**Kelmscott Press**

Perhaps the most famous of the private presses, William Morris established the Kelmscott Press at Hammersmith in January 1891. Between then and 1898, the press produced 53 books (totaling some 18,000 copies). Kelmscott was the culmination of Morris's life as a craftsman in many diverse fields. He set out to prove that the high standards of the past could be repeated - even surpassed - in the present. The books Morris produced were therefore medieval in design, modelled on the incunabula of the fifteenth century. Morris's roman 'golden' type, for example, was inspired by that of the early printer Nicolaus Jenson of Venice. Noteworthy for their harmony of type and illustration, Morris' main priority was to have each book seen a a whole: this included taking painstaking care with all aspects of production, including the paper, the form of type, the spacing of the letters, and the position of the printed matter on the page. Kelmscott books re-awakened the ideals of book design and inspired better standards of production at a time when the printed page was generally at its poorest.

