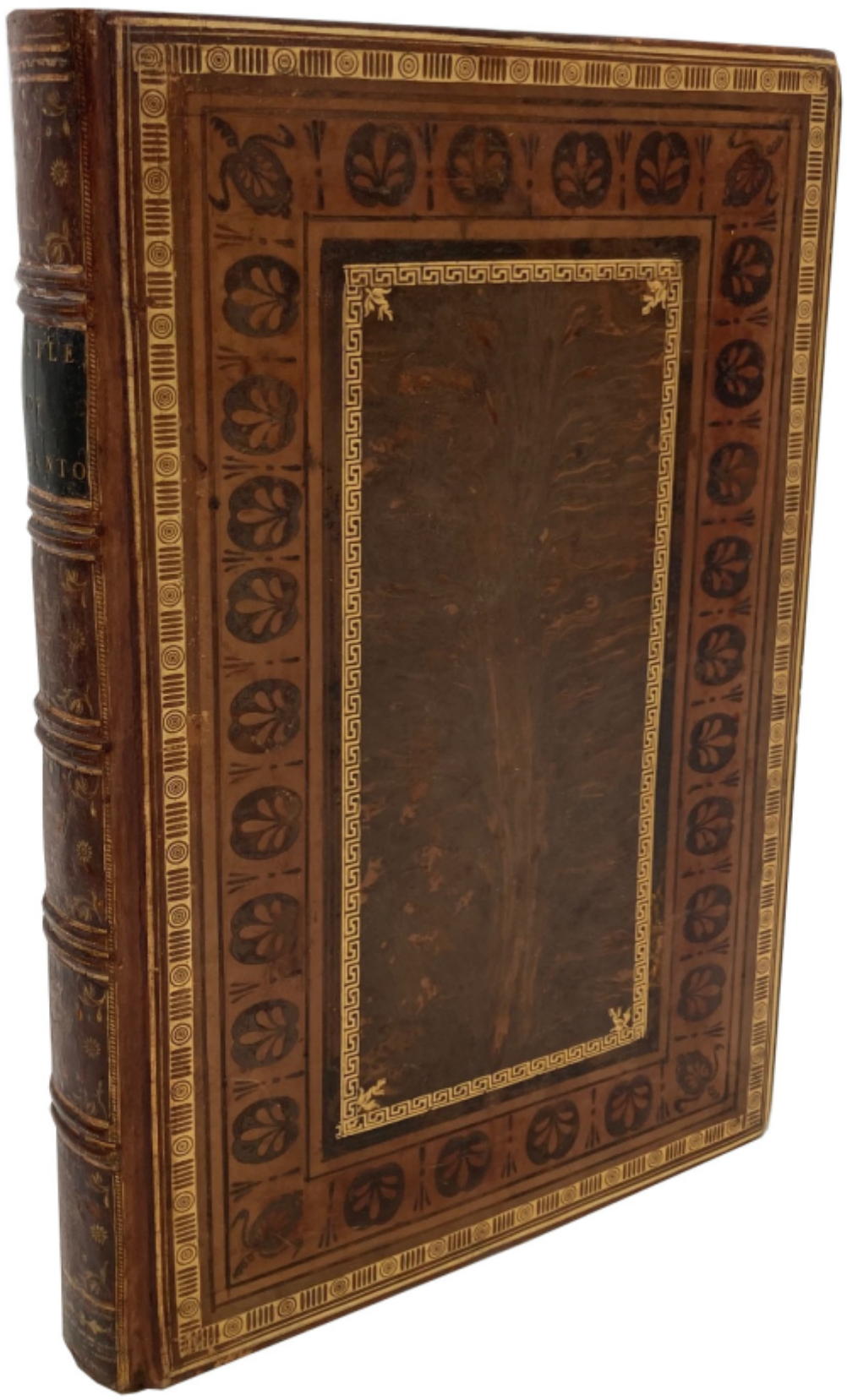
TEMPLE
RARE BOOKS OF OXFORD

The Castle of Otranto, a Gothic Story

Horace Walpole

Sold



REF: 1474

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Description

[7], ii-xxxii, [1], 2-245pp, [1]. Full contemporary calf by Edwards of Halifax, raised double bands, spine in six panels, title label to second panel, remaining panels with central urn, with fleuron corner pieces, with gilt rule either side of bands, covers with central panel of tree calf, with greek key border, within a double frame of Etruscanesque blind tool and gilt roll, with a thick and thin double fillet border, gilt line to edges, and a rope roll border to inner edges, watered silk doublures and pastedowns, a.e.g. with a fore-edge painting of Countess Weir Bridge on the River Exe. Gilt to spine rubbed and a little indistinct, joints repaired with Japanese tissue, rubbed to extremities, corners very slightly bumped. Internally some occasional light foxing, but fairly bright and clean. Red ruled throughout, with two engraved frontispiece's (Hazen's A and B plates, with B being a new plate and not just A with added detail), bound either side of the half-title. The engraver was Barlow according to Hazen, probably John Barlow (c.1759-1817 or later), see Alexander, 'A Biographical Dictionary of British and Irish Engravers, 1714-1820', pages 76-77. The title is the usual second state cancel, dated 1791. Housed in a modern cloth drop back box with leather title label to spine. The 'author' 'Onuphrio Muralto' is a near anagram of Horatio Walpole (with an M replacing the W). First printed in 1764, this seminal work by Walpole is widely regarded as the first Gothic novel. Edwards of Halifax were amongst the most successful and innovative bookbinders, booksellers, and publishers for about seventy-five years (1749-1826) (see Bentley, 'The Edwardses of Halifax', passim), and were largely responsible for reviving the fore-edge painting in England. The firm was started by William Edwards, and continued by his sons James and Richard. James Edwards was a friend of Horace Walpole, and published this volume, printed by Giambattista Bodoni in Parma, in an edition of three hundred copies on paper and five (though actually six) on vellum (Bentley, page 57). Bentley notes that there are at least three copies of this work known to have been produced with a fore-edge painting (Ibid, page 36). The Huntington Library has a copy with Lulworth Castle as a fore-edge (see Weber, 'Annotated Dictionary of Fore-Edge Painting Artists and Binders', page 113-4), and Weber goes on to note that 'Castle of Otranto' is one of the books "frequently ... specially bound and often have fore-edge paintings from Edwards" (Ibid, page 123), and a similar copy is included in Thomas Edwards' 1815 catalogue, "1351 Walpole's 'Castle of Otranto', elegant in Etruscan calf, gold borders to the plates, and an elegant drawing on the leaves" (Ibid, page 129). Hazen, pages 56-63; Summers, page 264; Rothschild 2492 (noting six copies on vellum)

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