

Alfred Boer

Alfred Boer Fine Arts - Painting Files

ERASMUS

[ca 1933]

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES	
LOCATOR	5169
BOX	15
FILE	18

Memo

From W. E. Doolcy, S.J. Department of Philosophy, MU

To Dr. Alfred Bader

Date May 21, 1983

Subject Preliminary report on your beautiful edition of the Opera of St. Augustine, edited by Desiderius Erasmus. My source for these notes is a Dutch Jesuit, J. de Ghellinck, a distinguished professor of the last generation at the University of Louvain: Patristique et Moyen-Age (Bruxelles, 1948), III, 378-392. I have uncovered a number of other promising leads, and shall report further if any of these provides useful additions to the information provided by de Gh.

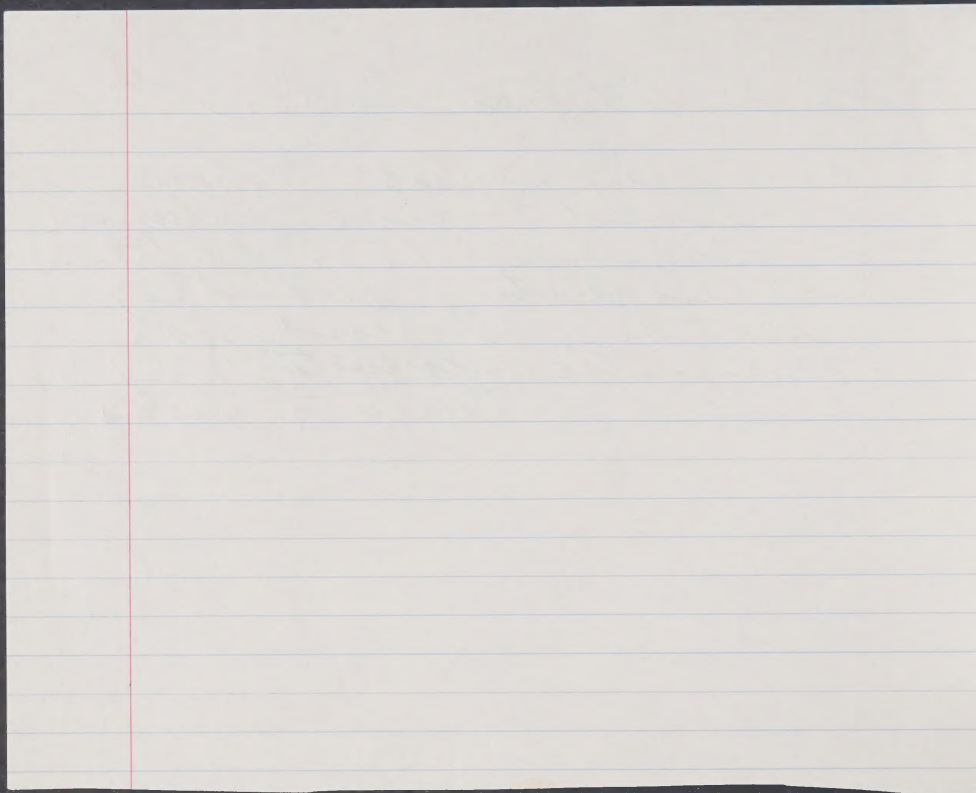
[Note He speaks of the rarity of this edition in the great libraries of Belgium and Switzerland, and of the difficulty of finding it "in our regions" (386 and 388, Note 1). Hence I judge that the friend who advised you to look to the Netherlands for a purchaser has a sound idea; de Gh does not say that even Louvain has a set.]

1. Erasmus, as I remarked last night, maintained a copious correspondence with all ~~his~~ contemporary humanists, and de Gh says that the history of the edition can be traced almost step for step in his letters. [They have been edited critically in ll vv, and I intend to look at the pertinent ones for further details.] It seems that as early as 1517, a friend suggested to him a "revision of the works of Aug;" de Gh takes this to mean Amerbach's edition of 1506. In December, 1520, Er said in a letter: "I am at work on the revision of Aug;" from this friend and from many others he asked for MSS that would enable him to produce a better text.
2. Publisher of the edition was Er's friend and host at Basel, John Froben (Johannes Frobenius in the Lt form of the name); like many of the great Renaissance printers, he was himself a man of considerable education, and Er was finally persuaded to undertake the editorial labor by the urging of Froben. [Froben died at the end of 1527, when printing of the first two vv had been completed; his son carried through the rest of the publication.] In a letter of August, 1522, to his friend, the great French humanist Louis Vivès [on whom vd. infra], Er set forth the complete plan of his projected edition. At that time, he envisioned seven (?) vv; but by ~~1528~~ ¹⁵²⁸, he had enlarged the scope of the edition -- the new plan is given in the prefatory letter to Fonseca I was skimming last night. Vv I and II were in press or printed by the end of 1527; III, IV, VI [note the hiatus] and VII in 1528; VIII, IX, X in Apr and May of 1529.
3. I discover this interesting fact about v V, which we found bound with v VI in your copy. It contains the lengthy work De civitate Dei (On the City of God), and was edited not by Er but by Vivès, who had undertaken the work at Er's request. This edition was completed in 1522 and published independently; it was very costly, and sold badly. Er was reluctant to make it part of his own edition, but it finally appeared as v V in December, 1529: thus the last volume to be printed. But Er included only the text, without the notes and commentaries of Vivès that were part of the original edition; these nearly doubled the bulk of an already long treatise. -- Except for this v V, printing was completed in June, 1529, and distribution begun in September.
4. According to de Gh, the exact number of copies printed is not known; but he suspects, from the rarity of the edition, that the number was small, certainly much less than the 2,200~~0~~ copies of Amerbach's edition. de Gh gives the price at Avignon (hence in France) as 16 gold écus, at Basel as 13 crowns; I can't interpret these ancient monetary designations, but de Gh says this was a high price for those days. He adds that the subsequent numerous reprintings of the edition (1569, 1579, and several others -- no indication if these were authorized or pirated -- seems to have limited circulation of the original edition, "which is not often found in our countries" (387).

de Gh has some interesting things to say about the scholarly qualities of Er's edition, but I think it is these physical details of its conception and production that will most interest you.

To Dr. Alfred Bader

on May 27, 1983 I have
received nine volumes
of Erasmus' 1828 edition
of Augustine works,
leather bound, for
Marquette University,
Curtis L. Carter





MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

JESUIT RESIDENCE

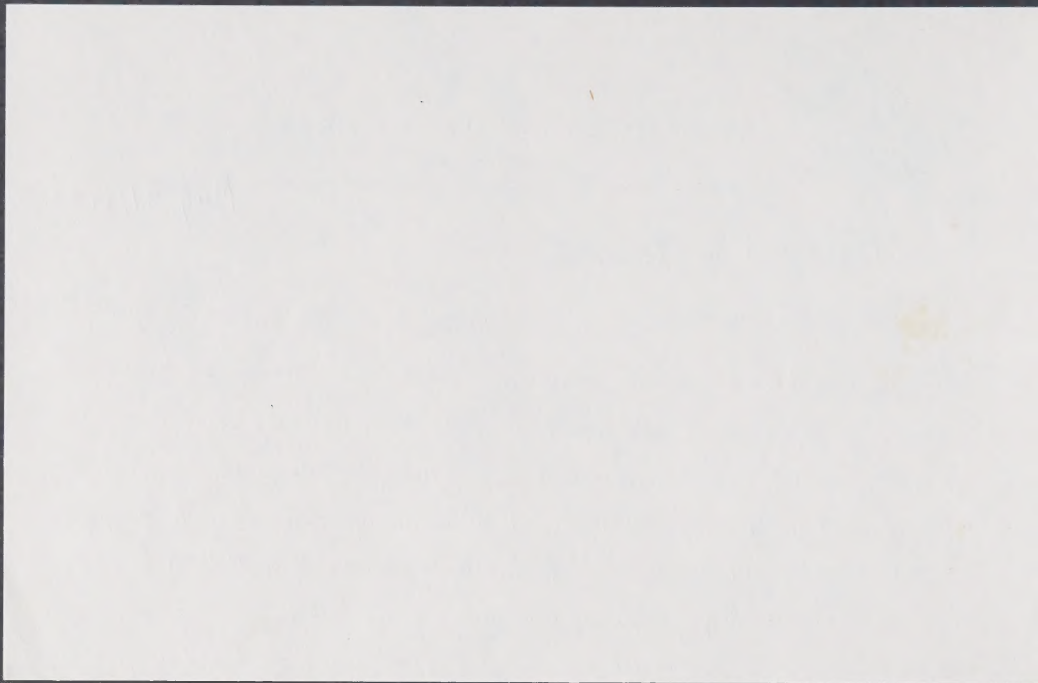
1404 WEST WISCONSIN AVENUE / MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53233 / (414) 344-7900

May 21, 1983

Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bards,

Dear Dr. and Mrs. Bards, I thank you not only for the rare opportunity to examine those exquisite volumes, but equally for the gracious hospitality with which you received us last evening. There is much beauty in your home (surely St. Augustine can repose in comfort there, surrounded by so many scenes from the Scripture he loved), and it is reflected in the kindness you showed to me, a stranger. My gratitude, and please salute David for me.

With all best wishes, Fr. Wm. F. Dowley, S.J.





MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

JESUIT RESIDENCE

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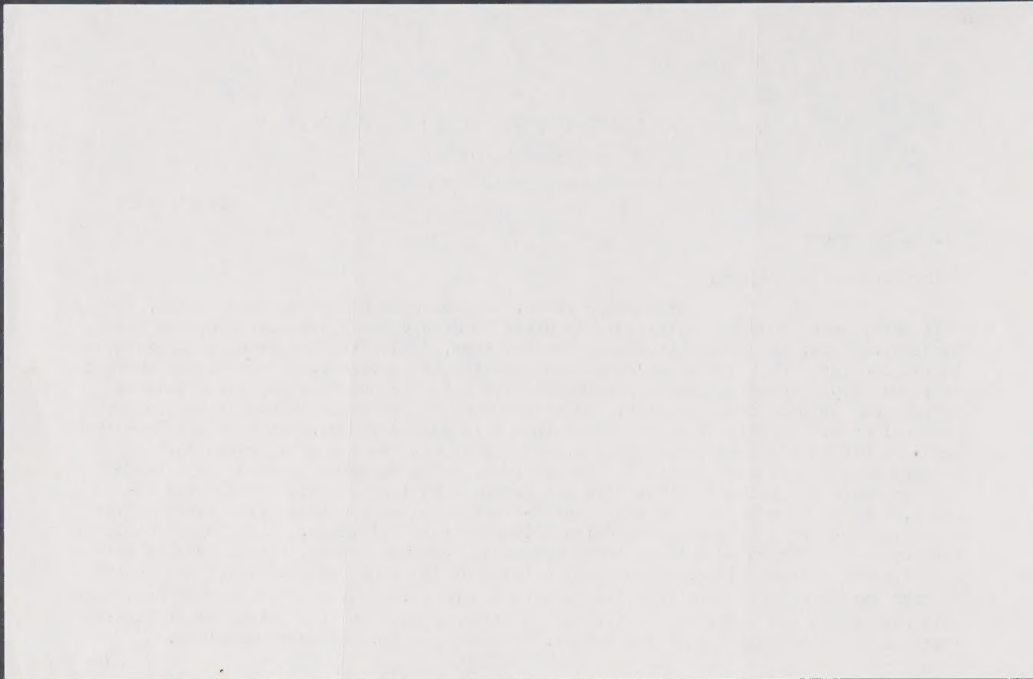
May 24, 1983

Dr. Alfred Bader

Dear and Generous Friend,

By a happy error, the enclosed pages and memo (which, you will note, bears Dunday's date) were returned to me because I had mis-addressed the envelope. Thus, in sending them off a second time, I have the opportunity to express to you the joy I felt after our phone conversation of yesterday. I was deeply touched that you should have thought to provide me access to the precious Augustine volumes during your absence from the city, and even more that you would entrust these to my personal care. I would of course treat them with all reverence, but dare not have them anywhere but in the library's archives, where they will be properly protected. But do be sure that I have easy access to the archives, whose director is going to arrange an area where the volumes may be laid out for my easy inspection. During your absence, I shall examine them with all care -- and with the greatest affection both for Augustine and for you, whose generosity allows me this privilege. I do hope I shall turn up some interesting details to report to you on your return, when I hope we may have further conversations. Here I say nothing of the truly extraordinary generosity of your larger offer, other than that it overwhelms me. I trust that you and Mrs. Bader will have a pleasant trip, and that when you return I may have the privilege of further meetings so that I might know you better. Shalom and pax, and much gratitude.

F. A. S. J.



FACSIMILE I.

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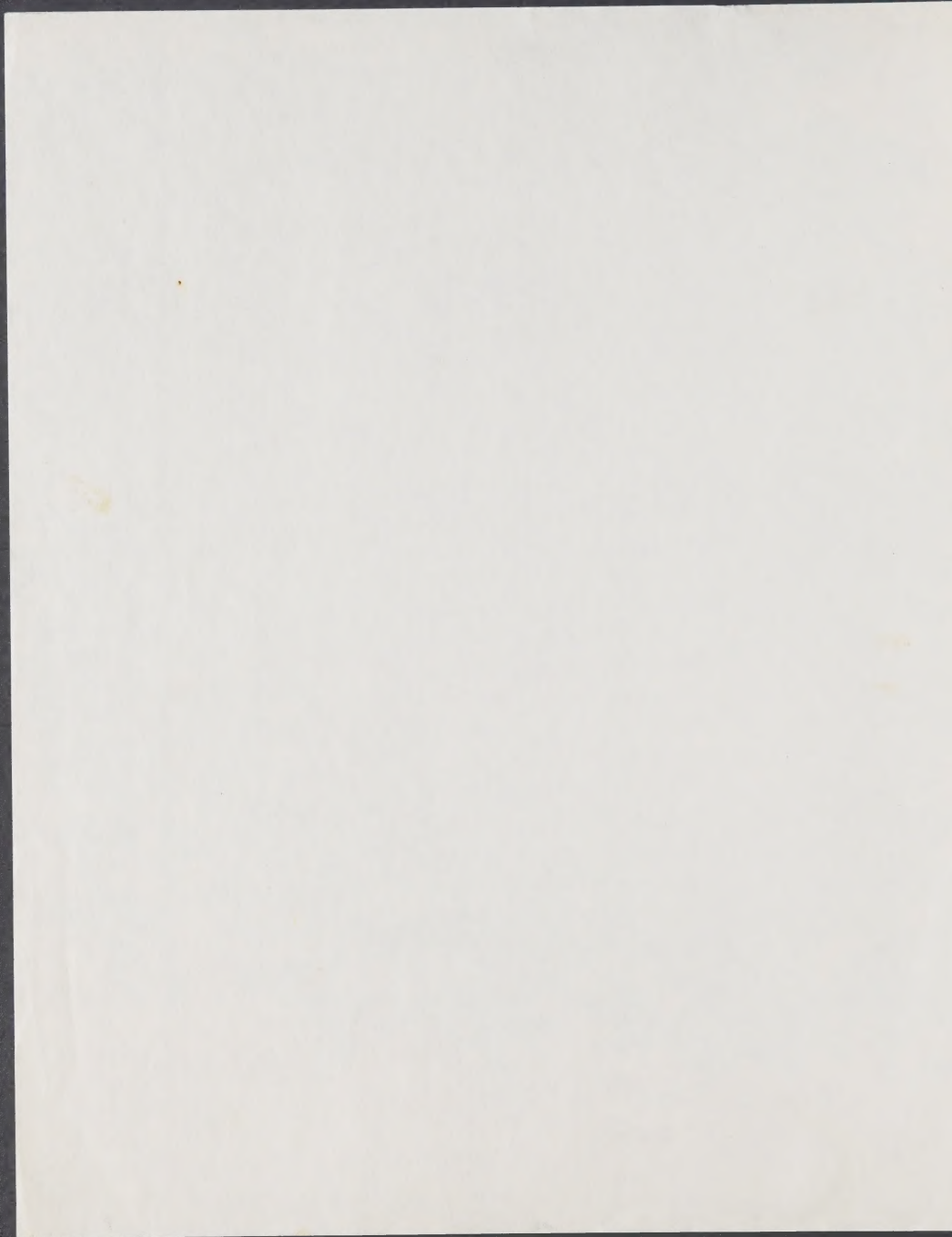
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Bambergensis B. iv. 21 (f. 114): Hieronymus, Augustinus.
 Half uncial text and contemporary marginalia in sloping uncial.

Half un





MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

JESUIT RESIDENCE

1404 W. WISCONSIN AVENUE / MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53233 / (414) 344-7900

May 21, 1983

Dr. Bader

At one point last night, our discussion turned to the question of the MSS from which the editors of the printed works of St Aug, such as Amerbach and Erasmus, compiled their text. You wondered, rather dubiously, if any MSS survived from Aug's own time; and although I know there are ancient MSS going back to the Fourth Century and beyond, I did not know the situation with reference to Aug. [He died, incidentally, in 432 (while the barbarians were devastating his episcopal territory!), so that he's considered a man of the 4th century.]

In view of that discussion, I thought you'd be interested to see an instance of a MS that does (in the judgment of scholars, which can be highly subjective) go back to Aug's own lifetime. In fact, according to the authority I'm citing here, there are six MSS dating from the 4th century, nearly a dozen from the 5th, four to the 6th, and nearly 20 to the 7th. (Since that opinion is now 50 years old, and there has been a tremendous amount of scholarly research on the MSS of St Aug, it's probable that the numbers are even larger.) -- You'll understand, of course, that a single MS (usually called a "codex") would contain perhaps only a single work of Aug, perhaps parts of several treatises; and this is especially true of the very oldest ones, most of which have survived in only fragmentary condition.

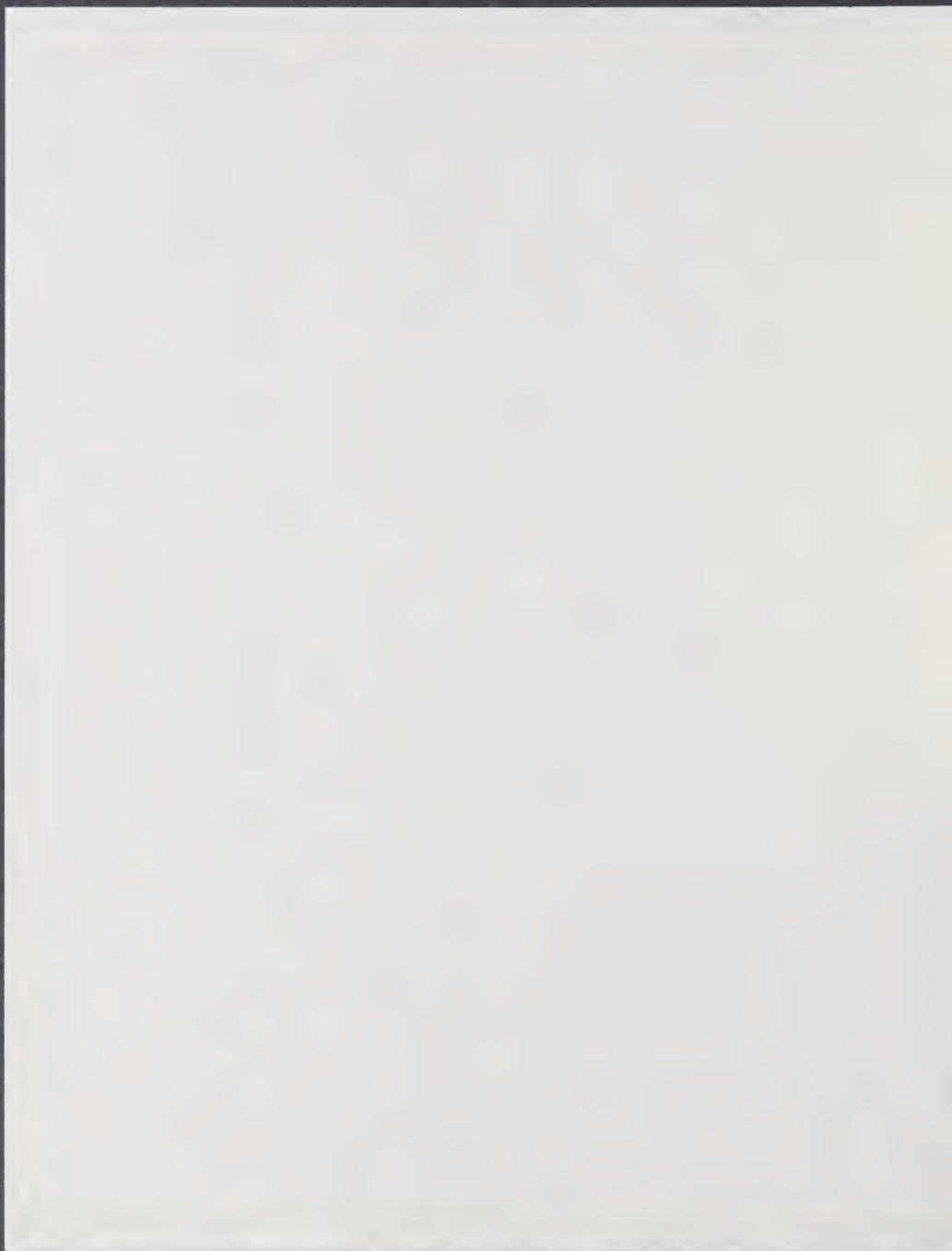
The sample I've photostated for you here is one considered to belong to the 4th century. It is, as you'll note even in the faulty reproduction, a very beautiful hand; although I'm not a paleographer, I can read this script, although with difficulty. The term "uncial" means, literally, "an inch in height;" the half-uncial is merely a smaller version. This style of writing, quite familiar to Aug himself, who praises the aesthetic quality of the letters, was in general use by copyists from the early centuries of the Christian era until about the 7th or 8th centuries, when it comes to be replaced by a form of writing called "cursive," not at all beautiful in appearance and devilishly hard to read in the various forms it assumed. -- The author of the article I'm citing says it's evidence of the veneration in which Aug was held by subsequent generations that his works continued to be produced in the rare and more difficult uncial script well into a time (9th or 10th century) when this form of writing was used to reproduce only the text of Scripture and liturgical books.

The reason for the decline of uncial was of course a lack of scribes trained to produce it and the increasing demand, with the revival of learning and the foundation of centers of study, for the rapid reproduction of sources. As so often in human history, quality had to be compromised for quantity.

Although these matters are not the subject of your own studies, I judge you to be a man of such intellectual curiosity that this tidbit of information, and the accompanying sample of MS, will capture your interest.

Regards,

F. D. S. J.



Memo FROM: W. E. Dooley, S.J.

TO: Dr. Alfred Bader

DATE: May 22, 1983

Subject: Enclosed photostat of some pages from the lecture of P.S. Allen on Erasmus

Dear Dr. Bader,

I turned up this lecture, and thought you would be interested in the lively account of the actual events which surrounded Erasmus' production of the edition of which, nearly 500 years after these events, you are the fortunate possessor. I've marked the passages relevant to the Augustine project; but the intervening text gives evidence of the extraordinary industry of this quite remarkable man.

To me, Allen's remark on 364 that Erasmus probably worked more printed editions than from MSS is a surprise; further, that there were, by 1520, "many" printed texts of individual works. I must explore this matter further; but since Allen is the editor of Erasmus' correspondence, and a noted authority on Renaissance scholarship, he must be sure of his ground. In 1925, the various printed editions, especially the earliest ones, had not been catalogued, but I believe that information can now be found in more recent publications. I'll explore the matter.

Regards,

W E D, SJ



Marquette University
Committee on the Fine Arts

Curtis L. Carter, Chairman

May 23, 1983

Dr. Alfred Bader
2961 North Shepard Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

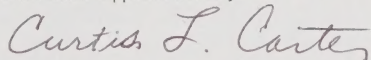
Dear Dr. Bader:

As always it is a pleasure to visit with you and your gracious wife and to enjoy the beautiful pictures in your home. As I told you, Father William Dooley who came with me to see the Augustine edition of 1528, was thrilled with his visit. He enjoyed both of you very much, and was much taken by the Augustine volumes.

We are very enthusiastic about having your Erasmus edition of Augustine's works at Marquette. Your very generous offer to donate your half-interest in these important volumes is much appreciated. I will begin immediately to see what, if anything, we can do to accommodate the other party's interest. Is there a chance that your partner might also be interested in considering a gift for tax purposes? I will explore the opportunities here and will make every effort to match your very generous offer.

Meanwhile, Father Dooley has written to Yale and Harvard to inquire into the condition of their volumes and will also attempt to establish whether the Harvard and Yale sets are the only ones in this country.

With much appreciation,



Curtis L. Carter

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