

BOOK FROM THE COLLECTION

Dodoens, Rembert *Florum et coronariarum odoratumque nonnullarum historia*
Antwerp, 1569

This *description of some scented flowers* by the Belgian botanist and doctor Rembert Dodoens is a small (octavo) book bound in vellum (Figure 1), printed in Antwerp in 1569 by the successful and influential scholar/publisher Christopher Plantin. It contains many charming woodcuts of well-known garden flowers. Woodcutting is a relief process (the design is left standing while the background is cut away) and this makes it difficult to show fine detail. However, because woodcuts can be set up and printed at the same time as normal type they integrate well with text, as can be seen in Figure 2.

Dodoens (1517-1585) had an interesting career. He was Emperor Maximilian's court physician at Vienna, then practised in Cologne and Antwerp before becoming a Professor of Medicine in Leyden. Dodoens wrote many books on botany. He was particularly interested in its medical aspects and wrote a herbal. The library contains nine books written by him.

This book was one of the first housed in the College Library. In 1705 the College bought the library of Patrick Moray, the deceased Laird of Livingstone, for 300 merks Scots. Moray toured Europe, visiting gardens and buying plants and books, and he bought this book in Paris on 30 September 1669. Robert Sibbald and Andrew Balfour, the second and third College Presidents, acquired many of the plants used to start the Physic Garden from Moray's Livingstone garden.



FIGURE 1
Title page.



FIGURE 2
A page showing one of the many woodcuts of
garden flowers.