scope of the collection, it is interesting to note the authors found here and those not now represented.

The writings of the ten classical historians being exhibited range from the beginnings of ancient historiography through the early Roman Empire. Herodotus of Halicarnassus, known as the founder of ancient historiography, is represented by his Historia, a nine book series on the causes and events of the Persian War. Exiled as the result of losing a fight to a local tyrant, he travelled broadly both in the area of present day Greece and beyond to research the details of this history.

Thucydides, another important Greek historian and the successor of Herodotus, wrote an unfinished history of the Peloponnesian War in eight books using a style that differed from Herodotus in one important aspect. Unlike Herodotus, Thucydides strove to present the historical events he narrated in an unbiased manner. This balance evolved as a result of Thucydides' banishment from his native Athens and because of
his admiration for his Spartan enemies. His exile left him free to observe the views and strategies of both Greeks and Spartans, and this balance ultimately carries through into his works.

Other Greek authors in the collection include Polybius, who wrote a thirty-nine volume history of which Books One through Five survive along with mere fragments of the remaining books. Plutarch, another Greek historian, wrote forty-four parallel biographies comparing prominent Greeks and Romans. Appian of Alexandria, a Greek of the second century C.E., wrote a twenty-four book history of Rome (of which almost half survives) that analyzes the histories of the various peoples conquered by Rome. Finally, Diodorus Siculus, a Greek historian who wrote during the reign of Augustus Caesar, is also represented in the collection.

Of the Roman histories in the A. M. Todd Rare Book Room surely none is more famous than the writings of Julius Caesar. Caesar's surviving historical works include seven books describing the Gallic Wars and the Roman Civil Wars in which Caesar himself was a major participant. Several editions of the works of Livy, author of a mammoth one hundred twenty book history of Rome of which only parts survive, are also in the collection. Unlike most of his literary predecessors, Livy never engaged in a public career but wrote his histories as an exercise of pure academic research. Found in the collection as well are the biographies by Suetonius, who narrated lives of the twelve Caesars from Julius Caesar to Domitian, and the annals and history of Tacitus, who though virtually ignored when he wrote, gained fame when rediscovered in the fifteenth century.

Despite the extent of the collection, some prominent historians are lacking. Conspicuous by his absence is Xenophon, who among his many works wrote a seven book history of Greece from 411-362 B.C.E. Xenophon was greatly influenced by the style of Thucydides and began his history where Thucydides concluded. Missing, too, is Arrian, a Greek living in the Roman Empire who wrote of Alexander the Great's exploits many years after they happened.

Roman historians not represented include Sallust, author of two historical monographs, one on the Jugurthine Wars in Africa and one on the Catilinarian Conspiracy at Rome in 63 B.C.E., as well as a major study, the Historiae, which was interrupted by Sallust's death in 35 B.C.E. Ammianus Marcellinus, the famous Syrian-born Roman historian, wrote a thirty-one volume history, Res Gestae, a work that covered the Roman Empire from 96 C.E. to 378 C.E. of which Books Fourteen through Thirty-one survive; Marcellinus' work is also lacking in the collection.

As one views the exhibition, its many outstanding examples of important editions and printings from the presses of Aldine, Plantin, Tonson, and others should be noted. Although the collection is by no means complete, one reason for its incompleteness may be that certain authors have gained and lost popularity throughout printed history. For example, Diodorus Siculus was well received in the early centuries of printing but
now is considered a minor author. While it is known that prized editions of several early classical histories were sold at auction following A. M. Todd’s death, it is also possible some may not have been available in editions that Todd would have collected and preserved. Although some important works are not now part of the collection, they are gradually being added to complement the current holdings. This year alone has seen a fine edition of Appian of Alexandria’s works added. Possibly, in the twenty-first century the collection will contain works in noted editions by all the classical Historians in Antiquity.

Exhibited Titles

Appianus, of Alexandria. *Delle guerre civili et esterne de Romani*. In Vinegia: In Casa de’ Figlivoli de Aldo, 1551.
Herodotus. *[Herodoti Halicarnasensis historia]*. Glasguae: in aedibus academicis excudebant Robertus et Andreas Foulis, 1761.
Plutarch. *[Plutarchi quae vocantur parallela]*. Venetiis: in aedibus Aldi, 1519.
Thucydides. *[De Bello Peloponnesiaci, libri VIII.]* Venetiis: in domo Aldi, 1502.
This exhibition has been curated by Josh Green '94, under the direction of Dr. Peter Corrigan, Department of Classics.

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