

## **A royal edition of two histories by Sallust.**

Sallust [Gaius Sallustius Crispus]. *La conjuración de Catilina; y, La Guerra de Jugurta*. Madrid: Joaquín Ibarra, 1772. 14 3/16 inches (360 mm), 396 pp.

Joaquín Ibarra y Marín (1725–1785) was the finest Spanish printer of his time, the Iberian rival of Didot in France, Bodoni in Italy, and Baskerville in England. This quarto edition of Sallust in Latin and Spanish is his masterpiece, combining beautiful engravings with fine presswork, accurate printing, and handsome types. Ibarra’s affinities are closest to Bodoni, who was clearly an influence. Their professional situations were similar. Ibarra was “*Impresor de Camara del Rei Nuestro Señor*” or Printer to the Court of King Carlos III, as indicated in the colophon at **Spread 223**. Bodoni was printer to the court of Carlos’ nephew at Parma. The great Italian printer called Ibarra’s Sallust “stupendous.”

The Roman historian Sallust (ca. 86–35 B.C.), after an upwardly mobile political and military career, largely under Julius Caesar, withdrew from public life to write pessimistic, disillusioned histories of his own times. His first work, the *Bellum Catilinae*, concerned the conspiracy of Catiline, a rebellion thwarted by Cicero. This episode of Roman history is familiar to many printers from the traditional use of a passage from Cicero’s oration *In Catilinam*—“*Quousque tandem abutere, Catilina, patientia nostra?*” (“How long, O Catiline, wilt thou abuse our forbearance?”)—as a splendid display piece to illustrate the attractions of a font of type. His second work, the *Bellum Iugurthinum*, remains the chief historical source for this North African war that began a quarter of a century before Sallust’s birth. Jugurtha of Numidia was eventually defeated by the Romans and executed in 104 B.C. Although comparatively little read today, Sallust served as a model for other Roman historians, especially Tacitus. The first printed edition of his works appeared in Venice in 1470.

This grand Spanish edition of Sallust was something of a family—a royal family—affair. Ibarra was printer to the king. The translator was his second son, the infante Don Gabriel Antonio Francesco de Borbón (1752–1788). The author of the notes (**Spreads 163–189**)

and the Dissertation (a footnote that got out of hand) on the Phoenician language (**Spreads 190–214**) was Pérez Bayer, tutor to the royal children. Sallust was a favorite schoolroom text until recently—the 15-year-old Rimbaud won a school prize for a Latin poem entitled “Jugurtha”—so the Ibarra edition might perhaps be flippantly regarded as a deluxe edition of a pupil’s homework. The Jugurthine War had the further attraction of being almost local history, having occurred just across the Mediterranean Sea from Spain.

The Spanish translation of *La Conjuración de Catilina* fills **Spreads 16–64**; the text of *La Guerra de Jugurta* fills **Spreads 66–163**. Both are printed in an attractive calligraphic italic produced by Antonio Espinosa. The Latin original is printed below, in two columns of small roman type. The text is interspersed with headpieces, tailpieces, decorative initials, nine plates, and a map of Numidia (**Spread 84**). Bayer’s notes include engravings of coins, rings, lances, battering-rams, and military formations, accessible through a subject index (**Spreads 215–221**). There is a handsome engraved title-page. The feeble bust of Sallust at **Spread 11** is perhaps the only failure of the book.

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