

Gutenberg Bible

1450 - 1456 The first book printed in the western world from movable type on a printing press, by Johannes Gutenberg in Mainz, Germany, **in an edition of about 180 copies;**

It is the St. Jerome *Vulgate*, in Latin, (also known as the Gutenberg Bible) 42 lines to the page; 1,282 printed pages (641 leaves) in two volumes: the Old Testament (O.T.) and New Testament (N.T.), **unpaged, with no title page.**

Rubrication was by hand and the type was specifically designed to resemble a hand-written manuscript.

Controversy existed up until the 1960's as to whether or not it was the first printed book, with some scholars believing that the crude Constance Missal was older. This view has been discredited by two distinguished German scholars and an American bibliographer, Allan H. Stevenson, who made his discovery in 1954 but didn't publish his findings until 1967.

In any case, Gutenberg's *Vulgate Bible* is certainly the first complete book printed with movable type in a large quantity. Historians also disagreed as to whether Gutenberg actually invented movable type, with some Dutch scholars arguing that Gutenberg stole the idea and possibly the type from a Dutch craftsman. Five hundred and fifty years later it is a moot point, for it was Gutenberg and none other who caused a revolution in the production of books that has forever changed mankind.

Forty-nine partial and/or complete copies exist today.