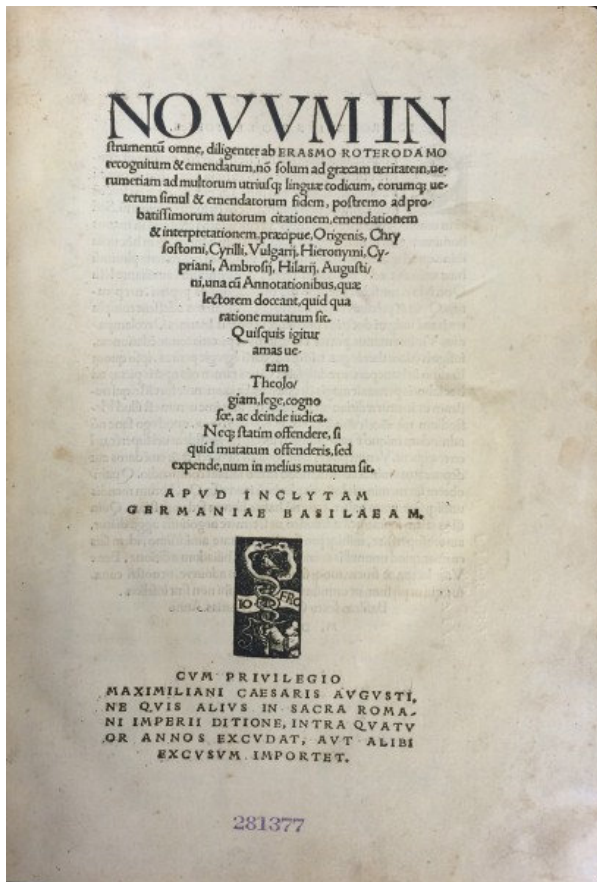

This Week in Eden History

September 6 | The internet comes to Eden



Title page of Erasmus's Novum Instrumentum omne.... a copy of which is in Eden's rare book collection.

Erasmus of Rotterdam, a prominent Dutch Catholic scholar, was born **Oct. 27, 1466**, in Rotterdam. Although many details of his early life are disputed, he received the best education available in his time. He was ordained into the priesthood in 1492. He taught at Oxford in 1499 and graduated as Doctor of Divinity from the University of Turin in 1506. He later taught at Queen's College, University of Cambridge, 1510–1515. He lectured at Leuven and then moved to Basel. When Basel accepted the Protestant Reformation in 1529, Erasmus moved to Freiburg im Breisgau. He died of dysentery in Basel during a visit on July 12, 1536.

Erasmus was the most prominent public scholar of the early northern Renaissance. Through his numerous writings, teaching, and extensive correspondence at a time of great intellectual and religious ferment in Europe, he had a significant impact on Western culture. He was critical of abuses of the Roman Catholic Church and, during the Reformation, of Luther and other Protestants over concerns about mounting disorder. In general, he attempted to avoid the fierce theological disputes of the time and to remain focused on his scholarship.

Eden's most direct connection to Erasmus is a copy of the 1516 first edition of his *Novum Instrumentum omne*..., in the Good Collection of rare books in

Eden's library. This work contains both his Latin translation of the New Testament and his Greek text, which he included so readers could check the integrity of his Latin translation. His Greek text was the first published Greek New Testament, and it and later editions were important to subsequent biblical translators and commentators. The 2nd edition was used by Luther in his translation of the German Bible, Tyndale probably used the 3rd edition in his English translation, and it formed the basis of the 1550 Stephanus Greek edition used by translators of the Geneva Bible, the King James Bible, and by most 16th-19th century biblical translators.

Eden Theological Seminary Archives
475 E. Lockwood Ave.
St. Louis, Missouri 63119
(314) 252.3141

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