

Medieval Mairn

April 20, 1455



Microsoft Encarta

Herr Gutenberg

-Announcements-

- A meeting to plan the banquet and celebration is tomorrow noon.
- Stained glass available. See the Abbot.
- Help needed to build viewing stands for the upcoming tournament.
- Preview the Bibles to be sold at the Frankfurt Book Fair.
- Tax day is every Tuesday.

Gutenberg Bible Top Seller

In just five months, Johann Gutenberg's Bible has gone from a novelty to a "must have."

Last fall, Mairn native Johann Gutenberg put five years of research with metals and ink together to print a Latin Bible. This Bible was the first ever printed. Since then, 200 copies have been printed and sold in Germany and surrounding areas.

Gutenberg's revolutionary idea combines his experience as a goldsmith and gem cutter and advanced training in metallurgy with the desire to print readable books in a short period of time. He first designed 290 separate symbols cast of lead, antimony, and tin. Next he experimented with different materials to come up with an ink that was the right consistency and wouldn't fade. His final printing fluid was a

combination of boiled linseed oil and soot! Finally, he adapted a wine press to press the type against the paper so as to make it easy to slide the paper in and out as well as squeezing extra water from the damp paper. This press, with its movable type, can print an amazing 300 pages per day.

Gutenberg has hired three apprentices to learn the job of type-setting and ink making. Several new printing businesses are preparing to open in the city of Prague and in the neighboring country of Holland.

One Monk's Opinion by Brother Georg

I am Brother Georg of the Mairn Abby on the northeast side of town. I copy and illuminate prayers, canticles, catechisms, and psalms. I have seen Herr Gutenberg's printing press and the 36-line Bible, and I am not impressed. The book lacks beauty, which is important to the enjoyment and understanding of the text.

Gutenberg claims the ability to print many copies in a short time will allow the citizens of Mairn to read and understand the scriptures for themselves. As if!!! I have been a scribe for 20 years and a

monk for 25 and even I do not understand all of what I read or copy. And I speak Latin! How can an uneducated man make sense of the scripture without the guidance of the clergy?

A reasonable man will agree with me, that this infernal machine must be destroyed. Some may call us Luddites (oh, wait, we don't have sewing machines yet), but all right-thinking people will agree, gadgetry does not necessarily mean progress, and in this case, it most certainly does not!

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Illuminated Text from the Gutenberg Bible