



Smithsonian Institution

Archives of American Art

Jacques Seligmann & Co. records, General Correspondence: Ackerman, Phyllis, 1928-1933

Extracted on Mar-29-2024 01:43:58

The Smithsonian Institution thanks all digital volunteers that transcribed and reviewed this material. Your work enriches Smithsonian collections, making them available to anyone with an interest in using them.

The Smithsonian Institution (the "Smithsonian") provides the content on this website (transcription.si.edu), other Smithsonian websites, and third-party sites on which it maintains a presence ("SI Websites") in support of its mission for the "increase and diffusion of knowledge." The Smithsonian invites visitors to use its online content for personal, educational and other non-commercial purposes. By using this website, you accept and agree to abide by the [following terms](#).

- If sharing the material in personal and educational contexts, please cite the Archives of American Art as source of the content and the project title as provided at the top of the document. Include the accession number or collection name; when possible, link to the Archives of American Art website.
- If you wish to use this material in a for-profit publication, exhibition, or online project, please contact Archives of American Art or transcribe@si.edu

For more information on this project and related material, contact the Archives of American Art. [See this project](#) and other collections in the Smithsonian Transcription Center.

COPY

THREE EPISODES FROM THE
HISTORY OF HERCULES

WOVEN IN AUDENARDE 1498, AFTER
THE DESIGN OF PIERRE FIERRET

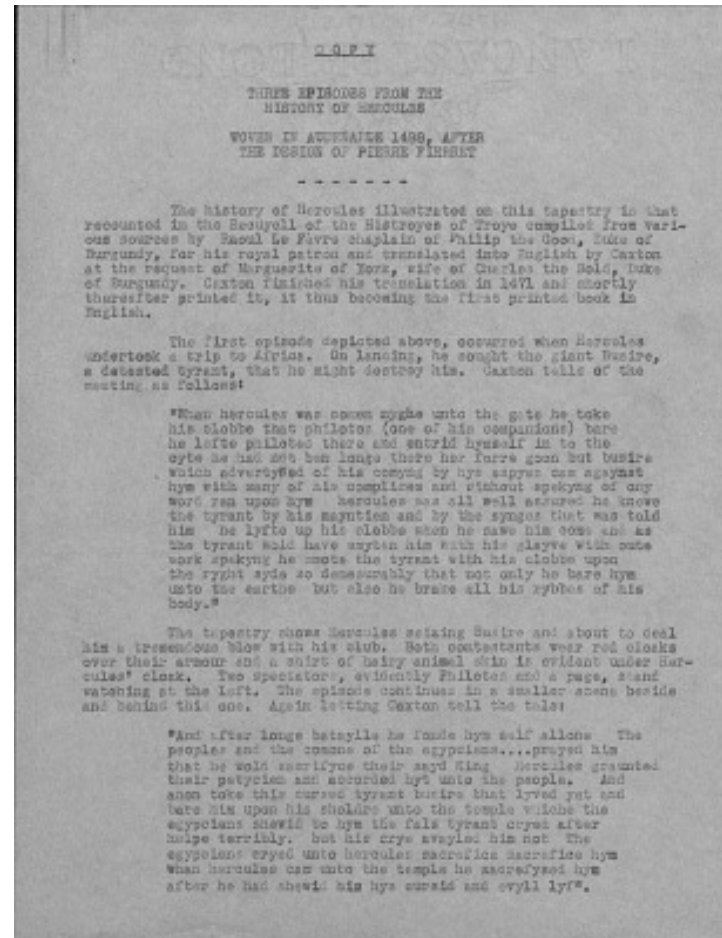
The history of Hercules illustrated on this tapestry is that recounted in the Recuyell of the Histories of Troye compiled from various sources by Raoul Le Fèvre chaplain of Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, for his royal patron and translated into English by Caxton at the request of Marguerite of York, wife of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. Caxton finished his translation in 1471 and shortly thereafter printed it, it thus becoming the first printed book in English.

The first episode depicted above, occurred when Hercules undertook a trip to Africa. On landing, he sought the giant Busire, a detested tyrant, that he might destroy him. Caxton tells of the meeting as follows:

[[block indent]] "Whan hercules was comen nyghe unto the gate he toke his clobbe that philotes (one of his companions) bare he lefte philotes there and entrid hymself in to the cyte he had not ban longe there her ferre goon but busire which advertysed of his comyng by hys espyes cam agaynst hym with many of his complices and without spekyng of any word ran upon hym hercules was all well assured he knewe the tyrant by his mayntien and by the synges that was told him he lyfte up his clobbe when he sawe him come and as the tyrant wold have smyten him with his glayve with oute work spekyng he smote the tyrant with his clobbe upon the ryght syde so demesurably that not only he bare hym unto the earthe but also he brake all his rybbes of his body." [[/block indent]]

The tapestry shows Hercules seizing Busire and about to deal him a tremendous blow with his club. Both contestants wear red cloaks over their armour and a shirt of hairy animal skin is evident under Hercules' cloak. Two spectators, evidently Philotes and a page, stand watching at the left. The episode continues in a smaller scene beside and behind this one. Again letting Caxton tell the tale:

[[block indent]] "And after longe bataylle he fonde hym self allone The peoples and the comone of the egypciens....prayed him that he wold sacrifyce their sayd King Hercules graunted their petycien and accorded hyt unto the people. And anon toke this cursed tyrant busire that lyved yet and bare him upon his sholdre unto the temple whiche the egypciens shewid to hym the fals tyrant cryed after helpe terribly. but his crye awayled him not The egypciens cryed unto hercules sacrifice sacrifice hym when hercules cam unto the temple he sacrefysed hym after he had shewid him hys cursid and evyll lyf". [[/block indent]]



Jacques Seligmann & Co. records, General Correspondence: Ackerman, Phyllis, 1928-1933
Transcribed and Reviewed by Digital Volunteers
Extracted Mar-29-2024 01:43:58



Smithsonian Institution

Archives of American Art

The mission of the Smithsonian is the increase and diffusion of knowledge - shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex, consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, and nine research facilities. Become an active part of our mission through the Transcription Center. Together, we are discovering secrets hidden deep inside our collections that illuminate our history and our world.

Join us!

The Transcription Center: <https://transcription.si.edu>

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SmithsonianTranscriptionCenter>

On Twitter: [@TranscribeSI](https://twitter.com/TranscribeSI)

Connect with the Smithsonian

Smithsonian Institution: www.si.edu

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Smithsonian>

On Twitter: [@smithsonian](https://twitter.com/smithsonian)